

another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory



Estorya sa Panganod by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | APR 2018

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by Mike Bozart
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It was 4:04 in the afternoon on a warm, tropically humid, breezy Sunday in mid-April (the 15th, 2018). I was sitting on our slightly slanted, basic-cinder-pavers-mortared-together-by-a-previous-owner back patio in sylvan, middle-east Charlotte (NC, USA), sipping on a KBC (Kennebunkport Brewing Company) porter beer while watching the billowing, hundred-shades-of-gray, cumulonimbus clouds advancing from the west. A line of strong storms associated with a potent cold front was now crossing the Catawba River. Two-inch-diameter (5 cm) hailstones had just been reported in Gaston County. Heavy weather was imminent in the city named after the Holy Roman Empire-born (now Germany) British queen (wife of King George III).

And just then, I heard the sound of an empty trash bin toppling next door. As I watched the towering, verdantly budding, tree limbs whipping about in front of the dynamic lead-colored backdrop, I mused. *So glad that I left the [Green Mountain RV Resort] campground [just north of Lenoir, NC] when I did. Would be quite unnerving to be driving right now on Interstate 85 through this gusty column. Or, that column. The ghosts of [Peter] Ott's Austrian column. Ott's odd lot. Zeus nearly forgot. Which sabre-wielding dragoon was the 1,800th to fall in that Marengo farm in 1800? Was no. 818 the one with the melancholic memo in his button-slashed-off pocket. Blood, bones and guts strewn all over that picturesque bowl of a valley in glorious Italia settentrionale. [northern Italy] Those commoners' dreams ignobly obliterated. 'You should have headed for the forest with crazy Leopold, Klaus.' Ah, that cloud kind of looks like Peter himself. And, there's [Michael von] Melas patting him on the shoulder. 'This aint Transylvania' he silently thinks. And, as if on cue, his cloud quickly dissipates. No one seems anxious anymore. Now, there's the bust of Napoleon himself. But, he's not genuinely happy. It was a narrow victory. A lucky one, perhaps, as well. Certainly on the fortunate side of fate. Looks like the famous Corsican has wafted into the torso of [Louis] Desaix. 'I knew that he'd be the death of me,' he solemnly thinks, and then smiles. His grin lengthens. And arches into another scene. A mound. Then a face of an infantryman in the next overtaking cloud. Is he Austrian or French? Hard to say. Such a stoic face. 'This was my kismet,' he seems to think. Did any of them know that there would be a pizza restaurant right there 218 years later? Would they have liked the taste of the cheese?*

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