

EXPOSÉ

ERIKA WALKER

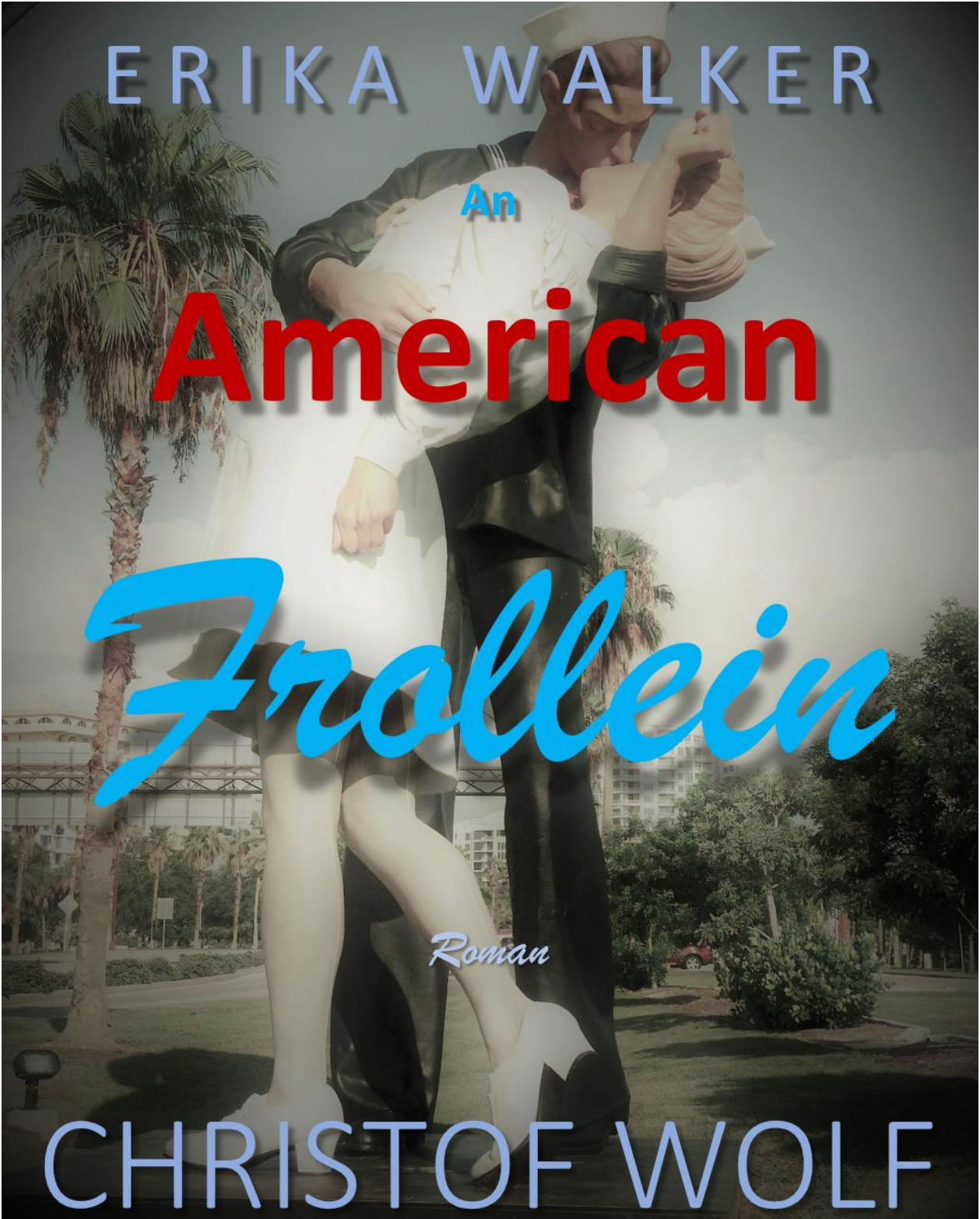
An

American

Frollein

Roman

CHRISTOF WOLF



Exposé: „Erika Walker – An American Frollein“ (working title)

Author: Christof Wolf
Genre: Novel with a historic background (20th century)
Content: Manuscript approx. 740 pages (99% completed)
Places of Interest: Germany(e.g. Frankfurt, Ramstein, Coblenz, Hachenburg)
USA (New York, Illinois, California), Korea and Vietnam

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Yours sincerely
Christof Wolf

Short description of “An American Frollein” by Christof Wolf

This outstanding story will take you on a journey through the last century. Beginning in World War I, on the western front in France, and ending in the new century, you will meet protagonists you will definitely love and some of them you will definitely hate. The plot will take you on a rollercoaster of feelings and emotions. As closely as possible, you will be part of our common history: The big depression after WW I. The rise of Nazi terrorism in Germany. The destructive power of World War II that lead the world on the brink of disaster. The time when the help of the allied countries built up a new Germany and Europe. The Cold War between the East and West. The wars in Korea and Vietnam. The prospering time in the 80s and 90s ...

But how could a story of this scope fascinate the readers enough to walk thought this outstanding period of world history? This will become very clear after you will have once met my protagonist ERIKA WALKER. She was born in 1922 and was raised in a country that changed its face for several times. But of course not the country itself changed, it was the people and the intent of those who were ruling the country. And this is what mankind and all countries have in common. Otherwise no one could explain that after WW I, there were WW II, Korea, Vietnam ...Okay, lets start with “The German Frollein” which is inspired by a real life:

Prologue

Benjamin Michels is an author. After finishing a reading in a retirement home, a man with a walker comes to the little stage and introduces himself as Kurt Holzbach. He heard from one of the nurses in the home, who is a relative to Ben, that Ben will leave for a holiday on the next day – destination Florida, USA, with a stop-over in Washington, D.C. Kurt handed Ben a little stack of papers with handwritten lines on each page. On the top, there is a letter which Kurt’s sister Erika once wrote him. Erika lives in San Francisco. On the letter, there is a photo that shows many white tombstones: “My husband Bill is buried on Arlington Cemetery in Washington D.C. I am too old now to look after his tomb. But, Kurt, if you will ever hear from one of our relatives, or your friends, that someone plans to travel to D.C., please ask him to look for Bill’s grave ...”

When Kurt shows Ben the letter, he immediately recognizes Kurt’s intention. So he promises Kurt to look up the tomb of the soldier. Kurt smiles and gives Ben the whole stack of papers. At home, Ben begins to read the lines and recognizes what kind of unbelievable story is contained in the papers ... they are telling the story of Erika Walker.

Story

As Conrad returns from having served in France in WW I, he is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and goes back to living on his father’s farm. One day, he met Emily, the daughter of the mayor of the neighboring town and seduces her to spend a night together. Upon her becoming pregnant, both are forced into marriage by their parents, having Emily wear a black gown to their wedding. The marriage leaves Emily very disappointed, since she notices that

Conrad does not love her—and Conrad feels he has been cheated for his life by entering this marriage that he did not want. Conrad's reason to follow his father's will solely was that he was promised a farmhouse of his own.

Conrad was hoping for a son – he wants to name him Erich, after a fellow soldier from WW I, who died in front of his eyes in France. But instead, Emily gave birth to a daughter – Erika. Later, Emily fulfills her “duty” and gives birth to three sons: Erich, Heinz and Kurt. The family members have to stand a hard life by accepting Conrad's changing moods, cruel attacks and uncontrollable reactions. Conrad's soul has been scarred by the awful pictures he saw when he was a soldier in WW I. He thinks he is wasting his life thanks to Erika's mother and having to live in the countryside – but one day, he finds a new role for himself, among the upcoming Nazi-regime. He soon becomes the head of the local group of the Hitler Youth and feels stronger than ever, seeing himself appointed to higher assignments. He sees it as his highest duty, to convince everyone of the ideals of the brown-shirts – first of all, his family has to follow all the new rules he took over from his wrong idols. So Erika, her mother and her three brothers have to face a hard life on the farm. One day, Erika's brother Erich cannot stand the pressure anymore that he is put under by his father – during the festivities for Hitler's birthday, which are organized by Conrad, he decides to jump out of a window of the castle, where these festivities are supposed to take place.

Erika later begins a vocational training in her aunt's hotel in Coblenz. During that time, she supports her aunt and her paternal grandparents to help several Jewish people escape from Germany, willingly accepting the danger that they now have to live under. Their efforts come to a sudden end, when Coblenz is being bombed and her aunt's hotel is destroyed. In the aftermath, Erika has to return to her father's farm.

One day, during the last days of war, a US Airforce bomber is shot down close to Erika's hometown, while Erika and her mother are working out on the field with an ox. They hear the crew screaming and hurry to the wreck, finding that two pilots already escaped from the burning plane and stand outside, while a third passenger is captivated in the cockpit by a bent piece of metal. Erika brings the ox and a rope and help the remaining pilot escape the burning wreck. The three men, one named Bill Walker, thank their saviors and escape before the plane explodes and the police comes to look for survivors and the wreck.

After the end of WW II and the end of the Nazi-terror, Erika hopes for a better life for herself, when all of a sudden her mother dies and she is left as the only woman on the farm, where she has to manage the household and do all the farm work. One night, Erika's father tries to rape her, leaving her no choice but escaping from the farm. With the help of her grandparents, she reaches Frankfurt, where she finds a job working for the US Postal Exchange. One day, she meets Bill, the pilot who she saved from the burning plane wreck. They fall in love, and soon Bill, in a spectacular manner, asks his “German Frollein” if she wants to marry him and if she would be willing to leave her “Vaterland”. Erika is full of love for him and very happy. She replies with “I do!” But with her next breath she tells him: “You can call Germany my home. Or my homeland. Or my mother's land. But, Bill, it is: Not My Vaterland!”

Erika starts a new life in the USA. First they live in New York, later in Illinois. It is not easy for her to get used to the American habits and way of life. But after a while she thinks her life is perfect. But during her pregnancy she loses the unborn baby and Bill has to go to Korea. She manages her life with the help of the good young and old ladies who live around her and already became real friends. Luckily Bill returns safe.

One day she gets a message from Germany. She is shocked when she reads the capital letters: MURDER! ...beneath, she finds a photo of her father, published in a newspaper article. What happened?

After Erika escapes from the farm, her father employs a young lady named Gretel who looked for a job and a place to stay for her and her daughter Greta. Conrad offers her a job and provides a home for her daughter. After a while he is not willing to pay her anymore –he asked her to marry him. So now he has not only her working for free ... no, she has to fulfil his sexual desires, too. Not much later Gretel is pregnant and gives birth to another girl – Ingrid.

Conrad never changes his personality and after a while, Gretel starts feeling sad and abused. Conrad's son, Erika's second brother, Heinz, falls in love with Gretel during that time. He convinces her to follow him to Cologne, where he wants to start a new life for her and the girls. They make plans for a secret escape. But however, Conrad finds out what is going on. And on the very last day, before the secret lovers want to escape, the unbelievable thing happens: Gretel is in the cowshed to milk the cows for a very last time. Silently, Conrad sneaks in the shed, grabs the axe, which he uses to decapitate hens, and hits Gretel's head! She tries to escape but dies lying outside on the pavingstones. One day later, Heinz jumps from a bridge in Cologne and dies in the river Rhine.

During Conrad's trial, Erika and Bill move back to Germany – to the US Air Force Base in Ramstein. Erika knows, if Conrad will not be sentenced to jail for a long time, the two girls (her stepsister Greta and her sister Ingrid) will face the same destiny like herself, when she lived on her father's farm. So Erika and Bill try to adopt the girls. It is a long and rocky way, but after pulling a trick (Conrad wants money for giving away the girls. Erika's brother Kurt finds some "hidden" money in Conrad's secret safe and they pay that money!), they are allowed to take the girls to the USA. Greta and Ingrid are raised as American teenagers in Illinois. They call Bill and Erika "Dad" and "Mom".

Bill has to serve in Vietnam. He gets missing in action. His family is sad and does believe he died – but one day, he returns. He was wounded in Vietnam and flown out to Ramstein Airbase. From there, he returns to Illinois. Then they start to live a normal family life. Some years later, Greta starts making problems. She leaves for San Francisco and falls in love with a drug-dealer. Bill quits his military service and finds a new job. He gets employed by United Airlines and is offered a job as Chief of Security– in San Francisco. Erika and him move to California, while Ingrid, who is already an adult, stays back in Illinois; where she fell in love with a man.

In San Francisco, Erika and Bill rescue Greta from her dangerous situation. Bill organizes some of his veteran friends and they take Greta away from the bad guy.

But Greta is not thankful. She always blames Erika for destroying her life, starting by kidnapping her from Germany. She escapes and starts a new life in Florida.

Erika and Bill live a nice and fancy life. But some years later, Bill gets diagnosed with lung cancer. He dies in the year 2000 (Notice that this is part of a real story: Bill died the same day like my wife Susan died! In my novel SUNSET she is named Hanna! Isn't that a strange kind of destiny!?)

Erika is alone now. One day, her friends take her out for a party, where she meets Herman Weinberg. They have a wonderful conversation. After a phone call by Herman the next day, they have their first date in the Napa Valley. Herman is a widower too - and a millionaire. Once he owned a little chain of steakhouses in San Francisco and Oakland. But Herman has had a hard childhood, too: After medical mistreatments while he was a little boy, he lost one of his eyes and could hear only on one ear ever since. Herman's family emigrated to the USA in the beginning of the 20th century. They have been a poor Jewish family and had no money for medical care, so Herman was treated wrong by medical-students. The treatment was for free. Since that time, Herman never accepts anything that is free of charge. He works hard and fulfills his very own American dream by himself and by paying for everything by himself. During their endless conversations, Erika and Herman figure out, that one of Herman's uncles once lived in Erika's hometown. And after a while they recognize, that Erika, her aunt and grandparents helped the Weinberg family escape from Nazi-Germany. They are sure: Destiny closes a circle between both! Erika moves into Herman's house and they live a lovely life together.

One day Erika receives a letter from Germany. From a man named Benjamin Michels. He sends her some photos. The pictures show the grave of Bill Walker, who is buried as an US-soldier at Arlington Cemetery in Washington D.C. Erika has not been at Bill's grave for a long time, so she is more than happy to see the pictures of his grave. Ben has been there during his stop-over in Washington. Erika gives that man a call and both people recognize how destiny has brought them together. Benjamin is an author who published several novels. So he promises to write a new novel about the story of Erika's life. On her 90th birthday, Ben visits Erika in the US and presents her the first draft of his manuscript. Erika can't believe it. During the birthday-party Ben meets Steven Weinberg, a nephew of Herman's. Steven can't believe either, what kind of story he hears, because he is one of the grandchildren of that Weinberg-Family who escaped Germany with Erika's help.

Epilogue

Steven Weinberg is a film producer. After the birthday party, he gets an idea: He wants to produce a movie with the name "Not my Vaterland".

After the premier showing of the movie, people take out their tissues, because they are touched by what they saw. And in the very last scene the close-up of 92 years old Erika appears and closes the movie by saying: "My name is Erika Walker, I am the American Frollein. This is the story of my life!"

THE END

About Christof Wolf and his intentions to writing novels

I was born in 1967. After a graduation in Business Administration I worked for the HR-Division of the German central bank. These days, I am responsible for the studies-section of the well-known German University which is ran by the central bank. I love to travel around the world and have already visited a lot of wonderful spots. I met people, who showed me how necessary tolerance and acceptance between different cultures and religions are. Of course, all these experiences have had a strong influence on my novels. But sometimes I do not have to invent the stories I tell, there are some plots which are just waiting for someone to tell them. Two times, such strange things happened to me, and one of those outstanding situations made me become an author. Here is the initializing situation:



More than 14 years ago I lost my wife to cancer. To find back to life, I went to the US, just by myself. In New England, I wanted to send a message-in-a-bottle to my wife. We both loved to travel and went several times to the US. But when I went around the coastline I did not find the right place to throw my bottle into the sea. So an inner voice told me to take it back to Germany. "... one certain day, on another time and on another spot you will find a place to send your message!"

The following year I flew to Australia. It was my second time 'down under'. My wife and I went there some years before and we fell in love with the country. For three weeks, I drove though the Outback areas and tried to find myself coming through and dealing with loneliness. When I went back to civilization, I reached a little fishermen-town called Albany. One morning, when I was hiking on a coast trail, I found the right place: a steep cliff. Of course I had my bottle with me. So I sent a prayer and threw it: Usually these days you are sent a confirmation notice, like "Message sent". But nothing like this will happen if you send a message-in-a-bottle. But sometimes the unexpected will happen. How?

What happened, was unbelievable ... shortly spoken: My wife got the message and she sent me a confirmation. How is that?

The bottle was found by an Australian police-officer. He took it to a newspaper. They published an article with a photo of him and a short text. In the text they mentioned my name and Hachenburg, the town I live in. The newspaper was read by a young German woman in Albany, she lives there because she is married to an Aussie. She recognized the city of Hachenburg, because she originally comes from that region, which is called the Westerwald (translated: Western-forest or West-wood). Her parents still live there, in the town of Hoehr-Grenzhausen, which is famous for pottery and the glass-producers Rastal and Sahm (look at the glass,

when you drink a beer. It does not matter whether you are in the US or in South Africa or Australia ... you will often read the company's name Rastal).

So the young lady called her mother in Germany and told her about the article and the man who wrote the message-in-the-bottle. Her mother said, that she would look up in the telephone-book and find out if there was a man with that name: There was! It was me. So, she picked up the phone and called me. You perhaps can imagine how surprised I felt and how shocked I was. Especially because the lady on the phone told me: "Susan called me some minutes ago!" Susan was the name of her daughter, but it was the name of my wife, too. After a while, when we stopped talking, I began to cry – because I recognized, that my Susan sent me a sign from where ever she is now! She sent me her confirmation – she has got my message and appreciated what I wrote. For me it was the confirmation and her spur on me, that I should go on and take my life into my own hands. And that is what I did then ...

After a while I wrote down the story of my message-in-the-bottle, because I wanted to memorize this outstanding event of my life. I thought, I have to write everything down, so I would be able to remember every detail when I am old. Otherwise people will say: "Oh look at this old man, he is mixing up fiction and reality. He is getting nuts ..." When I showed the first 30 pages to a friend, he recommended to keep on writing. He said it will be a good way of therapy, too, to deal with my sorrow. So I went on writing my own story: The story of Hanna (Susan) and Benjamin (that's me). The manuscript became a size of nearly 700 pages; the story of the message-in-the-bottle became the prologue!

HOW I GOT THE STORY PUBLISHED

One day another miracle happened: I mentioned on XING (social network) that 'I like writing' and that 'I had already prepared a manuscript'. I got a mail from the publisher Acabus-Verlag Hamburg (www.acabus.de) and they asked what the manuscript was about. I answered the mail and some days later, they offered me a contract. After the lectorate was finished, they published my story in the way of a modern trilogy: Sunrise - Sunshine - Sunset A modern, dramatic, lovely and unbelievable LOVE STORY (comparable to Erich Segal, who published his wonderful story in the 70s and promoted the tissue-industry a huge surplus). The trilogy takes you around the world (mostly to the US: like Los Angeles, NYC, Hawaii, Washington D.C. but to Australia, too).

After the success of the trilogy people asked me about more stories. So I thought of what I can write now. A crime story? A medieval story? Then I decided to write a medieval story because I was interested in history. I constructed a plot which combined authentic parts of history with fiction. And 2011 I published Civitas (latin for City) anno domini 1200 – Das Geheimnis der Rose (The secret of the Rose). A success-story which was nominated as BEST NEWCOMER HISTORIC NOVELS on LOVELYBOOKS.de

And now I have almost finished "An American Frollein".

The copyrights are still available!

List of published novels and essays

Sunrise – Das Tor zum Träumen (The door to your dream)

(Novel, Part 1 of Trilogy, Publisher: Acabus-Verlag, Hamburg, 2009)

The story is starting with the message in a bottle Benjamin throws into the Australian sea and how it 'returned'. Afterwards, a lovely teenage story of finding the first real love begins. It all starts when Benjamin and Johanna meet for the first time in school, how they fall in love. There are ups and downs, misunderstandings ... real teenager-life. The most serious problem causes Hanna's engagement with Wolfgang. Will Ben and Hanna solve their difficulties and will they ever announce their love to be official?

Sunshine – Wo Himmel und Erde sich berühren (Where heaven meets earth)

(Novel, Part 2 of Trilogy, Publisher: Acabus-Verlag, Hamburg, 2010)

This part 2 tells about the outstanding life Hanna and Ben lived since they have become a couple. They saw a lot of wonderful spots on their journeys around the world. They bought and renovated an old house – built in 1875 - and called it their little "Villa Kunterbunt" (Villa Colorful). Colorful was their life - no place for boring moments.

Both crowned their love it with a marriage. Ben's proposal of marriage starts with a very romantic 'kidnapping'. Then they planned and organized their outstanding wedding. For the reception they chose the theme: "Around the world". Their plans were to simulate a journey for their guests. They taped the sound of airplanes. The waiters had to dress and speak like 'flight attendants. They decorated the ball-room like the interior of a plane. Every chair was equipped with seat-belt, amenity-kits (In advance they asked several airlines to support their dream and reception. A lot of them did!) Several weeks before, Ben and Hanna planned 'stop-overs' in USA, Asia, Africa and South America. Afterwards they divided their guests into different travel groups. The guests were asked to organize the stops by welcoming and congratulating bride and groom in the respective language. Later on they had to present special items of the country and an original song. It was an unforgettable day for all participants - and of course for Hanna and Ben. Afterwards both depart for their honeymoon: San Francisco, Hawaii and Las Vegas. In that moment, when they think they found their paradise, dark clouds appear at the velvet sky ...

Sunset – Darum sehet die Lilien (Consider the lilies of the field)

(Novel, Part 3 of Trilogy, Publisher: Acabus-Verlag, Hamburg, 2010)

One year later Hanna and Ben move to Frankfurt, where Ben works for the HR department of a bank. They rent a flat, but they keep their little Villa Kunterbunt, too, for their weekend escapes. Johanna finds a job, too: She is HR assistant in a brand new five star hotel. Both live an urban and vivid life. But Hanna never gets used to living in the big city. One day Ben is offered a job in a University in their hometown Hachenburg. Hanna is so happy, because they are able to return home

into their Villa Kunterbunt. When she finds a job too in a big health-insurance company everything seems to be perfect. But then, only one month later, Hanna is diagnosed with breast cancer. It is a devastating message. Their lives step on a rollercoaster of different feelings: hope, sadness, fear, love, hope, disappointment, tears, hope, belief, hope, God, metastases, Jesus, love, cry, strength, blood, tumor, loss ...

Civitas a. d. 1200 – Das Geheimnis der Rose (The Secret of the Rose)
(Historic Novel, Publisher: Acabus-Verlag, Hamburg, 2011)

The Historic novel takes part in/around the year 1200. Heinrich returns as a crusader. He has a souvenir which is chased by the STRICT EYES OF GOD, an association which wants to collect and preserve all relicts, which are brought back by crusaders from the holy land. Several years Heinrich fought for his Christian idols, but now he only wants to get back home to his wife and son. Heinrich is the count of Hachenburg. Before following the demand of emperor Barbarossa, he and his brother Eberhard began to build a castle. Heinrich hopes his brother will fulfill their plans. Years later, almost reaching home again, he gets almost caught by three raiders from the Strict Eyes of God. But Heinrich escapes injured. When he reaches a gorge, he falls, unconscious, from his horse. Antonius, the son of a miller, finds him and takes him to his father's mill. The whole family takes care of the stranger. When he recovers, he offers Antonius to accompany him on the last kilometers to Hachenburg. Heinrich promises Antonius will return with a reward that will help the miller's family. Antonius follows Heinrich on the way to his new civitas. It does not take one day and Antonius gets stuck in his first real and dangerous adventure. The raiders are close and ... Civitas is a story that combines fiction and real story/people. In 2011 the book awarded for the Readers Price of Best Newcomers in Historic Novels on LOVELYBOOKS.de.

Die Allegorie der Bäume (The allegory of trees)
(Essay in anthology „Der König im grünen Gewand“ (The king in the green gown), Publisher: Christoph Kloft Verlag, 2013)

Ein Brief für Albertine (A letter for Albertine)
(Essay in anthology „Albertine von Gruen- meine Freundschaft zu Johann W. von Goethe“ (Albertine von Gruen – My friendship with Johann W. von Goethe), Publisher: Ruldolf Grabowski, 2014)