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Reason and Passion  
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### Hempkill

'Tis only now, in the Year of Our Lord 1841, that I feel it is safe to publish the following epistles. I recieved these communications from my brother, Hempkill P. Sandusky, during the Republican troubles in France near the close of the last century. They were all undated, and no direct indication of location was given, probably both because my brother was always conscious of censorship, as well as for other reasons which shall become self-evident. They arrived in packets addressed by another hand, always marked from cities in Europe outside of France.

As I am in failing health, and do not believe I shall outlast the year, I am releasing for publication these letters. I fear no reprisal for this action as I shall in all probability have passed away before the appropriate individuals feel a need to silence me. I have taken some liberties with both the text itself, and the translation of certain passages from the various foreign languages in which they were written. Where it is relevant, I have indicated the original language of the passage in question.

"February;

"My dearest Theodore;

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"My sojourn near Toulouse having been completed and certain <<affaires>> concluded, I am planning to <<faire du ski>> for a while in the Pyrenees, then spend the spring and part of the summer at Biarritz. First, however, I shall be traveling to the valley of the Loire, to a certain chateau where I have been informed an inheritance of a collateral branch of mater's family lies unclaimed. I am as yet uninformed as to the nature of this inheritance, but rumour has assured me of the worth of the rather lengthy detour. Someone comes, more later.

"-I have been trying to avoid local politics, but today they were thrust into my face. At dusk, our stage was pursued by a raiding party of some sort, which we escaped by outrunning them until we reached St. Cere, near the border of the <<departement de Limousin>>.

"We were driving along an old Roman road, taking a shortcut known by our driver, and agreed to by the gentlemen in the van, as there were no ladies present. As the sun set, some sort of flare rose before us. We were directing our attention to this phenomenon when a lit ~~lit~~ torch struck our coach, causing the canvas rain covering on our luggage to catch alight. Our valiant footman attempted to extinguish the conflagration, but was himself struck by a fiery missile and fell to the road. As we were in full flight and under attack, we could not stop to effect a rescue, so I pulled out my pistol and climbed atop the the coach to battle the flames and the bandits.

"While I was atop the coach a <<filum>> was dropped from a

tree onto my person. It pierced my clothing, but missed my tender most personal parts by a fraction of an inch. I caught a glimpse of he who threw the antique weapon. He appeared to be dressed in armor! No one else claimed to have gained a view of the attackers, and the <<Pilum>> fell from the coach in our flight to St. Cere, so I said nothing of him and merely mentioned that the gaping hole in my drawers, which caused the good wives of St. Cere no little embarrassment, was caused by my leaping out of the door onto the roof while the coach traveled at such extreme speed.

"We speculated that the raiders were Republicans with designs on our purses. As for myself, I have employed several maidens to draw me a bath and effect repairs to my trousers while I was being washed and shaved, and so now write to you at my leisure."

The next passage was originally in German.

"Theodore-

"I had a very strange dream last night. A soldier in armor, Roman armor, entered my room covered with St. Elmo's fire, and commanded me to leave Gaul if I valued my life. I sat up, and punctuating my comments with gestures of my pistol, demanded an explanation of his threat. He planted his <<Pilum>> in the mattress in an extremely familiar place, causing further rips and tears in my wardrobe in a previously used location, and informed me that if I did not leave Gaul on my feet I would leave on my back, in a comfortably upholstered pine box. I discharged my

pistol in his general direction, hitting the kerosene lamp and causing a fire. I then exited the room via the window, arriving at the courtyard some two stories below atop a very surprised ostler who has since retired, and now stays away from walls and tall buildings. After the fire was extinguished we could find no trace of the soldier or his <<Pilum>>. I shall continue to the Loire, but am beginning to doubt the wisdom of that course.

"April-

"Theodore-

"I have twenty words; please contact Roset/Toulouse. My Tours have fallen foul. Mother Church protects all!"

I relayed this message, cryptic as it was, to a M. Roset, my brother's business partner in Toulouse. He informed me that my brother had probably fallen foul of a rival business concern. I eventually received another packet

"The Loire is beautiful during summer. I shall be able to walk unassisted by fall. The doctors say my legs are healing well, and that I am lucky that they did not break my kneecaps as well. The <<ancien regime>> is reeling, but that is in Paris. Thank you for relaying my message to Roset. I was rescued from my imprisonment in a dungeon beneath a cathedral in Tours. They smashed both my legs, though. I don't even know who. I am practicing shooting, though, should I ever have the good fortune to

encounter them again. I have found three <<Piles>> around the estate in the last week. This estate I am living in and on is our inheritance.

"Theodore-

"The soldier was back. I very carefully shot him six times, until I ran out of pistols, but to no avail. He thrust his <<Pilum>> into the fold below my tender crotch and told me I had no more chances, that I must leave Gaul immediately. For an answer, I threw the chamber pot at him. This surprised him. He screamed and ran through the door without the benefit of knob or hinges, knocking it flat. The servants very easily traced his path through the house and out the front entrance, which was also rendered open in a less than civilized fashion. It was as if a giant windstorm or an engine of war had passed.

"By the wayside, I also discharged some grape at royal tax collectors.

"Sept-

"Theodore-

"I have seen Romans everywhere. The servants told me a story about this chateau, our inheritance. The West Wing is of Roman construction, and juts out into the Loire. This was the barracks of a Roman century of footsoldiers, commanded by a German centurion named Sisfried Allectus. They bore the standard for their legion, either the 66th Roman Guards in exile or one of several frontier regiments, no one knows which. The entire century left

on alert once while in parade dress, and took the standard with them. They never returned. <sup>The standard was lost</sup> I think they are back, and for some reason do not want me in their fortress."

The next passage was written in Turkic, <sup>Turkic</sup> a language which I was unaware my brother knew. I think he wrote it thusly to avoid censorship. I had to send it to Yale for translation.

"Last night, I was attacked here in the chateau. I awoke at midnight, to a cloudy sky and therefore nearly absolute blackness. I was about to resume my slumbers when I noticed a flame on the front lawn. I hobbled downstairs to the front hall, awakened my manservant, and took a spyglass to see who it might be. I saw a torch, and by its light a <<Pilum>> bobbed, with other torches and shadows following. Immediately I retreated to the thirty-six pound muzzle loader recently installed in the foyer, and with the aid of my manservant, I fired it at the centurions. As I had neglected to open the door, having peered at the intruders through a window, this caused not inconsiderable damage to the already <sup>ab</sup> ~~ruined~~ front hall of the building. We however reloaded, and fired again. We then lobbed lead and insults at the retreating soldiers with few dozen or so pistols and muskets I had stationed in the parlor for that purpose.

"Theodore-

"A most unfortunate incident has occurred. A group of tax collectors and soldiers was feloniously assaulted on an estate in the area last week. Apparently they were fired on by cannon and

a large number of infantry quartered in the house. I had not realized that there were republicans ensconced in the area.

"I learned this intelligence from a marshal who came to assess our estate. He remarked on the damage to the face of the building. He has requested permission to search the premises for the triple purpose of establishing our inheritance tax, seeking out Republican infiltrators, and discovering the utility of our chateau as quarters for a company of Royal soldiers. I have offered him my full assistance."

The next passage is translated from German

"Two weeks ago they searched the house. The marshal found a golden eagle with a tattered flag hidden under the footings of the West Wing. He arrested me for concealment with intent of evasion of taxable goods of exceptional value, as well as for supporting Republican militia, as he also found some armor in a closet. I do not know what I am to do.

"They also arrested and hanged three thieves caught sneaking about on the estate dressed in Roman armor. The scoundrels admitted to knowing of the existence of the standard, but said that they were not aware of its location, and were still searching for it. They admitted to attacking my coach in the south, and frequenting my estate, but never entered my chambers, either on the estate or in any hostelry I patronized.

"I shall soon be dead I fear. They want me to cease writings."

The following letter was in French, in another hand.

"M. T.K. Sandusky:

"Your brother was assassinated in his cell last night, probably by Republican infiltrators. We assure you that they will be speedily brought to justice. He was found with several large stab wounds from a heavy instrument in his crotch and groin. His last words were, "Yes, I know, I was warned, told to leave Gaul. Well, Sisfried, it is done!" His personal effects shall be forwarded immediately.

"Cap. M. LeBrec,

"Warden, Cronin Prison, Tours"

I never recieved my brother's effects, and have always been afraid to show even these letters. I have no interest in wealth, but have always been curious as to the fate of that historical curio, the standard. Word reached me in 1821 that the chateau was razed by artillery during the Napoleonic wars, so no clues lie there. As I believe I am the legal owner<sup>of the curio</sup>, if it is recovered and an effort made to return to the rightful owner, I will it to the people of Sisfried Allectus, the German, specifically the king of Saxony, for use in his efforts towards unification.

Editors note: Theodore K. Sandusky was assassinated three days after the manuscript was submitted to my keeping. He died of bleeding from heavy wounds in the groin and crotch. May Our Lord keep his soul.