



# BromeliAdvisory

**January 2013**

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What	Who
Sales Table	Terrie Bert

**FEBRUARY 19, 2013 7:30 PM**

**SPEAKER:** Terrie Bert – "The Outstandingly Ostentatious and Particularly Picturesque O & P Bromeliad Genera, Part I"

**RAFFLE TABLE:** Julio Odey Lopez

**FOOD:** Maureen Adelman, Bernadette Small, Barbara Partagas, Patty Gonzalez, Ofelia Sorzano

**Speaker's Topic**

"The Outstandingly Ostentatious and Particularly Picturesque O & P Bromeliad Genera, Part I"

In this presentation, Terrie will talk about 5 of the 8 bromeliad genera beginning with the letters O or P (plus a bonus genus) and not commonly grown by hobbyists. For each genus, she will review the natural distribution, habitats, and growing conditions. I show examples of species in the genus in cultivation and in nature; describe how (if) they can be cultivated; and include interesting facts and tidbits of fun information throughout the talk. As has become my custom, there will be a surprise at the end of the talk.

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## President's Message

by Barbara Partagas

Where have all the labels gone? Have you noticed that despite your efforts to identify your plants, the pesky labels seem to evaporate? Why bother to label the plants, anyway? When I first joined the BSSF, I couldn't pronounce the names of most broms. I also couldn't tell the difference between the genera. Little by little, thanks to some good lectures, I began to recognize some of the common bromeliads.

I got better at labeling repotted plants. I began to be more specific on the labels, adding the dates I repotted. Then I added the date I got the plant and from whom. The plants that went into the garden had labels. I am sure the yard creatures removed them, every one. The mystery is what happened to the labels in the plants on my porch? Is there a label thief? We have had lectures addressing how to label plants. Use wires, use permanent stakes, label the pot instead of the sticking the label in the mix. Use a #2 pencil or all effort will be lost due to sun and water wear. I can vouch for that one. Even expensive marking pens pale in comparison to the mighty #2 pencil. Now I bury a label in the pot for "potsterity." I have learned that it is more important to me to remember who gave me the plants than anything else. I'd still like to know what happened to all those labels, though.

We have had some lovely weather for sprucing up the gardens and perusing our plants. Have you taken a walk in your garden to just enjoy your masterpiece? Mine is still a work in progress. Take a walk in your yard. Just ignore those stray (or rampant in my case) weeds. Soon enough it will be too hot to meander down the garden path. While you are strolling, remember to keep an eye out for possible entries for our April show. A little preplanning could make it easier for that weekend when you finally decide it is time to prepare your show plants.

See you at the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

*Barbara Partagas*

NOTE: Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30pm at the home of Barbara Partagas. Members are welcome to attend. Please notify Barbara prior to the meeting.

## Peat Moss Wars

by Robert Meyer

Growing your plants often requires rooting, and that usually requires moss – sphagnum moss or sphagnum peat moss or peat moss.

Horticultural use of peat moss is subservient to the uses for energy (fire), water filtration and other industrial concepts. But, it is still a very large business in horticulture.

Sphagnum peat moss used in horticulture is partially decayed or decomposed matter which grows in small, dense patches in wet and boggy areas. Peat bogs are principally located in the northern hemisphere most often in Canada, Finland, Ireland and Russia. The harvesting is a controversial matter which will be discussed below.

In Canada, skimming is the method for removal. Many of the bogs are 15-20 feet deep from which operators remove 2-3 inches of depth per year. Harvesting can occur for 30 or more years on the same bog.

Environmentalists are concerned and their voices have been heard. There are regrowth plans implemented in Canada—a feature used by the Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association (CSPMA) in preserving its name in the community.

Sifting of the product prior to sale makes the Canadian product often dusty, hard to maintain; and, unless wetted frequently, it may dry into a cement-like constrictive soil which will strangle the roots and cause a plant's death. For such reason, many of the local growers blend the peat with perlite or other organic matter to improve air and water flow.

In Europe, many of the growers use peat without perlite. The harvesting's or matter's difference offers the European user a coarser product which appears more like a pine forest's

floor than the brown sands of Canadian peat sold to us at the big box stores. And, upon purchase of the apparently superior product, Europeans can use their product with less mixing, and perhaps less labor, as the production continues with a single product.

Unfortunately, Miami consumers will have to live with neighboring Canada's peat. But, there is an answer as to how to improve the product.

Large growers can order from brokers who deliver Canada's true peat. The product sold at the retail stores is apparently the fallen byproduct which is shaken and packaged so that the waste is not lost. Effectively, retail offers the dust which fell from the coarser product sold by brokers to large horticultural users including nurserymen.



Excavated peat bog

If you know a nurseryman, you may make a deal with them to purchase some of their premium product.

But, our use of peat moss includes environmental violation. Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott, a Washington State University professor, stated, "Peat moss is a non-renewable resource whose replacement takes centuries." And she concluded that such loss would be severe as peat lands are "bio-diverse ecosystems with important functions in water quality and carbon storage."

So, alternatives are being examined. Coconut coir is one material being suggested as a good replacement for peat moss. It's a byproduct of the coconut processing industry. It's made from the fibers found between ripe coconut's husk and

shell. The brown fibers, high in lignin, are water-proof – which may slow the composting of the product, and may deliver watering issues. Some researchers are finding better water retention in coconut coir, and growers like the improved ph level.

Smaller consumers can go to the big box stores and find mixes such as Vermiculite (silicate that expands in heat – but may be carcinogenic), rockwool (a horticultural growing media made from Basalt rock and Chalk), coco peat (see above), or aquatic soil (saturated, heavy clay or loam soils).

Another alternative, which is not yet available to the home hobbyist, is a manure byproduct called "post-digestion" treatment. The manure bio-solid fiber delivers a more environmentally conscience gardener to avoid the peat moss dredging, and delivers a reason to avoid unnecessary disposal of an otherwise valuable composting material to

our gardens.

I have recently employed the "Solomon soil solution." Cut the problem in two. Use peat, but add to the peat used cat litter to aerate, and top the pot with compost as fertilizer together with some slow release granules. Not necessarily the prettiest concept, but I have cut in half the environmental issue, resolved some litter waste problems, and the plants love the compost topping.

As every grower will tell you that every grower has his or her own soil and fertilizer regimen. And, they all seem to work.

## **Planning for the BSSF Spring Show and Sale**

by Alan Herndon

Our annual Show and Sale is only two months away. Setup in the Garden Room and plant entries will take place on Thursday, 11 Apr 2013. Judging and the dinner/party for judges and volunteers will take place on Friday, 12 Apr 2013. Both Show and Sale are open to the public over the weekend, 13-14 Apr 2013.

By this time, you should have given the plants you wish to enter a preliminary cleaning to minimize the effort needed in a final cleaning just before the show. You should generally try to wash any debris out of the leaf axils of the plants, remove leaves that are discolored and remove any visible scale (living or dead) from the leaves.

This is also a good time to check the names of your planned entries. Our rules state that only correctly named plants are eligible for major awards, and that any cultivars entered must be officially registered in the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry. If you need to check whether a name has been duly registered, you may find the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry on the Bromeliad Society International web page ([www.bsi.org](http://www.bsi.org)).

If you have an extra plant of particularly attractive appearance \_ especially if it is not a plant commonly grown plant, please consider donating it to the auction held during the show. The auction held on Saturday will consist of plant provided by the commercial vendors at the show, but the Sunday auction will feature plants from BSSF members.

As always, we need our members to volunteer some hours during the show. There are jobs aplenty every day. On Thursday, Sharon and Urszula can always use help setting up the Art Show. In particular, she needs help hanging the student art work. On the plant side, we always need help with Placement \_ arranging the show

plants on the tables \_ late into the evening. If you would like to try a more technically-oriented position, and have a good knowledge of bromeliads, consider assisting with Classification. Entries are allowed from noon to 8 PM, and we especially need help during the final few hours. Friday is judging, and we need several clerks to follow the judges, recording their decisions, attaching ribbons, moving plants for the afternoon judging session, etc.

If you feel more comfortable handling food than plants, please help Sandy Roth by joining the Catering crew on any day \_ Thursday through Sunday (but especially Friday). On Thursday, the work is primarily a matter of moving the food that will be used during the show into place. And setting up a lunch for the volunteers working that day. Friday is by, far, the hardest day for Sandy. Early in the morning, coffee and pastry, etc. are set up for the judges and clerks. While judging goes on in the morning, Sandy and her crew are preparing a lunch for the judges and clerks. As soon as lunch is over, Sandy rushes home to prepare for the Dinner/Party given there for the judges and show volunteers in the evening.

Saturday and Sunday, the show is open to the public, and we need volunteers to help the visitors throughout the weekend. Two main tasks needing member assistance are the Member Sales Table and the Hospitality Table..

Member Sales are outdoors among the other vendors. As the name implies, any member with excess plants is welcome to sell at this table. You will need to get a vendor number from the chair of the Member Sales Table committee (Carl Bauer).ahead of the show, and be prepared to spend some time at the table so you can explain the true value of your plants to the public.

Hospitality jobs are mostly in the Garden Room. You can work at the Hospitality Table (right by the entrance door to the show room) passing out

information sheets and answering visitor questions. If you wish to be more active, you can walk around the show room, looking for mildly perplexed visitors in need of assistance.

We also have an Auction both Saturday and Sunday that requires some volunteers to serve as runners who deliver bid sheets and plants to the appropriate places. We also need someone to help the successful bidders locate their plants, and compare the bid sheets presented with the plants to make sure the proper plants are going to each person. Just in case you are concerned, you can still participate in the bidding if you are working on one of these jobs.

Another job that needs some volunteers is the plant holding area set up just outside the entrance to the show room.

If you know of a few young people who would not mind spending the weekend at Fairchild, transporting plants purchased at the sales area to the parking areas for our customers (in return for free food and tips), please consider volunteering to recruit a crew and bring them to the show.

Finally, we could use a few volunteers to help break down, repack the show materials and clean up on Sunday. Everyone is tired and ready to go home by that time, but a few extra people can greatly cut down on the time required to finish the job.

This annual Show and Sale is our best opportunity during the year to interact with members of the public who have some interest in bromeliads and might benefit from learning more at our monthly meetings. If we remain friendly and willing to answer questions, we may well find ourselves with new friends in BSSF after the show.

## Garden Notes - January 2013

by Alan Herndon

A few more days with temperatures in the range normally associated with a south Florida winter

came along in January, but we are still in the middle of an exceedingly warm winter. The warmth has not only allowed our plants to continue growing, it has also intensified the effect of our normal dry season. The combination of relatively high temperatures and high winds that have been common throughout the past two months has left areas without supplemental irrigation parched. This situation will only get worse as we head into spring, so keep a close eye on your gardens. Plants are likely need more frequent waterings.

Winter-blooming plants are still dominating the following list, but it seems likely that they will be replaced by spring-blooming plants sooner than in previous years.

Among the *Aechmea* species, members of *Aechmea* subgenus *Ortgiesia* remain conspicuous. *Aechmea kerteziae* is in the second mass-bloom cycle of the season. *Aechmea apocalyptic* and *Aechmea caudata*, in contrast, tend to bloom in one pot at a time. Various clones of *Aechmea weilbachii* are also still much in evidence. Most of these clones are on their second bloom since the start of the season. *Aechmea chantinii*, as usual, has a small number of plants in bloom now. A relative, *Aechmea serrata*, is also blooming, but this species seems to have a much shorter blooming season. Members of the *Aechmea orlandiana* complex are still in flower, with *Aechmea milsteiniana*, *Aechmea orlandiana* and *Aechmea gurkeniana* all seen with open flowers. *Aechmea fosteriana* is in late bud, but no open flowers were seen before month's end. *Aechmea germinyana* is continuing to bloom, giving every sign that it will flower for quite some time to come. A species inexplicably overlooked in December, although it was clearly in bloom then, is *Aechmea mexicana* (albomarginate form). Among plants first blooming during January, *Aechmea fendleri* put out its very bright inflorescence, but the color did not last more very long. *Aechmea warasii* and *Aechmea victoriana*, two closely related species, the former with a pendant inflorescence and bright, orange-red berries, the latter with an erect or

leaning inflorescence and dull, dark red berries, both bloomed. The berries on both species retain good color long after the flowers are gone. Of course, if you are growing the *Aechmea warasii* on a bench or on the ground, you may never notice the inflorescence lying at the base of the pot. Growing this species in a hanging basket is preferred. If you must grow it in a pot on a bench, make sure the pot is at the edge of the bench. Finally *Aechmea bracteata* and *Aechmea ramosa* Both flowered during the month.

A majority of the blooming-size *Androlepis skinneri* are now past bloom, but those remaining are continuing to send up new inflorescences.

*Billbergia* species are still blooming frequently. Of particular note is a plant collected by Karl Green near Ibatinga, Brazil. It was identified as a form of *Billbergia vittata* by the Brazilians, but has much heavier marginal leaf spines than any other form of *Billbergia vittata* I have seen. Other species in bloom were a clone (also collected by Karl Green in Brazil) of *Billbergia pyramidalis* with leaves that appear silvery due to the dense trichomes, *Billbergia elegans* and *Billbergia nutans*. *Billbergia leptopoda* was the first species to produce a second found of flowers this season.

Among the less well known species. *Fosterella micrantha* (both the red leaf clone and the green leaf forms) were blooming for much of the month.

Two *Guzmania* species were noted in flower during the month. *Guzmania minor* and *Guzmania sanguinea brevipedicellata* have been in bloom almost continuously for the past several months even though the flowers on any single rosette last only 2-3 weeks.

One of the less commonly grown species,

*Lymania corallina* (the red leaf clone) bloomed during January. An interesting variation among the plants was noticed. Plants with a darker red inflorescence produced flowers with light violet petals. Plants with a lighter red inflorescence (approaching pink) produced flowers with white petals.

Several species of *Neoregelia* were seen in bloom. *Neoregelia compacta* is the only species among this group that is really expected to be flowering now. The remaining species are miniatures. *Neoregelia* 'Devine Brown' is a wild-collected plant that, in many ways, is intermediate between *Neoregelia ampullacea* and *Neoregelia punctatissima*.. The green leaf

form of *Neoregelia punctatissima* was also in flower. *Neoregelia crispata*, with its long, narrow flower petals, bloomed, as did two members of the *Neoregelia olens* complex. The plant of *Neoregelia indecora* reported in December remained in bloom shortly into the month. *Neoregelia olens* (the red leaf clone frequently but incorrectly

cultivated as *Neoregelia fluminensis*) was also found in flower.

Miniature *Nidularium mangataribensis* bloomed again this month, The small size of the blooming plant allows pups to attain blooming size rapidly, so multiple blooms per year are to be expected.

Flowering activity among *Orthophytum* species is still depressed, but I have increasing numbers of *Orthophytum ophiuroides* in bloom and bud. Most of the plants coming into bloom were repotted last summer, and the blooms now may be a response to the extra nutrition. *Orthophytum alvimii*, *Orthophytum lymaniana* and *Orthophytum disjunctum* also continued their streaks of continuous months in flower. *Orthophytum lemei* and *Orthophytum rubiginosum* reappeared in the flowering



Photo courtesy of FCBS

column during January.

*Portea grandiflora* made an appearance on the list of blooming plants this month. Flowering on this species is, unfortunately, a brief affair, so it was over before the end of January. *Portea alatisepala* also has a short flowering life, but I have several different clones and multiple pots of each, so I still have plants in flower. The *Portea* we know as “petropolitana petrolitana”, in contrast, has a long-lived inflorescence, and the .same plant reported in bloom last month is still in bloom.

*Quesnelia humilis* made a brilliant, but brief appearance with its bright flowers.

*Ronnbergia brasiliensis* and *Ronnbergia neoregelioides* both flowered during January.

Several species of *Tillandsia* have been blooming throughout the month. We can start with two pseudobulbous species: *Tillandsia baileyi* and *Tillandsia bulbosa*. The former has been in bloom for several weeks, and is still not near and end. The latter, a small, but brightly colored clone, seems to have a much shorter bloom life.

Different clones of *Tillandsia ionantha* have also bloomed on and off during January. Most of the other *Tillandsia* species I recorded in bloom belong to *Tillandsia* subgenus *Anoplophytum*. *Tillandsia stricta*, *Tillandsia stricta albifolia*, *Tillandsia jucunda*, *Tillandsia polzii* and *Tillandsia neglecta* all rapidly form clumps that produce multiple inflorescences. This is important because the individual inflorescence on each rosette has a short life. The multiple inflorescences make up for this. The two remaining species in flower belong to a different group. *Tillandsia leonamiana* was also a new entry in the flowering log and *Tillandsia klausii* continued its now months long blooming season.

Only *Vriesea carinata* was still in flower during the month.

We still have a few more weeks where there is a danger of frost. With the warm weather, and consequent rapid plant growth, any temperatures near freezing will be very hard on our plant. Keep your guard up for those few weeks.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **February 16-17, 2013**

Gardenfest Coral Springs  
Riverside Park  
205 Coral Ridge Drive  
Coral Springs, Florida  
<http://gardenfestcoralsprings.com/>

### **February 23 - February 24**

Plant & Garden Festival at Selby Gardens  
811 South Palm Avenue  
Sarasota, FL 34236  
(941) 366-5731  
[www.selby.org/events/plant-garden-festival](http://www.selby.org/events/plant-garden-festival)

### **March 8-10, 2013**

Fairchild's 11<sup>th</sup> Annual International Orchid Festival  
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/Events/?date=03-2013&eventID=746>

### **March 9-10, 2013**

South Florida Palm Society Montgomery Sale  
12595 SW 57 Ave.  
9:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
[www.southfloridapalmsociety.org](http://www.southfloridapalmsociety.org)

### **March 23-24, 2013**

Gardenfest 2013  
Volunteer Park  
12050 W. Sunrise Blvd.  
Plantation, FL 33232  
<http://www.bromeliadsocietybc.com/calendar.htm>

### **March 30-31, 2013**

Flamingo Gardens Orchid/Bromeliad Sale  
3750 South Flamingo Road  
Davie, FL 33330  
<http://www.flamingogardens.org/>

### **April 5-7, 2013**

Tropiflora Spring Festival  
[www.tropiflora.com](http://www.tropiflora.com)

### **April 13-14, 2013**

Bromeliad Show for BSSF  
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden  
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/Events/?date=04-2013&eventID=740>

### **April 20-21, 2013**

The Food and Garden Festival Featuring the 34th Annual Spring Plant Sale  
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden  
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/Events/?date=04-2013&eventID=747>

**April 27-28, 2013**

Mounts Spring Sale  
Mounts Botanical Garden  
559 N. Military Trail  
West Palm Beach, FL  
<http://www.mounts.org/>

**May 4-5, 2013**

Broward County Plant Affair  
Plantation Heritage Park  
1100 South Fig Tree Lane  
Plantation, FL  
<http://www.broward.org/calendar/welcome.htm>

**May 17-19, 2013**

Redland International Orchid Festival  
Fruit and Spice Park  
24801 SW 187th Ave  
Miami, FL  
<http://www.redlandorchidfestival.org/> (Hacked by extremists – so wait)

**September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

Bromeliad Extravaganza – Hosted by the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society  
Indian Rocks Beach, Clearwater  
Holiday Inn Harborside. Free parking!  
Contact Judy Lund at 727/439-7782  
[glund@Tampabay.rr.com](mailto:glund@Tampabay.rr.com)

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**MURDER IN CORBIN A**

© by Robert Meyer

PREVIOUS CHAPTERS MAY BE SEEN IN  
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

**65.**

Before Marin's appointment with Boss could be made, the Captain walked toward Boss and yelled, "Vazquez, Rodriguez, and Marlene, in my office – pronto." Immediately, the trio marched into the office and as Marlene closed the door, her superior began his well thought out tirade.

"You people are some of Miami-Dade's best. And, out there is a two-bit punk who is seeking to kill bromeliad people who no one gives a hoot about, with the exception of a few eccentric wives and tree-hugging birkenstock-wearing 1960's wannabes. This embarrassment is coming to a close, whether we are involved or others do the job for us. Now I hear the

dead were on their way out the door before some idiot lanced them with knives, or leaves, or sticks and stones. Heck, these crazy plant growing people are out there throwing poisons in the air to make their plants redder, or greener, or more purple – and what for? Cancer causing liquids are invading their bloodstreams, diving into their kidneys and other organs, and preparing them for an early retirement from life – all for the sake of a fatter, bigger, more colorful plant sitting out in their yard. Nuts. That's what I say. Fat plants, red plants, green plants are not what make motive for murder. And, each week I get a burning sensation in my keister. I am told each week to take a visit to the chief, and each time I look like a baboon locked in a room full of Bengay. I stand there wide eyed and nostrils flared, mouth shut, and drooling whenever I want to speak. Why? I'll tell you why. Because I got nothing to say about some idiot killing without motive, or whose motive we know nothing about. Now, I called the three of you plant participating people to do me one favor – solve this damn thing! Now. And when it is solved do not come gallivanting toward me on your way to erase the murders off the main board. Do not expect anything from me but an acknowledgment that each of you merely did your job. For God knows – no one seems to be doing it right now. Now get out of my office and get your thumbs out of you know where, and find me a criminal. Find him or her now. And, when this case is over, tell me that we can make an announcement to the press."

And the three left the room, Marin stood across from them akimbo, understanding that each of his interrogators felt their superior's vituperative actions had been received seriously. But, he hoped their misery would not become his as well. He hoped they would be modest in the wake of their scolding.

"Marin – in Room A now and don't think about asking for a drink or anything until you tell us what you should have told us weeks ago!" Boss yelled.

Walking into the room with something more than a slight amount of indignation, Marin took a deep breath and allowed his maturity to overcome anxieties. He knew the cops were angry at the murderer, not he. And, as he knew he had not committed the acts, he would not become the exclusive focus of their antagonisms. So, he gently sat in the intentionally very uncomfortable chair and awaited their arrival.

Boss entered, followed by Rodriguez and Marlene, and slammed his yellow pad on the table, and calmly spoke. "Write down on that pad of paper everything you know about the Code. And, just when you are

about to drop your pen and think there is nothing more to write, read it over, and write more about what you think would be a reason for anyone who knows or wants the Code to want to kill Bea, the Judge and Candy.

And, immediately upon finishing his statement, Boss left the room, followed in succession by Marlene and Rodriguez. As they shut the door and walked far enough away from the door, Rodriguez asked whether the old goat would cough up the information.

“If he doesn’t” Boss responded, “he will be not only sign that paper, but will assuredly sign his own death certificate. Now, to speed things up, I want you to call in Linares, give her the speech I gave Marin, and leave the room with her alone with a pad and pen.”

#### 66.

When handling a corpse, Joshua requested only one thing – accuracy. As a young professional, this had never been a problem. But, when the corpse of Stitch arrived, with her beautiful young body clad in some of Victoria Secret’s most revealing item, he felt hampered in his ability to be professional. Stitch was not just gorgeous, she was ideal.

He thought to himself, “What do we know that she does not have? Well, since she is not a member of the bromeliad group, she should not have Florel issues in her system. But, if I had to draw some blood, and extract some tissue, I would be entitled, in the name of science – mind you – to see her one more time on the table.” And, so more tests were done.

When the results arrived, the results were good news and good news. Each surprising news. What he thought could never be, was. She had the same Florel poisoning that Bea and the Judge had. She was being slowly poisoned, and then before she could be eradicated the clever way, someone came in and dug a long knife into her back and delivered an immediate death to the lovely little woman. Joshua thought again, : “What does this mean? How did she get this poisoning? How can she be in common with the others?” Then the answer hit him. “She, not Candy, was the target of the murder.” “Wow” he thought. “One of the bromeliad people was young and good looking – who would have thought?” And, then he laughed to himself in the isolation of the morgue where laughter was far too uncommon.

But, as his mind raced through several thoughts about several topics in moments, he concluded one thing: “I have got to tell Boss about this immediately.” And so he began to run to the precinct, and immediately stopped. He picked up a phone and called instead.

“Hello” Boss drolly said to the speaker of his phone while watching Room A with his eyes to see whether or not Marin was still writing on the yellow pad.

“Detective Vazquez, this is Joshua. From the morgue. Remember me?”

“Yes, I remember you. Why or what brings rise for you to call me?”

“It’s the new corpse. The young girl with the negligence. She is a bromeliad person. She is like the others. She was going to die if she hadn’t been stabbed. You understand?”

“No. No and no. What in the heck are you trying to tell me. And, before you answer, step back, pretend you are speaking to the least intelligent person on this earth, and relay the information you have to that person. Okay, speak to me.” Boss said.

“Well, she had Florel poisoning. She had the same amount of deterioration in her organs as Bea and the Judge. She was just like them physically. Whoever poisoned them was poisoning her too?” Joshua felt proud of his proclamation.

“Let me get one thing clear. I am no scientist, but I have an idea that I need an answer to. Is there any chance that the knifing, murdering lout who killed these three people, assuming it is the same person, carried cooties of Florel poisoning or had a bottle with him, which slipped into their blood system when they were murdered, and that act was what brought their respective Florel levels out of the stratosphere?” Boss did not know the answer, and thought maybe his hypothetical would give the science guy something to think about. A pause was well expected.

Without pause, Joshua said, “Nope.” Silence on the phone line prompted Joshua to give an explanation to his answer. “The Florel poisoning is indicative of prolonged exposure, not an isolated incident. And, the prolonged exposure must be for months to reach the levels we have seen in Bea, Stitch and Judge. Does that answer your question?”

“Yes” And, then Boss walked into Room A, and looked straight into the eyes of Marin and said, “Change the topic of the today’s paper. Just when you are about to drop your pen and think there is nothing more to write, read it over, and write more about what you think would be a reason for anyone, who knows or wants the Code, would want to kill Bea, the Judge and my new corpse – a girl named Stitch.”