He took a moment to select the music.

Not Standelman.

As angry as she was, the harpsichord was music to shave by.

The favorite of the empire, Wagner, was what this evening needed.

He held the phonograph record with manicured fingers by the edge and set it on the spindle. Scratchy static as the needle sought out the beginning and The Flight of the Valkyries struck every corner of the small room.

The housekeeper was cooling in the bathtub wrapped in plastic.

Sooner or later they all snooped.

The chloroform wafted from behind the shower curtain and he closed the door. He waved a scissored lock of her hair over the flame of a pyramid candle. The biting odor brought back rich memories to accompany Wagner’s mordant concerto. He hadn’t caught her stealing, just found a fingerprint on the hasp of the rosewood case in the dresser drawer.

But a smudge was enough.

He took the case to an overstuffed chair centered in the room and spread the contents on the coffee table. This ritual was important to him and he wanted to again feel those days when he had power, when men, all men feared him.

He kicked off his work shoes and put on house slippers.

Corinthian leather well broken in hugged his gnarled feet.

He struggled a little with the film to thread it into the reel. His eyesight had suffered over the years and he squinted to line up the holes. The viewing made ready, he sat in the chair and leaned forward to assemble the syringe and needle.

The glass tube rolled in his hands and he clutched it before it dropped. The liquid it would inject was too precious to trust to the plastic disposable junk sold in 100 packs at the Jew pharmacy.

This syringe had come with him.

He slid the needle into a bottle of sterile water and drew it to the quarter. Only the amateurs tapped the glass or squirted it from the tip to check for air.

He was a doctor, he had done this a million times.

A million injections of death.

But to him this would be the injection of life…immortality. He looked at his hands covered with liver spots. Not perfect immortality, but it would last until he found them.

A tiny vial, nested in red velvet, was gently lifted from the box and the needle punctured the seal to draw the sacred contents.

Two drops mixed with the sterile water.

He spun the syringe with a practiced motion before lining it up in the row of scars on his arm. If it had been a flawless serum he would never have known another scar, not a single blemish, for the rest of eternity.

He pushed the plunger and clenched his teeth for the jarring transformation. The spots on his hands sank back into the flesh and the skin tightened across his knuckles.

He felt Death cringe and turn tail.

He had given in to technology with a remote for dimming the lights. In the darkened room the projector illuminated the blank wall. The ratcheting reels finally wound to the scene played out over seventy years ago. The grainy black and white images flickering in front of him were of two children laid on tables in an operating room.

He remembered the room in scrubbed colors, whitewashed walls and red concrete floors. The tables were gray marble with drainage troughs cut into the edges. A man in a lab coat gave them both injections, ignoring the pleading looks they gave him.

A slight tremble and as one they both stiffened and died.

Just like the hundreds before them.

He leaned forward to watch.

To see what only he knew.

The boy’s forearm gave the first indication that he had been right. That immortality was in front of them all the time.

The child’s forearm had the tattoo given to every person entering the gates of Auschwitz. The smooth adolescent skin rebelled against the ink inside and forced it to the surface where the breeze from the overhead circulating fan blew it off. The man in the lab coat was still making notations of the twin’s death as they accepted the life inherent in their bodies. He rose from his chair in the jumpy stuttering of the film and rang for the Sonderkommando to remove the bodies.

The man then stood next to the body of the girl and moved her thin legs apart. His back was to the camera, but the impact was visible through his coat. A spreading red stain, black on the colorless film, darkened the back of the lab coat from the blood rupturing from his anus.

He dropped to the ground and she sat up.

She showed her hand covered in blood to the camera and mouthed a word slowly, her dark eyes meaning malice to all save her brother on the adjacent table.

Travail.

Her brother’s eyes were open and in turn looked to the lens. His message was also given in one word.

Judgment.

The reel ran out and the end of the film flapped free as it rotated against the projector.

The changing man stared at the white square on the wall.

The world believed that he was dead, stupidly drowned in the Argentine surf.

 They were wrong.

He enjoyed the news of his death because that meant that the world have given up looking for him.

He breathed deep with invigorated lungs. The doctor opened another case and took out his gleaming surgical tools. He always hired the smallest indigent women as housekeepers because they were much easier to split into manageable pieces and nobody gave a fat rat’s rump if they disappeared. He had a spatula and an industrial grinder that was the simple solution to a meaningless life.

He shut off the projector and turned on the light. His ingrained Teutonic nature made him finish the meticulous dismemberment before retiring for the evening.

But the seeming immortality had made him careless.

He had no idea how wrong he was about the hunt being over. He was a very wanted man and the Two Drops of God were closer than ever before.