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MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA

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PHOTOS: WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



"MY FIRST IMPRESSION WAS THAT SHE WAS JUST AN ORDINARY WOMAN -- WHO HAD DONE SOME VERY EXTRAORDINARY THINGS."



"LIKE, FOR INSTANCE, THIS ONE: COMING ALL THE WAY FROM ROME TO LEBANON TO BRING ST HANDICAPPED AND RETARDED KIDS FROM A BOMBED-OUT HOSPITAL TO SAFETY IN THE WESTERN SECTOR WITHOUT ANY MORE HESITATION THAN YOU OR I WOULD GIVE TO CROSSING A CITY STREET!"

"SHE WAS MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA! AND SHE WAS MY STORY."

"AS THE CRYING CHILDREN WERE TRANSFERRED FROM AMBULANCES TO A HOSPITAL BUS..."



MOTHER TERESA! WHAT DID IT FEEL LIKE TO BE IN A WAR ZONE? WERE YOU AFRAID?

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU ORIGINALLY CAME HERE TO COMFORT YOUR MISSIONARY SISTERS IN BEIRUT?



YOU CLAIMED THAT THIS EVACUATION WAS BEING DONE "WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE PALESTINIANS AND EVERYONE -- THE WHOLE WORLD!"

I CAN'T GIVE ANY INTERVIEWS NOW. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND.



HUH--?

WELCOME TO THE CLUB, MATE. I'M CRIBBINS, LONDON DAILY NEWS. BEEN FOLLOWING THAT LADY FOR SOME TIME MYSELF AND SHE'S A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK.

HERE, MAYBE THIS COVER BLURB I GOT FOR MY SUNDAY ARTICLE WILL MAKE THINGS CLEARER.



IT'S A QUOTE FROM A LETTER SHE WROTE TO ONE OF OUR BRITISH TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE.



Christ's life was not written during his lifetime, yet he did the greatest work on earth. He redeemed the world and taught mankind to love his Father. The work is his work and so remain so, all of us are but his instrument who do our little bit and pass by.



THAT'S WHY SHE DOESN'T USUALLY TALK TO US FOURTH ESTATE BLOKES. SEE YOU AROUND, MATE-- AND GOOD LUCK!

I DON'T GET IT. THIS WOMAN PULLS OFF THE PUBLICITY COUP OF THE DECADE-- AND SHE WON'T SAY WORD ONE ABOUT IT!



THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MOTHER TERESA, SOMETHING UNUSUAL, AND MAYBE JUST A LITTLE BIT... SPECIAL.

AND THAT COULD BE AN EVEN BIGGER STORY THAN THE ONE I CAME HERE FOR!



COME ON, MARTY, LET'S PACK!

WE'VE GOT A PLANE TO CATCH!

GREAT! I'VE BEEN LUGGING THIS HEAVY EQUIPMENT AROUND SO LONG, I CAN SCRATCH MY TOES WITHOUT BENDING OVER! IT'LL BE GOOD TO GET HOME!



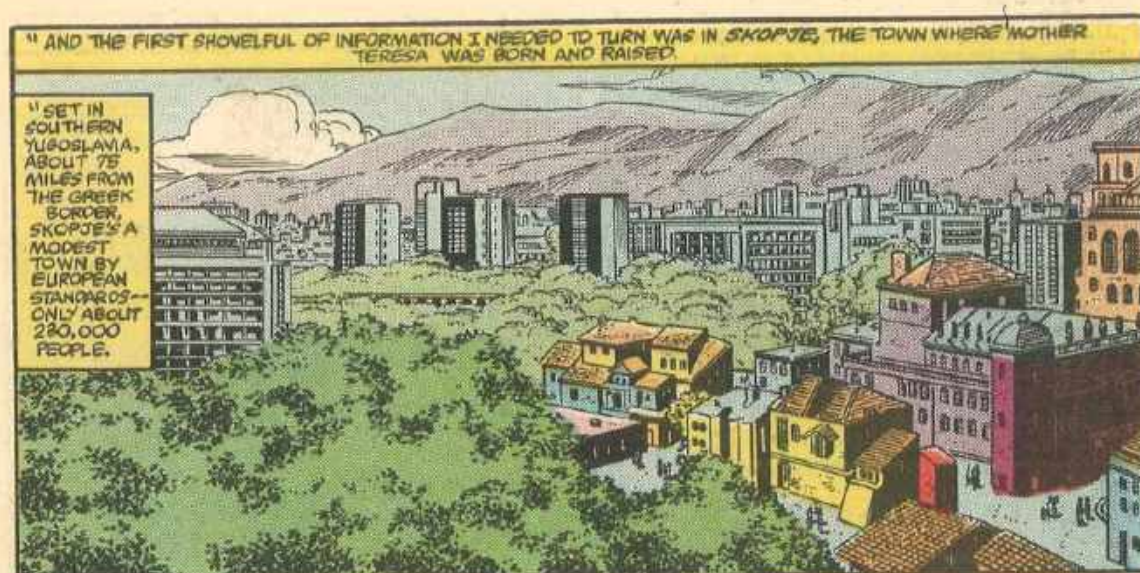
WE'RE NOT GOING HOME. WE'RE GOING TO YUGOSLAVIA.

YUGO-- WHAT?!



I'D DONE SOME BACKGROUND READING ON MOTHER TERESA BEFORE HEADING FOR BEIRUT-- AND I DID SOME MORE ON THE PLANE TO EUROPE.

THERE HADN'T BEEN ALL THAT MUCH WRITTEN, AND A LOT OF IT WAS REPETITIVE. I KNEW I'D HAVE TO DIG.



AND THE FIRST SHOVELFUL OF INFORMATION I NEEDED TO TURN WAS IN SKOPJE, THE TOWN WHERE MOTHER TERESA WAS BORN AND RAISED.

SET IN SOUTHERN YUGOSLAVIA, ABOUT 75 MILES FROM THE GREEK BORDER, SKOPJE'S A MODEST TOWN BY EUROPEAN STANDARDS-- ONLY ABOUT 280,000 PEOPLE.



WE INTERVIEWED NEIGHBORS... RELATIVES OF NEIGHBORS' DESCENDANTS OF RELATIVES WHO VAGUELY REMEMBERED NEIGHBORS.

I RECALL THE GIRL, YES. SHE WAS A SWEET CHILD.



WE TALKED TO MEMBERS OF THE CLERGY ABOUT CHURCH RECORDS...

SHE WAS ONE OF OUR MOST ACTIVE AND DEDICATED MEMBERS. SHE HAD SUCH ENTHUSIASM.



WE EVEN TRIED TO REACH MOTHER TERESA'S ONLY SURVIVING RELATIVE-- HER BROTHER, LAZAR BOJAKHUI, NOW LIVING IN ITALY.



AND BY THE END OF THE THIRD DAY...

THE PICTURE'S STILL HAZY, FOR SURE, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THE EDGES ARE STARTING TO CLEAR...

"IT SEEMS THAT BACK AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, SKOPJE WAS QUITE A DIFFERENT PLACE FROM WHAT IT IS TODAY. SKOPJE WAS PART OF MACEDONIA, AN AREA THAT HAD BEEN FOUGHT OVER BY CELTS, ROMANS, HUNS... MORE ARMIES THAN YOU COULD SHAKE A SPEAR AT. BUT BY 1910, THINGS HAD GROWN PRETTY PEACEFUL..."



"...A PEACE THAT WAS SHARED BY A CERTAIN PROSPEROUS BUILDING CONTRACTOR, ORIGINALLY FROM ALBANIA, NAMED NIKOLA BOJAXHIU, AND HIS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS WIFE, DRONDA."



"THEY WERE A HAPPY FAMILY."

"AND THEY WERE MADE EVEN HAPPIER ON AUGUST 27 OF THAT YEAR BY THE BIRTH OF THEIR THIRD CHILD..."



"WE WILL CALL HER GONXHA--THAT MEANS 'FLOWER' IN ALBANIAN."

"BUT THAT INFANT WAS LATER TO BE KNOWN THE WORLD OVER AS MOTHER TERESA."

"FROM ALL ACCOUNTS, GONXHA BOJAXHIU WAS A PRETTY NORMAL KID, PLAYING IN THE LOCAL PARKS AND STREETS WITH OTHER CHILDREN OF THE TOWN..."



"GONXHA'S GOT THE BALL!"

"CAN'T CATCH ME! HA-HA!"

"--AND ATTENDING THE SAME GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS AS THEY DID. SHE WASN'T A BAD STUDENT, EITHER."



"SHE DID SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN CHURCH ACTIVITIES--HER FAMILY WERE PIOUS CATHOLICS--BUT THAT WASN'T REALLY UNUSUAL..."



"THE AREA AS A WHOLE WAS RELIGIOUS AND CHURCHES FREQUENTLY PROVIDED SOCIAL, AS WELL AS SPIRITUAL, FOCUS."

"IN FACT, GONXHA'S GREAT LOVE OF MUSIC--AN AFFECTION SHE SHARED WITH HER OLDER SISTER, ASA--WAS CENTERED ON THE CHURCH. BOTH SHE AND ASA WERE IMPORTANT FIGURES IN THE CHURCH CHOIR, AND GONXHA WAS A FREQUENT SOLOIST."



"SHE SINGS LIKE AN ANGEL..."



"BUT THERE WERE OTHER INFLUENCES IN GONXHA'S EARLY LIFE--ONE OF THE BIG ONES WAS HER FATHER. NIKOLA WAS AN ALBANIAN NATIONALIST, AN ACTIVIST, AND THE BOJAXHIU HOME OFTEN PLAYED HOST TO MEETINGS OF POLITICAL ALLIES, AND WAS FILLED WITH TALK OF ALBANIAN INDEPENDENCE.

SOME DAY, ALBANIA WILL BE SOVEREIGN--AND WE SHALL MAKE IT THAT WAY!



"GONXHA LOVED HER FATHER, AND THOSE MEETINGS MAY HAVE SERVED AS LESSONS TO HER YOUNG MIND--TEACHING HER THE VALUES OF STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION IN FOLLOWING A CAUSE.

NEVER GIVE UP WHEN YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE RIGHT!



"BUT, ONE NIGHT IN 1919, WHEN GONXHA WAS JUST NINE YEARS OLD, HER FATHER RETURNED FROM A POLITICAL DINNER. HE WASN'T THE SAME MAN WHO'D LEFT HOURS BEFORE...

FATHER, WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU LOOK ILL, MY LOVE.



MOTHER! TH--THERE'S BLOOD COMING FROM HIS MOUTH!

NIKOLA--?

DRONDA... I-I DON'T... FEEL VERY... UUUHHH...



FATHER!



"NIKOLA BOJAXHIU WAS RUSHED TO A HOSPITAL, BUT THE BEST SURGICAL TECHNIQUES OF THE DAY COULDN'T SAVE HIM. IT WAS OVER IN HOURS.

I AM SORRY THE HEMORRHAGING SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY SOME SORT OF POISON.



HE WAS MURDERED! I KNOW HE WAS! SOMEONE WANTED TO SILENCE HIS STRONG VOICE!

IT IS A HORRIBLE TRAGEDY, BUT IT IS PAST. NIKOLA WOULD WANT US TO THINK OF THE FUTURE.

NOW, MORE THAN EVER, WE MUST HOLD OUR FAMILY TOGETHER!



"BUT THAT PROVED TO BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE. NIKOLA'S CONTRACTING PARTNER SOON PLUNDERED THE BUSINESS OF ITS RESOURCES, LEAVING THE BOJAXHIUS WITHOUT INCOME.



N. BOJAXHIU CONSTRUCTION



"THEY WERE FORCED TO SELL MANY OF THE BELONGINGS THAT NIKOLA'S SUCCESS HAD BOUGHT THEM.

MAMA--?

HUSH, CHILD THEY ARE JUST THINGS.



"AND SOON...

WE HAVE NOTHING LEFT BUT THE SHELTER OVER OUR HEADS.

"IT WAS A DARK TIME. FOR SOME, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A HOPELESS TIME...





"BUT PERHAPS EQUAL IN IMPORTANCE WAS A SUBTLE SEED PLANTED IN GONXHA'S FERTILE MIND AT THAT TIME. LIKE MANY VILLAGE GIRLS, SHE BELONGED TO A CHURCH STUDY GROUP CALLED *THE SODALITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY*."



"A FREQUENT ACTIVITY OF THE SODALITY WAS THE READING OF LETTERS FROM JESUIT MISSIONARIES IN BENGAL, INDIA..."

THE FATHER FURTHER WRITES: "THINGS ARE VERY DIFFICULT HERE--IT MAKES EVEN THE STAINCHEST HEART CRY. PEOPLE ARE SO POOR THAT THOUSANDS DIE EACH DAY BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOTHING TO EAT."



THOUSANDS?

EVERY DAY?



"IT WAS A THOUGHT THAT WAS TO HAUNT THE YOUNG GIRL FOR YEARS TO COME. IN FACT--"

"--IT WAS A THOUGHT THAT WOULD NEVER LEAVE HER."



"HER BROTHER, HOWEVER, DID LEAVE. HAVING FOLLOWED THE DIRECTION OF HIS FATHER'S INFLUENCE MORE CLOSELY, LAZAR HAD GONE TO MILITARY SCHOOL, AND WHEN HE CAME OF AGE, HE JOINED THE ALBANIAN ARMY."

NIKOLA WOULD HAVE BEEN SO PROUD!



"WHEN HE LEFT FOR HIS MILITARY DUTY, HE HAD NO IDEA THAT THAT WOULD BE THE LAST TIME HE WOULD BE SEEING 'GONXHA BOJAXHIU'."



"AFTER THAT, LIFE CONTINUED PRETTY MUCH THE SAME IN SKOPJE. GONXHA ATTENDED SCHOOL, HELPED HER MOTHER, WENT TO SODALITY MEETINGS."



"BUT SHE ALSO BEGAN TO FEED HER EVER-GROWING HUNGER FOR INFORMATION ABOUT MISSIONARY SERVICE."

YOU HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM INDIA, FATHER? PLEASE, TELL ME OF YOUR WORK.



"AND ALL THE WHILE, FASCINATED, SHE LISTENED..."

...LEARNED...

...ABSORBED!



"HOW MUCH SHE ABSORBED WAS EVIDENCED SOME TIME LATER, AS A NEW PARISH PRIEST AT A CHURCH MEETING UNROLLED A MAP OF THE WORLD WITH VARIOUS MISSION LOCALITIES INDICATED ON IT..."

CAN ANYONE TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT THE MARKS ON THIS MAP?

YES, FATHER! I CAN!



THIS IS THE MISSION SET UP BY THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN BENGAL. STARTED IN 1925. IT HAS TWO YUGOSLAVIAN MISSIONARIES.

AND THIS ONE IS EVEN OLDER. IT WAS STARTED BY--



"THE NEW PRIEST WAS IMPRESSED. VERY IMPRESSED. ESPECIALLY WHEN GONXHA WENT ON TO NAME AND DESCRIBE EVERYONE OF THE MISSIONS ON THE MAP!"



"AND AFTER THE MEETING..."

SUCH ENTHUSIASM MUST BE ENCOURAGED. I WILL GIVE YOU THE ADDRESS OF THE SISTERS OF LORETO, IN IRELAND. THEY HAVE MISSIONS IN CALCUTTA. PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO CORRESPOND WITH THEM?



"THEN, IN 1925, AT THE AGE OF EIGHTEEN, GONXHA BOGAXHIU MADE THE DECISION THAT WAS TO MOLD THE REMAINDER OF HER LIFE ON EARTH..."

MOTHER, AGA, I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR PERMISSION TO ANSWER GOD'S CALL.

I WANT TO JOIN THE SISTERS OF LORETO-- TO BE A NUN IN INDIA.



"PLEASED WITH HER DECISION, GONXHA JOYFULLY WROTE THE NEWS TO LAZAR, NOW A LIEUTENANT IN THE ALBANIAN ARMY."



"HIS RESPONSE WAS NOT QUITE AS ENTHUSIASTIC..."

"HOW COULD A GIRL LIKE YOU BECOME A NUN? DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOU ARE BURYING YOURSELF?"



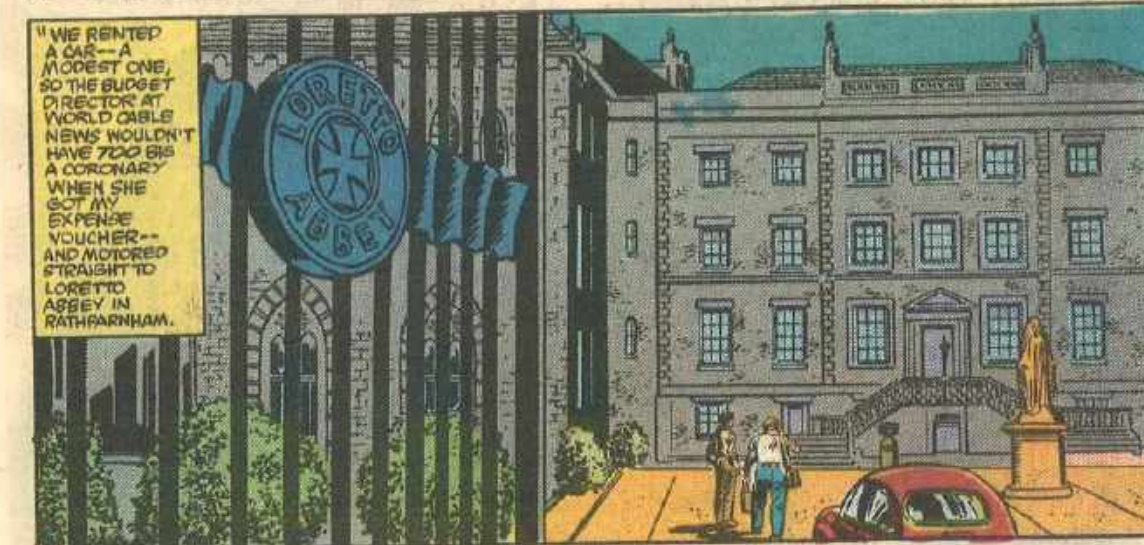
"SHE MUST HAVE SMILED AS SHE PENNED HER REPLY."

DEAR LAZAR... YOU THINK YOU ARE IMPORTANT, AS AN OFFICIAL SERVING THE KING OF TWO MILLION SUBJECTS. WELL, I AM AN OFFICIAL, TOO-- SERVING THE KING OF THE WHOLE WORLD! WHICH ONE OF US IS RIGHT?



"SOON AFTER, IN NOVEMBER OF 1925, SHE BOARDED A TRAIN ON THE FIRST LEG OF HER JOURNEY TO THE BRITISH ISLES--AND TO A LIFE OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE."

"SHE NEVER ONCE LOOKED BACK."





BUT SHE LEARNED FAST, AND SOON SHE HAD BECOME THE TEACHER, READY TO BEGIN THE JOURNEY THAT WOULD TAKE HER THROUGH THE REST OF HER YEARS.



"THERE WASN'T MUCH TO DO ON THE FLIGHT TO INDIA--THE BATTERIES IN MY WALKMAN WERE DEAD, AND I'D ALREADY SEEN THE MOVIE.

"SO I JUST CRANKED BACK THE CUSHIONED SEAT, ORDERED ANOTHER APPLE JUICE, AND THOUGHT I HAD A LOT TO THINK ABOUT...



"BECAUSE I WAS STILL CONVINCED THAT, EVEN THOUGH I COULDN'T PUT MY FINGER ON IT YET, THERE WAS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL ABOUT MOTHER TERESA.

"AND I KNEW AS WE FINALLY DEPLANED AND PLODGED THROUGH CUSTOMS IN CALCUTTA THAT IF A CLUE TO THAT 'SOMETHING' WAS TO BE FOUND--IT WOULD BE FOUND HERE.



"WE WERE PICKED UP AT THE AIRPORT BY A COPYBOY FROM THE LOCAL MCN BUREAU--CALLED HIMSELF A 'GO-FER CHAUFFEUR'--AND WE SPENT MOST OF THE FIRST DAY JUST TOOLING AROUND CALCUTTA.

"THAT PLACE HAD A REAL SENSE OF HISTORY--EVEN MARTY FELT IT.



"WE STOPPED BY TO PICK UP SOME ESTABLISHING SHOTS OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSE OF THE DYING--THE INSTITUTION SET UP BY MOTHER TERESA DECADES AGO TO SHELTER TERMINALLY ILL DESTITUATES. I HAVE TO ADMIT I FELT A LITTLE UNEASY BEING THERE, BUT I GUESS THAT'S NATURAL.



"THOUGH THE NUNS WHO KEPT GOING IN AND OUT DIDN'T SEEM ALL THAT UNCOMFORTABLE. IN FACT, THEY SEEMED DOWNRIGHT HAPPY.

I AM SORRY, BUT WE HAVE NO TIME FOR AN INTERVIEW NOW, PERHAPS LATER.

"THEY EVEN TURNED ME DOWN WITH A SMILE.



"FORTUNATELY, A SHOP OWNER IN A NEIGHBORING BUILDING WAS MORE TALKATIVE.

YES, I OPPOSED THE HOUSE AT FIRST. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT HURT BUSINESS. BUT ONCE I SAW THE GOOD IT WAS DOING, I NOT ONLY ACCEPTED IT, BUT STARTED SUPPORTING IT WITH DONATIONS!



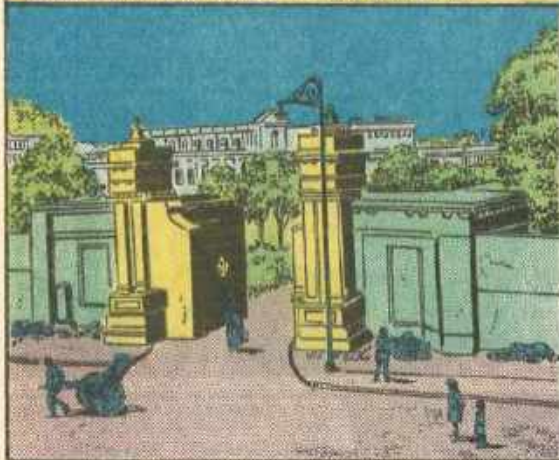
"LATER THAT NIGHT WHILE MARTY SOAKED HIS EVER-COMPLAINING CORNS, I WENT THROUGH MICROFILM FILES, AT THE WORLD CABLE NEWS FIELD OFFICE, SORTING OUT PIECES OF THE PAST, LOOKING FOR THE ELUSIVE CLUE. AND WHEN I'D GOTTEN THINGS INTO SOME SEMBLANCE OF ORDER, THEY SEEMED TO SPELL OUT ONE WORD--

"--HORROR! THAT HAD TO HAVE BEEN WHAT SISTER TERESA FELT WHEN, IN 1941, AFTER SERVING TWO YEARS OF NOVITIATE SERVICE IN DARJEELING, SHE JOURNEYED 250 MILES SOUTH TO WALK THE STREETS OF CALCUTTA FOR THE FIRST TIME.



"THOSE WERE STREETS CLOGGED AND CRAWLING WITH HUMAN DROSS--THE DISEASED, AND THE MAIMED, THE HOMELESS, THE STARVING... THE DYING. BUT, IF SISTER TERESA DID FEEL HORROR AT WHAT SHE SAW THAT DAY--THEN SHE ALSO FELT A GREAT DEAL OF PITY, AND A DEEP COMPASSION.

"HOWEVER, DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE FEELINGS WAS TO TAKE YEARS. FOR HAVING MADE HER FIRST VOWS AS A SISTER OF LORETO ON MAY 24, 1921, TERESA HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO TEACH AT THE ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL IN ENTALLY, A MIDDLE-CLASS SECTION OF CALCUTTA.



"IN HER 17 YEARS AS A TEACHER IN THE ENTALLY COMPOUND, SHE SHOWED GENUINE TALENT AS AN ADMINISTRATOR, SO MUCH SO THAT SHE WAS EVENTUALLY MADE PRINCIPAL OF ST. MARY'S.



"ALL THE WHILE, A DISCONTENT WAS BUILDING...

"I KNOW MY WORK IS IMPORTANT, BUT WHAT AM I DOING TO HELP THE *SUFFERING*, TO EASE THEIR PAIN?"



WELCOME, SISTER.

WE ARE SO HAPPY TO HAVE YOU HERE.



"THOUGH HER TRUE INTERESTS AND ABILITIES LAY IN HER NATURAL FRIENDLINESS AND CONCERN FOR PEOPLE.

SHE HAD A MAGIC TOUCH WITH CHILDREN.

SHE HAS A MAGIC TOUCH WITH EVERYONE.



"I WANTED TO SERVE THE POOR, BUT HERE I AM SERVING THE RICH.

SO MUCH PAPERWORK.

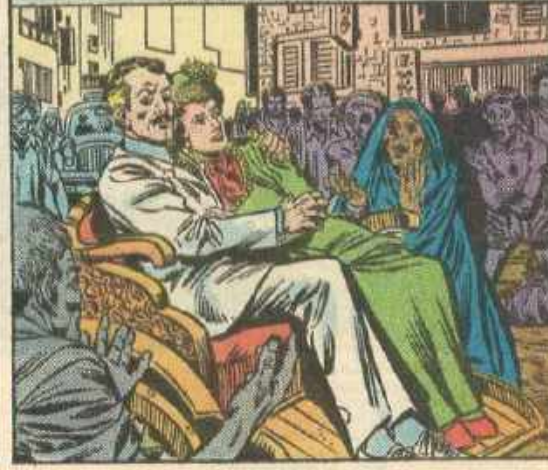
IS THIS REALLY WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO DO?"



"THEN, AS IF THINGS WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH, ALONG CAME *WORLD WAR II*, AND BRITAIN SWEEPED INDIA UP IN THE CONFLICT BY DECLARING WAR ON HER BEHALF.



"BOATS THAT USUALLY BROUGHT RICE FROM PADDY-LANDS TO THE CITIES WERE PRESSSED INTO MILITARY SERVICE, CUTTING ALREADY MEAGER FOOD SUPPLIES AND CAUSING A FAMINE THAT TOOK AS MANY AS FIVE *MILLION* LIVES!



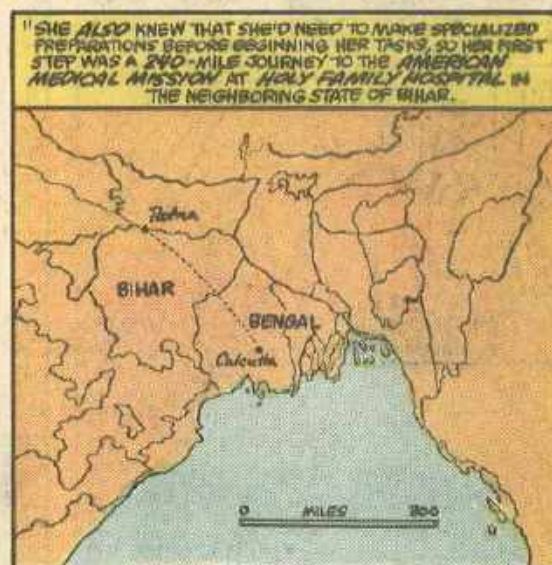
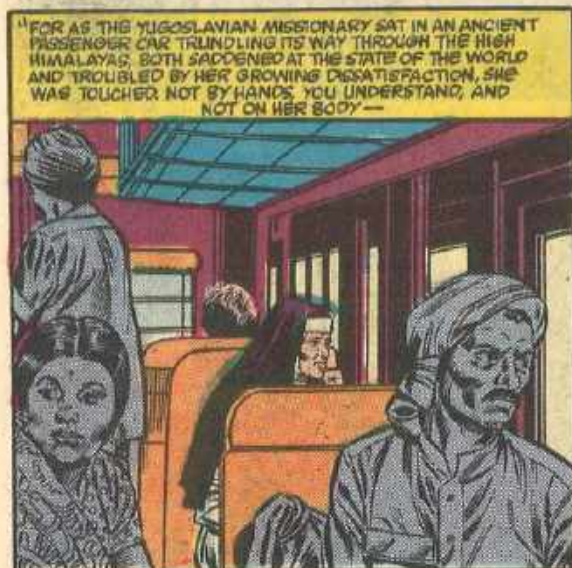
"AND EVEN WHEN THE WAR SLITHERED TO AN END, DISASTERS CONTINUED TO PLAGUE INDIA. IN 1946, *DIRECT ACTION DAY* WAS DECLARED BY THE MUSLIM LEAGUE, PITTING MUSLIMS AGAINST HINDUS IN AN EXPLOSION OF *HIDEOUS* VIOLENCE.



"MEN AND WOMEN ALIKE WERE WHIPPED ON METAL *SHOO LATHIS*, SHOES WERE SET ON FIRE WITH THEIR OWNERS STILL INSIDE, SEWERS FLOODED WITH THE *BOODIES* THAT WERE DUMPED INTO THEM.

"AND BUTTERS THAT HAD ONCE RUN DARK WITH FILTH NOW RAN RED WITH HUMAN BLOOD.





"THERE SHE SPENT THREE MONTHS TAKING CONCENTRATED TRAINING IN MEDICINE, NURSING AND NUTRITION."



"AND IT WAS IN THIS LATTER FIELD THAT A SPOT OF CONFLICT AROSE..."



"IT WAS ONLY AFTER SHE WAS TOLD THAT SUCH A PRACTICE WOULD BE A SERIOUS SIN THAT SHE GAVE IN AND AGREED TO A PROPER DIET. IT'S KINDA NICE TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE WITH SUCH A TRACK RECORD AS TERESA OF CALCUTTA CAN BE AS STUBBORN AS THE REST OF US. SORT OF MAKES HER A LITTLE MORE HUMAN."



"BUT SHE STILL TRIED TO BE AS TRUE AS POSSIBLE TO HER GOAL OF LIVING AND WORKING IN THE SAME CONDITIONS AS THE FOLK SHE WANTED TO HELP. AND THAT MEANT SETTING ASIDE THE RELIGIOUS HABIT SHE'D BEEN WEARING AS A NUN FOR ALMOST TWO DECADES."



"INSTEAD, SHE CLOTHED HERSELF IN THE WHITE COTTON SARI OF POOR INDIAN WOMEN. SHE ONLY ADDED A BLUE BORDER, A SMALL CRUCIFIX HELD ON BY A SAFETY PIN, AND A PAIR OF SANDALS GIVEN TO HER BY THE AMERICAN SISTERS. SOME MIGHT SAY SHE WASN'T EXACTLY DRESSED TO KILL."



"AT ANY RATE, SHE ARRIVED BACK IN CALCUTTA IN DECEMBER OF 1948, STEPPING OFF OF A STEAM-HISSING TRAIN --"



"SHE HAD AN IMPOSSIBLE JOB IN FRONT OF HER. SHE HAD FIVE RUPEES--ABOUT 70¢--TO HER NAME."

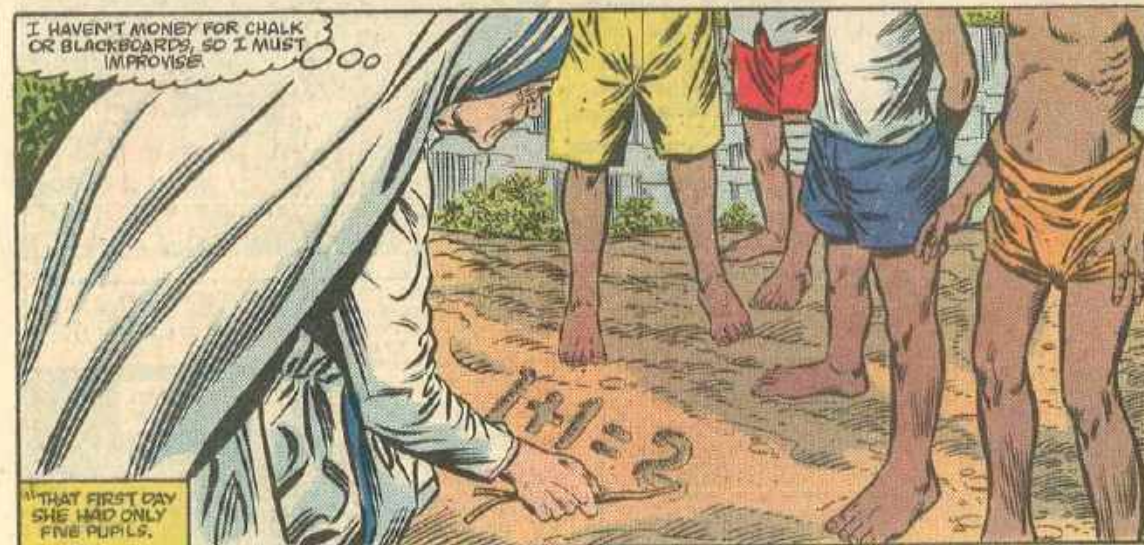


"SHE WAS ALLOWED RESIDENCE IN A HOME FOR THE AGED RUN BY THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR."



"BUT SHE WAS TO SEE LITTLE OF THAT SPARSILY-FURNISHED ROOM IN THE DAYS TO COME. FOR SHE WAS NOT ABOUT TO ASK THE PEOPLE TO COME TO HER. NO..."







"SHE DID— SINCE IT IS ON THE SECOND FLOOR, I WILL CALL IT THE UPPER ROOM."

"— AND THAT BECAME THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY. THE FORMAL NAME OF THE ORDER MOTHER TERESA FOUNDED, ONE THAT WAS APPROVED IN 1950 BY ARCHBISHOP FURNER TO WORK IN THE CALCUTTA ARCHDIOCESE."



"THEN, IN OCTOBER OF 1952, AS MOTHER TERESA MET WITH A CHRONICALLY-ILL BELGIAN WOMAN IN THE PATNA HOSPITAL..."

"WHAT YOU CAN DO FROM YOUR BED OF PAIN HAS MORE VALUE THAN WHAT I DO WITH THE POOR. OFFER YOUR SUFFERING FOR MY SISTERS AND ME."

"THE WOMAN EVENTUALLY MOVED BACK TO EUROPE, BUT MOTHER TERESA KEPT IN TOUCH WITH HER, SUGGESTING THAT SHE BECOME A SPIRITUAL MEMBER OF THE MISSIONARIES BY OFFERING HER PAIN AND PRAYERS FOR THEM."



"THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE SICK AND SUFFERING CO-WORKERS, AN ORGANIZATION THAT BECAME PART OF THE CO-WORKERS CONSTITUTION IN 1969."

"BUT, BACK IN '52, THOUGH HER SCHOOL WAS FLOURISHING, MOTHER TERESA STILL WANTED TO BRING HELP TO THE POOR. AND LATER THAT SAME YEAR, SHE TOOK THE NEXT STEP..."



"IMPOSSIBLE! IF SHE HAS NO MONEY TO PAY, WE CANNOT ADMIT THIS WOMAN."

HOSPITAL

"BUT MOTHER TERESA REFUSED TO MOVE UNTIL THEY DID, AND, EVENTUALLY..."



"OH, VERY WELL. BRING HER IN."



"BUT THAT WASN'T THE END OF THE INCIDENT. MOTHER TERESA WENT ON TO THE CALCUTTA HEALTH DEPARTMENT WHERE, AFTER EXPLAINING THE PLIGHT OF SO MANY PEOPLE DYING IN THE STREETS..."

"I AM SORRY, THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO."

"BUT THERE IS SOMETHING I CAN DO! JUST GIVE ME A BUILDING!"



"AS IT HAPPENED, DR. ANAND, THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL, WAS ABLE TO DO JUST THAT. HE OFFERED HER AN EMPTY PILGRIMS' HOSTEL IN A TEMPLE BUILT TO WORSHIP THE INDIAN GODDESS, KALI."

"MOTHER TERESA HAPPILY ACCEPTED."



"ABOVE ALL, THE DYING HAVE TO BE TOUCHED, TO BE HELD. THEY HAVE TO FEEL THAT, EVEN IF ONLY AT THE END, SOMEONE LOVES THEM."

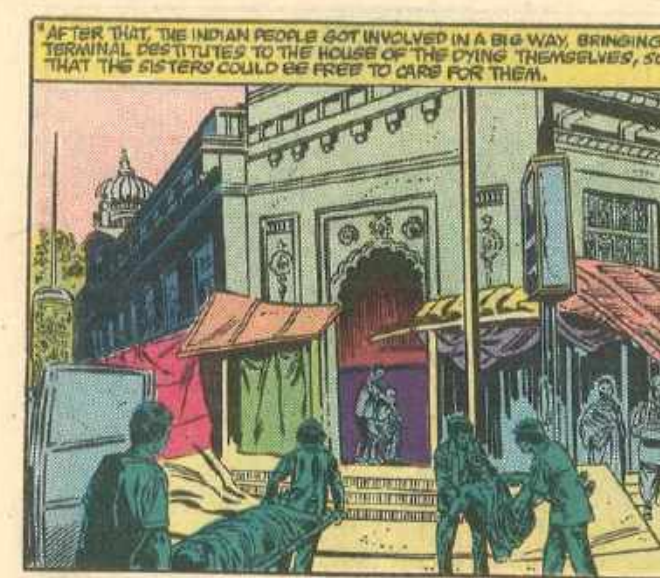
GOD LOVES THEM.



"WE WILL CALL THIS PLACE NIRMAL HARTS-- IMMACULATE HEART."

"WITHIN 24 HOURS, MOTHER TERESA AND HER FOLLOWERS HAD BEGUN MOVING PATIENTS INTO WHAT WAS TO BE THE FIRST HOUSE OF THE DESTITUTE DYING."

"SHE FILLED IT WITH THE REFLECTED HUMANITY THAT WAS UNDISCOVERED TO THE CITY'S STREETS AND BUTTERFLY MAKING FLIRTS THAT THEY GOT THE CARE AND LOVE THEY SO DESPERATELY NEEDED."







"BUT MINOR SETBACKS WERE TAKEN IN STRIDE, AS THE MAIN CRUSADE WENT ON."

"THE MISSIONARIES ESTABLISHED A LEPROSY PAY, AND A LEPROSY FUND, WITH COLLECTION BOXES SPORTING A SLOGAN THAT'D MAKE MADISON AVENUE PROUD..."

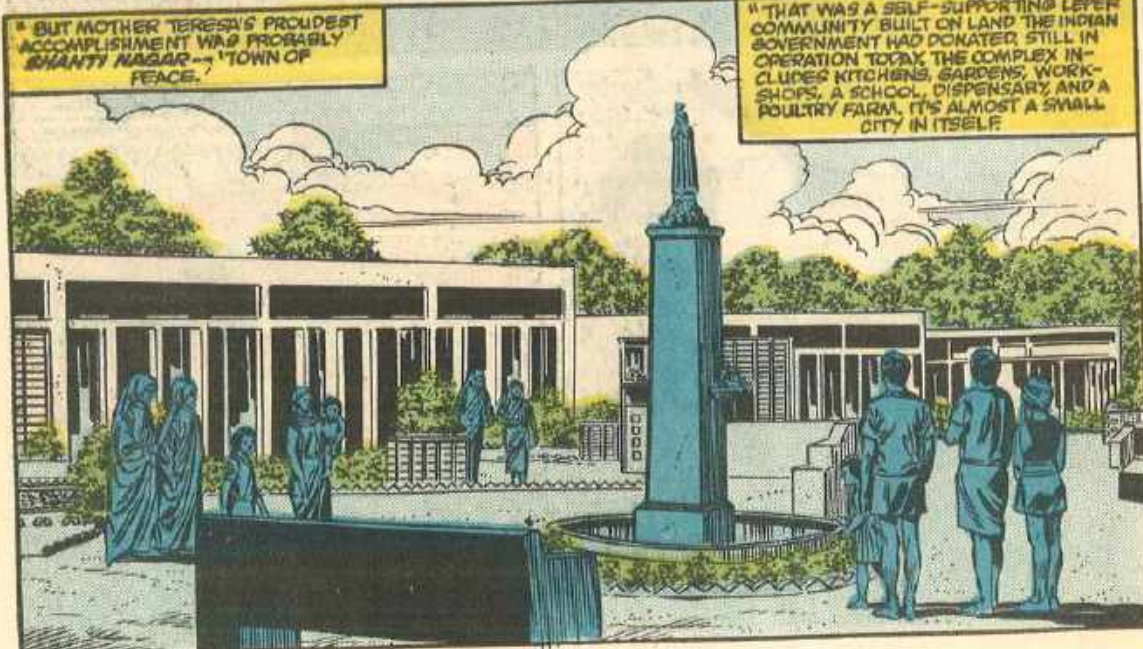
TOUCH THE LEPER
WITH YOUR
COMPASSION!
MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY

"U.S. CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES DONATED A MOBILE CLINIC-- WHICH WAS USED TO ORGANIZE OPEN-AIR TREATMENT DAYS AT VARIOUS LOCALS SO THAT MANY LEPERS COULD AT LEAST BE RENDERED NON-INFECTIOUS."



"BUT MOTHER TERESA'S PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS PROBABLY SHANTI NAGAR-- 'TOWN OF PEACE.'"

"THAT WAS A SELF-SUPPORTING LEPER COMMUNITY BUILT ON LAND THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT HAD DONATED. STILL IN OPERATION TODAY, THE COMPLEX INCLUDES KITCHENS, GARDENS, WORKSHOPS, A SCHOOL, DISPENSARY, AND A POULTRY FARM. IT'S ALMOST A SMALL CITY IN ITSELF."



"IN SHANTI NAGAR, LEPERS WHOSE DISEASE HAS BEEN ARRESTED CAN GET TRAINING IN LIGHT INDUSTRIES, SO THAT THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO RETURN AND FUNCTION IN NORMAL SOCIETY."



EVEN FOR THOSE WHO MAY NEVER LEAVE, SHANTI NAGAR OFFERS A HAVEN, A CHANCE AT HAPPINESS, A PLACE TO LIVE WHAT TIME THEY HAVE LEFT IN DIGNITY.



"THE GOOD WORK THE MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY WERE DOING PAID OFF IN OTHER WAYS, TOO. AFTER TEN YEARS, THEY PASSED THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD REQUIRED BY CANON LAW, AND WERE GIVEN PERMISSION TO OPERATE OUTSIDE THEIR DIOCESE."

"INVITATIONS TO ESTABLISH MISSIONS IN MANY OTHER PARTS OF INDIA WERE QUICKLY ANSWERED."



"AND EVERY ONE OF THEM WAS BASED ON MOTHER TERESA'S SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY..."

EACH PERSON, NO MATTER HOW TATTERED OR DISEASED, IS ONLY GOD IN A DISTRESSING DISGUISE.

TO SHOW OUR LOVE FOR HIM, WE MUST SHOW THAT SAME GENTLE CARING FOR EVERY INDIVIDUAL.

"SO I HAD MY CLUE--SOMETHING ABOUT MOTHER TERESA'S ATTITUDE. SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY SHE SAW PEOPLE, WAS WHAT MADE HER SO SPECIAL."

"BUT I WAS OUT OF RESEARCH MATERIAL. MOTHER TERESA BEGAN TRAVELING OUTSIDE INDIA IN 1960, AND HAD BECOME SORT OF A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD."



"AND FOR THAT PERIOD IN HER LIFE I KNEW I'D NEED MORE THAN LOCAL NEWS ARTICLES..."

"TIME'S FLYING, MARTY-- AND SO ARE WE! UP AND AT 'EM, COMFADRE!"

"NO WAY, NICHOLAS. EVERY MAN'S GOT A LIMIT-- AND I'VE REACHED MINE."



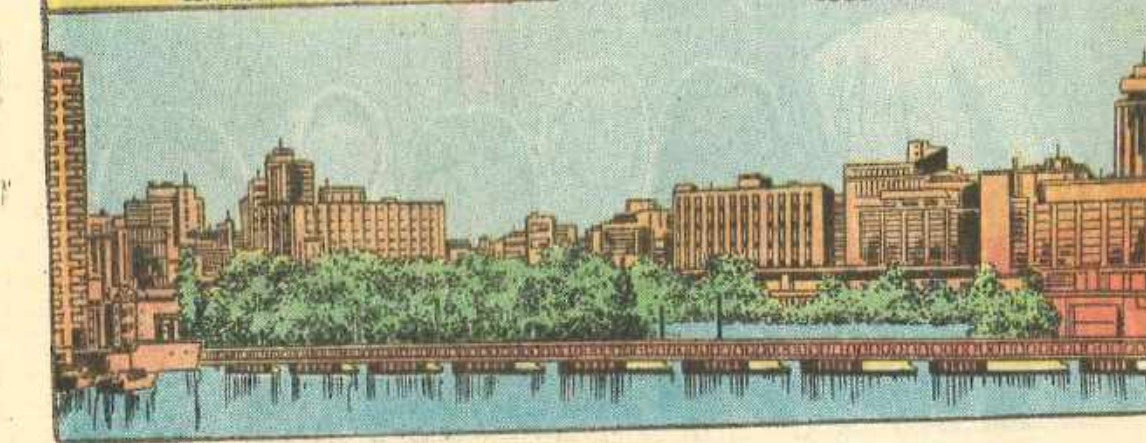
"YOU'D NEED A DOZEN STEVEDORES WITH CROWBARS TO PRY ME OUTTA THIS CHAIR!"

"OKAY, BUDDY, SUI YOURSELF. I'LL SEND YOU A POSTCARD WHEN I GET--"



"I'D NEVER ADMIT IT TO MARTY, BUT I WAS GETTING A LITTLE TIRED OF HOPPING FROM CONTINENT TO CONTINENT MYSELF."

"AND SO A FEW HOURS LATER, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS WRAPPED IN HUMIDITY SO THICK YOU COULD'VE CUT A SLICE FOR LUNCH, MIAM! LOOKED AWFUL GOOD TO ME!"



"I STOPPED BY MY BUNGALOW IN CORAL GABLES JUST LONG ENOUGH FOR A SHOWER AND A CHANGE OF CLOTHES. I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT I'D LEARNED WHEN..."

"SAY, MISTER, COULD YOU SPARE FOUR BITS FOR A CUP OF COFFEE?"

"SORRY, ACE, I GAVE AT THE LAST CORNER--"



"HERE, PAL, HERE'S A TWENTY-- HAVE YOURSELF A STEAK WITH THAT COFFEE."

"GOSH, MISTER, TH-TH-THANKS!"



"YEAH, I KNOW IT WAS A SMALL GESTURE NOT EXACTLY LIKE STARTING UP A LEPER CLINIC, BUT STILL..."



"MARTY WAS GOING THROUGH THE FOOTAGE HE'D SHOT ON OUR TRIP WHEN I GOT TO THE CONTROL BOOTH."



"I'D CHECKED OUT AN ARMALOAD OF TAPES FROM WGN'S TAPES LIBRARY, AND I SET ABOUT BONING UP ON MOTHER TERESA'S MORE RECENT LIFE."



"HER FIRST JOURNEY OUTSIDE OF INDIA IN OVER THREE DECADES--ASIDE FROM A QUICK JUMP TO IRELAND TO TAKE HER INITIAL VOWS--WAS A TRIP TO, OF ALL PLACES, LAS VEGAS."



"ON HER WAY BACK TO INDIA THAT SAME YEAR, 1960, MOTHER TERESA MADE SEVERAL IMPORTANT STOPS. ONE WAS A JOYOUS REUNION WITH HER BROTHER, LAZAR, WHOM SHE HADN'T SEEN SINCE 1928."



"BUT IT WAS THE LAST STOPOVER THAT HAD MORE WIDE-RANGING RESULTS."



"SHE'D BEEN INVITED TO SPEAK AT A CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN..."



"ANOTHER WAS A LOT MORE SOBERING--IT WAS A SIDE TRIP WITH EILEEN EGAN OF NEW YORK'S CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES TO THE NAZI PRISON CAMP AT BACHAL."



"THERE, SHE PRESENTED A PETITION..."



"BUT, JUST LIKE THE TIME SHE'D ASKED PERMISSION TO LIVE OUTSIDE OF A CONVENT, THE WHEELS OF CANON LAW MOVED SLOWLY."



"SHE ALSO ORGANIZED A GROUP CALLED THE CO-WORKERS, HEADED BY HER OLD PAL, ANN BLAISE. THOUGH THE GROUP WASN'T FORMALLY APPROVED BY THE CHURCH FOR SEVERAL YEARS, THE CO-WORKERS WERE MADE UP OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN OF ALL RELIGIONS WHO DEDICATED THEMSELVES TO THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE EXEMPLIFIED BY THE WORK OF MOTHER TERESA."



"OF COURSE, THE LADY THEY ALL LOOKED UP TO WASN'T IDLE HERSELF DURING THIS TIME. NO, SHE TRAVELED QUITE A BIT, AND AS ECONOMICALLY AS POSSIBLE..."



"IT WAS A PROBLEM THAT WAS SOLVED IN A UNIQUE WAY AT THE OPENING OF A NEW CHILDREN'S HOME IN DELHI, AN EVENT ATTENDED BY NONE OTHER THAN PRIME MINISTER NEHRU."



"IT WAS AT ABOUT THIS TIME THAT POPE PAUL VI VISITED INDIA, AND AS HE ADDRESSED A CHEERING CROWD IN BOMBAY...

MOTHER TERESA HAS A UNIVERSAL MISSION OF LOVE. TO HELP HER, I AM LEAVING HER THE LIMOUSINE GIVEN TO ME FOR MY USE HERE.



"BUT, WHEN THE SURPRISE GIFT WAS PRESENTED...

WHEN WILL YOU USE THE LIMOUSINE, MOTHER?

NEVER. I ALWAYS TRAVEL LOWEST CLASS. BUT... HMMM...

I KNOW! WE WILL RAFFLE IT OFF TO FUND OUR NEW LEPROS RETREAT!



"AND SHE DID A FITTING WAY TO PASS THE TIME WHILE WAITING FOR WORD ON HER PETITION FROM THE VATICAN.

"THEN, IN 1965, THE POPE GRANTED HIS RECOGNITION --



"--AND THE MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY SPREAD OVER THE WORLD LIKE A LOVING BLANKET. THE FIRST NON-INDIAN FOUNDATION WAS ESTABLISHED IN CARACAS, VENEZUELA ON JULY 26, 1965. IT WAS FOLLOWED BY A MISSION CENTER IN THE SLUMS OF ROME, OPENED AT THE SPECIAL REQUEST OF THE HOLY FATHER HIMSELF.

"EVEN IN THE GOOD OLD UNITED STATES--SPECIFICALLY, THE BRONX IN NEW YORK--THE SISTERS SET UP FOUNDATIONS TO HELP THE POOR AND NEEDY, THE SICK AND THE FRIGHTENED.



"AND THE SISTERS THEMSELVES WERE OFTEN HELPED IN WAYS THAT ONE MIGHT CALL... WELL... MIRACULOUS.

I'M SORRY, MOTHER. SUPPLIES HAVE RUN OUT. WE HAVE NO FOOD TODAY OR TOMORROW.

BUT WE HAVE 7,000 POOR AND NEEDY PEOPLE TO FEED!



"HOWEVER, BY 9:00 THAT SAME MORNING...

MOTHER! THE GOVERNMENT HAS CLOSED ALL SCHOOLS FOR TODAY! NO ONE KNOWS WHY, BUT THEY ARE SENDING ALL OF THE SCHOOL BREAD TO US!

THEN THE POOR WILL EAT--MORE BREAD THAN THEY'VE EVER EATEN IN THEIR LIVES!



"AND, ON ANOTHER OCCASION...

THAT'S RIGHT, MOTHER, WE NEED 50,000 RUPEES FOR A CHILDREN'S HOME HERE IN AGRA.

I REGRET, SISTER, BUT WE DO NOT HAVE 50,000 RUPEES.



"THEN, LATER THAT DAY...

MOTHER! A NEWSPAPER JUST CALLED! YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE HASSARD AWARD FROM THE PHILIPPINES!

AND HOW MUCH IS THE AWARD?



ABOUT 50,000 RUPEES!

AH! GOD MUST WANT A CHILDREN'S HOME IN AGRA.





"AND SOMEHOW, I KNEW WHERE I'D FIND THAT BLUE. JUST AS I KNEW I'D HAVE TO GO AFTER IT --"



"--ALONE!"



"BY THE TIME I GOT BACK TO CALCUTTA, I WAS DETERMINED TO TALK TO MOTHER TERESA IN PERSON, AND I HAD MY ARGUMENTS READY."



"AT FIRST, THE SISTERS WERE RELUCTANT, KNOWING HOW BUSY THEIR LEADER WAS. BUT FINALLY, I CONVINCED THEM THAT I WASN'T THERE IN MY PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY, AND MOMENTS LATER..."



"I'VE STUDIED YOUR LIFE, MOTHER. I KNOW HOW MUCH GOOD YOU'VE DONE. BUT WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS... WHY? I MEAN, WHAT MAKES YOU SO SPECIAL THAT YOU CAN DO SO MUCH?"

"I AM BUT GOD'S PENCIL, WITH WHICH TO WRITE WHAT HE LIKES. THE LOVE I GIVE IS GOD'S LOVE, BECAUSE THE WORK I DO IS GOD'S WORK. PERHAPS YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT BETTER, MR. BUGATTI --"



"--IF YOU WERE TO SHARE THAT WORK."

"WHEN I REALIZED WHAT SHE MEANT, I FELT MY THROAT TIGHTEN. BUT I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO..."

"GIVING TWENTY RUPEES TO A STREET BEGGAR IS ONE THING -- BUT WALKING INTO A ROOMFUL OF DEAD AND DYING PEOPLE IS SOMETHING ELSE."



"I DON'T KNOW WHICH I FELT MOST STRONGLY WITH THOSE FIRST STEPS: FEAR, DISGUST... OR MAYBE BECAUSE OF THE OTHER TWO: SHAME."

"THEN ONE OF THEM TOUCHED ME -- A WOMAN WITH SORES ON HER FACE AND HANDS. BARELY CONSCIOUS. MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO PULL AWAY."



"BUT THEN I SAW HER EYES. THEY WERE WARM EYES, GENTLE AND WIDE, LOOKING AT ME WITH A GRATITUDE THAT REACHED LIKE SOFT FINGERS DOWN TO MY VERY SOUL."



"AND WHEN SHE SMILED AT ME, WEAKLY... I FOUND MYSELF SMILING BACK."

"AND THAT'S WHEN IT ALL CAME TOGETHER, ALL THE RECES: THE EARLY LIFE OF ANOPIE, THE RELIGIOUS TRAINING IN IRELAND, THE INSPIRATION, THE SCHOOLS, THE CLINICS, THE AWARDS."



"THEY ALL STEMMED FROM ONE TRAIT, ONE CHARACTERISTIC."

"IT'S A TRAIT THAT ALL OF US POSSESS, BUT ONE WE USUALLY TRAP BEHIND WALLS OF SELFISHNESS, CLOAK IN MASKS OF EXCUSES. AND WITH A JOLT I REALIZED THAT WE COULD ALL BE LIKE MOTHER TERESA, IF WE'D ONLY LET OURSELVES."



"BECAUSE WHEN THE BOTTOM LINE IS DRAWN, THE THING THAT MAKES MOTHER TERESA SPECIAL IS QUITE SIMPLE..."



PHOTOS: WIDE WORLD PHOTOS



