A love letter to Greece seems an improbable mission for me, so far away, never having met her, never having chatted over coffee on the somewhat-mandatory, U.S.-style, daylight date in an aboveboard, public place...

But I can't help it. I've seen the travel posters. I've seen documentaries. I've read books. I'm in love. I can't help it.

And here I am, locked away in a nearly insane country run by mouth-foaming, pinstripe-suited financiers and fiscal charlatans of all stripes -- except the cartoony prison sort wearing the broad bands of old-fashioned, black-and-white-striped suits...

... and there they are, the Greeks, with their long crossroads of history, with their many legendary gods and goddesses, blessed with an astonishing number of starkly gorgeous islands and brilliant ocean inlets washed in the colors of sea and sky, and with their earnest and good-humored, quick-to-smile folk, alongside a diet of dining and drink to die for...

And, me, here, landlocked in a brown, paved land of The Unending Big Mac, of Queens of Dairy-things, and of Kings of Burgers -- or is it Dairy Kings and Burger Queens? -- hoping to offer this centuries-old culture of cuisine and class some well-meaning advice, there in the Aegean, a hop and a skip from the heel of Italy, a short stride and a half-step away from what may be the most important gateway country of the modern era, in Turkey, where modernity has long met Muslims in a mostly modest, humane way, offering us all some lessons on how to behave...

And here I am, addressing these good and fine people of Greece from the land of The Spoiled Brats of Wall Street, where no boots-on-the-ground are needed when a fiscal invasion is launched against a new country.

Here, the beachheads and shock-waves are made in another nation's finances, by sharp-dressed, double-breasted, Big Shot, Big Old Boy Bankers flying solo in khaki, gnoshing on *hors d'oeuvres,* outfit inside air-conditioned beach resorts, not lumped together in outfits of tattered, shattered, battle-weary regular guys laden down in green gear, bounding and lurching

around in landing craft trying to keep down a Spam lunch, and where it is laptop weaponry that fires off round after round of devastating spreadsheets and faxes, amid the acrid scent of hot, electronic smoke hanging in the air -- solid-state smoke left over from the endless blows lethally aimed toward knowledgeable people's eyes and in what should have been a very solid state, an ancient state, while the metallic, moneyed smoke is sent sailing up unsuspecting people's everyday, and even festive-dress, skirts...

Yes.

There are no cartoon-cutout heroes in this war movie. Just the impossible, unimaginable greed seething from the Lords of the Economic Jungles in dark cold sheets. Their point of focus, their whole locus of being, is whip-snapped and locked on to their prey. For these black clouds of foraging locusts, there is only the prey, and the victims on which they predate and so leisurely graze.

The predators' incisors and eye teeth are today being sharpened for Greece. The sharpening has been in progress for such a long time, whetting their perpetually-insatiable appetites as the whetstones work the razor-tipped tooth enamel.

It is here, just before the Lords of Pestilence pounce on their latest prey, that I wish to make known my letter to Greece:

* * * * *

Dear Greece,

I wish we were better friends, and that we lived closer together, both in geography and in our outlooks, as yours is a age-wrought view born of wisdom and an opinion I hold in very high regard.

We are young here -- still in our Terrible Twos -- so we still reach out and clutch blindly at anything shiny.

I can also wish our people were more alike, but, in our modern world, most of the surface we see is only the result of the window-dressing of marketeers, and their rush to get our citizenry to stop contemplating and chewing quite so finely, and slowly, and to simply slurp and swallow everything whole -- goods, ideas, memes, propaganda, slogans.

We are not so much of the "slow-food movement for quiet contemplation" types as we are "fast food for the slow-witted and hard-of-thinking," to be brutally honest about ourselves. (We're still big on arrogance and ignorance, a damnable combination in my opinion, but a great many of us profess to mean well.)

In the end, difference aside, all people everywhere are alike, if not all but identical. We have the same needs, the same desires, the same hopes. Much to-do about our differences is always made, especially by people who have much profit to gain in making us imagine those differences are many and deep, and to imagine them very strongly, and to stop seeing all our similarities.

(Any psychologist will tell you why this is: We humans can't seem to make any kind of war on our friends and loved ones, or on anyone we see as being very much like ourselves. So, vast amounts of money and effort and twisted industries are in charge of making us see each as monstrously and as differently as possible, country to country, place to place, race to race.)

Anyway, I'm just worried that soon, you'll be coming home bruised and bashed-up from any more dates you might accept with all the banksters courting you endlessly, and that's just plain wrong for anyone, let alone for a bright, warm, stunning soul as yourself.

That is why I'm enclosing a few telephone numbers to, and some notes from, some incredibly wonderful people in Iceland. You see, they also had a somewhat recent infestation of banksters with rabies, and they had to take very drastic action to protect their people, their land, and their entire country, it turned out, from these vile, paper-pushing pit vipers.

Once the people of Iceland persuaded their official entourage to act in a manner befitting the people, there was an instantaneous sea change -- so much so that no banksters needed to be ridden out of town on a rail, so urgently did they wish to immediately depart Iceland under their own power.

Iceland can hopefully share with you the finer details of their self-sustaining, home-made recipe for excellent fiscal health, and how they turned back an invasion of piranhas with only a pointed index finger and some paperwork of their own.

Who knows -- you two may become great friends in the process, and decide to cobble together a corporation for your own needs and conveniences, using many of the world's laws to your advantage, just as the major world corporations, and the Wall Street cry-babies, do at their own whims, and only for idle profit, not for the higher calling and imperative of survival, as in your case.

You might even form a partnership under a new name, if everything worked out to your best possible advantage. Although "Greeceland" might seem presumptuous in billing, you'll probably also agree that this is not the best era in which to create a union sounding a lot like "Isis," as some might think is the way "Ice-Eece" might be pronounced.

And, the name "Grice" might only confuse consumers who are lost in the rice milk aisle in the first place, or may make them think of grouchy people, and Grinches, so I'd seriously shop that one around a while before you consider using it.

If your working partnership is successful, you might even be able to expand your new corporate dimensions with Puerto Rico, who is also breaking out the antacids over budgetary issues, and starting to talk about the subject over which you're already far too familiar: meeting with gouging creditors and having to ask them to settle for a reasonable profit in transactions, instead of performing back-alley muggings as their routine method of markup, billing, and collections.

(If the three of you get together, I have no great ideas for names, right off the top of my head, as my mind seems to have exploded after thinking about "Ice-Eece-Ico.")

Well, just thought I'd mention it as a possibility.

After all, just think what all those banksters did when they triggered the global Great Recession, almost toppling the entire planet's economic system, and getting only the merest, most inconsequential "Oops" from them in response to all our questioning, and only the thinnest possible whisper of a measly fine or two, applied here and there, making a tap on the wrist seem like corporal punishment by comparison.

Don't remind me of the sheer number and type of scams, flim-flams, shell games, and assorted frauds banks have been committing -- and getting away with -- decade after decade.

Then, we discover one of every thousand crimes they commit, and fine them a penny on every illegal, illegitimate million they've made -- then we all celebrate like mad, as if the victory were issued by Lady Justice and Lady Liberty themselves, and as if we've done something worthy, when all the time both Ladies are in the lounge getting tranquilizers, cold compresses, and anti-nausea medication, trying to figure out what to do next to make things right, even though they know they'll be outfoxed every step of the way, just like always.

(It's the American Way, apparently. I wish I cold say that I didn't understand it, or that I were adopted, but it's not always been this way. I find myself hoping that we will change just as much as I find myself hoping that you can avoid the deep, throttling change with which you are being now threatened.)

At any rate, if banksters can get away with things like that, well, just remember how inconsequential your hiccups are to the world overall, compared with the black plague these high priests of commerce constantly bless us with, unbidden.

(And, no, even though our crazy court system voted some time ago to make corporations people, but not so much vice versa, we have not had even so much as one bankster CEO go to a real jail for life. Well -- I just don't know what to tell you, except that corporal punishment and corporate punishment are two twains that shall never meet, at least, not in my world, over here, where we seem to automatically forgive everyone here of everything they do, all the time, so

long as it's about stealing, killing, and gathering up bling by the armload.

... even war crimes, like torture, and lying their country into war on purpose, and even Planetary crimes, like destroying whole cultures and civilizations for no real reason at all, except for more corporate profiteering, get a fine-by-me pass over here.

So, before you feel uneasy about accepting Iceland's advice about keeping the banksters at bay, and you before you start feeling like Somali pirates, just remember who the real pirates of this world really are!)

P.S. You might also contact Ireland if you have time. They went through something like this, too, a while back, and came back pretty strongly, too. Of course, they had St. Patrick to drive the snakes out of their land.

* * * * *

Here, I would affectionately note a place for a hug in the closing.

I might normally seal it with a kiss, but it's from me, someone in *America*, where that innocent kiss might be taken at first glance as the kiss of death.

And, I like Greece too much to even think of putting her through that face-draining double-take, even for a second.

No, for me, if there's anything worth longing for, economic fairness is in the top three on my list. Why? Well, the human system of money touches all human beings, even the unborn, and it has touched people throughout much of human history. We should expect much from its practitioners -- even more than from politicians, from whom we also expect the moon and stars, and get grit, dust, and a penny's worth of glitter every four years.

Greed may be very bad, short- and long-term, as it absorbs good energy from many adults and children, and has all throughout time, teaching nothing and voiding the crucial human emotion of empathy, killing the consideration of Commons and community. But greed is not the biggest evil, not for all its injuries.

Wars may kill, maim, injure, and leave homeless many people -- but not as many as banksters.

For my money -- *pardon both the filthy lucre and the pun* -- banksters are about as low as you can go on the human totem pole, beneath lobbyists, even. (This is why I have always done my banking, so called, at credit unions, where the group works for itself, not for the profit of outsiders. You should look into these, as soon as your banksters flee.)

I complain, but, then, what do we expect, for all our hollow talk hereabouts, about godliness -- miracles?

Over here, in this country, we raise people under the twin myths of American Exceptionalism and of so-called Rugged Individualism. We teach 'em to be "Me-Me-Me-Centric Go-Getters," and to go out there in the world, grab all you can, and hang onto it forever, no matter what, regardless who you stole it from...

Yes: Some people here forget that their fingers **end** where the next person's wallet **begins**. It's the same type of people giving Greece so much trouble now.

Somehow, I'd try to make Greece feel good about helping Americans remember that one key lesson about freedom, especially when Americans get to dreaming that the world is their oyster, and that ours is a nation of 100% rights and absolutely no responsibilities, no matter where we go, no matter what we do.

You know, as Americans so often do.