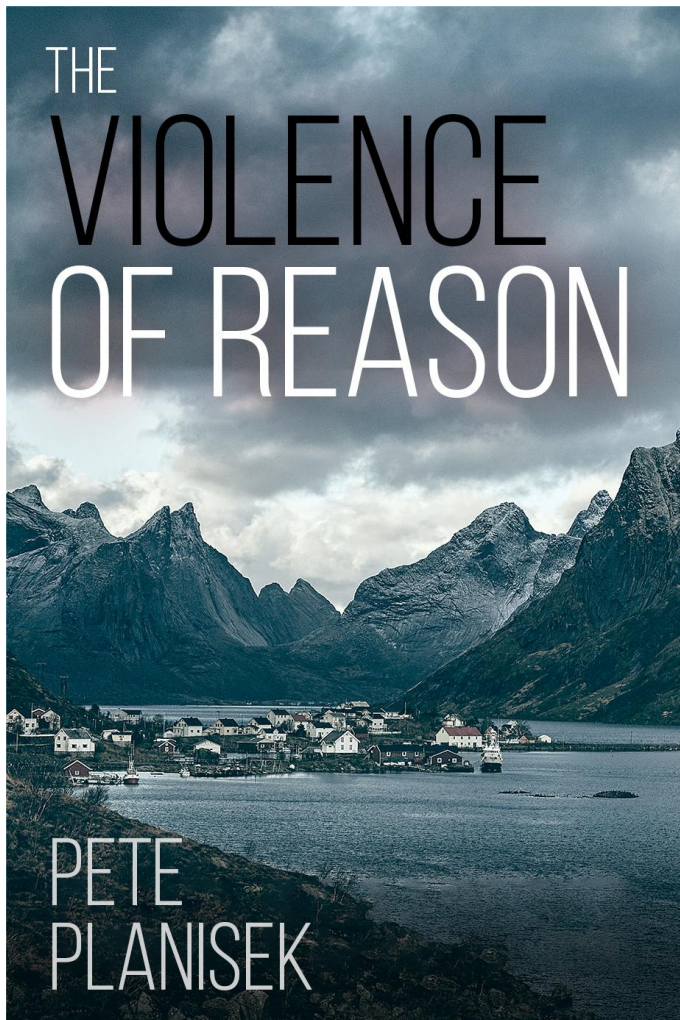




# *The Violence of Reason*

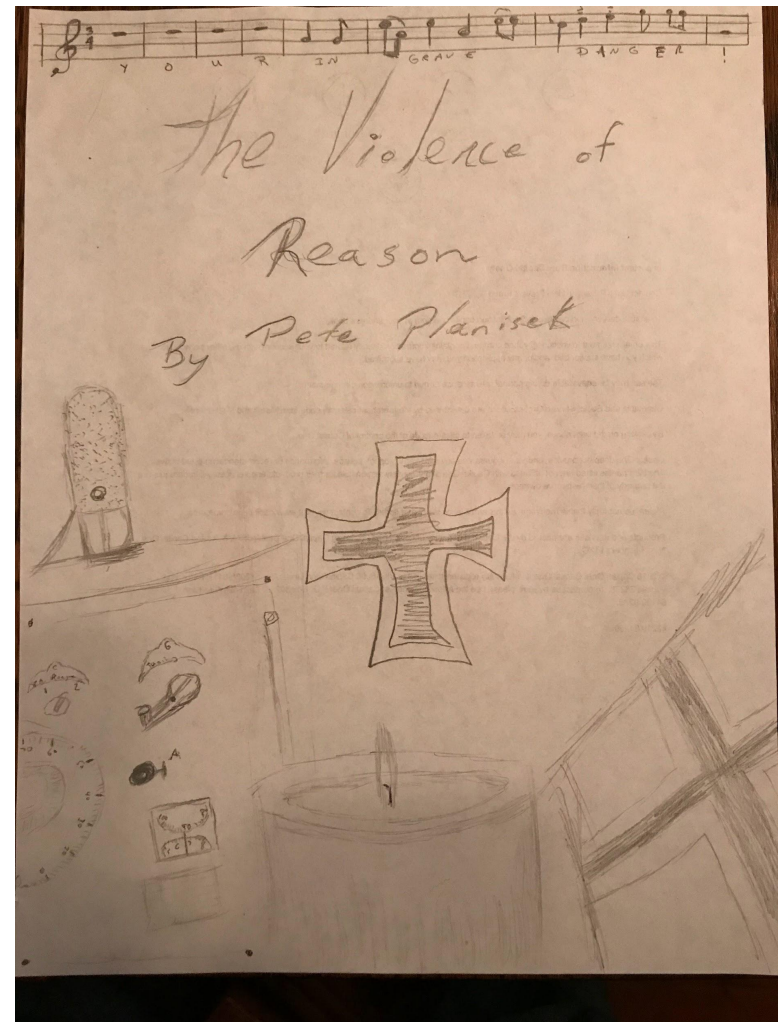
## *The story behind the cover*

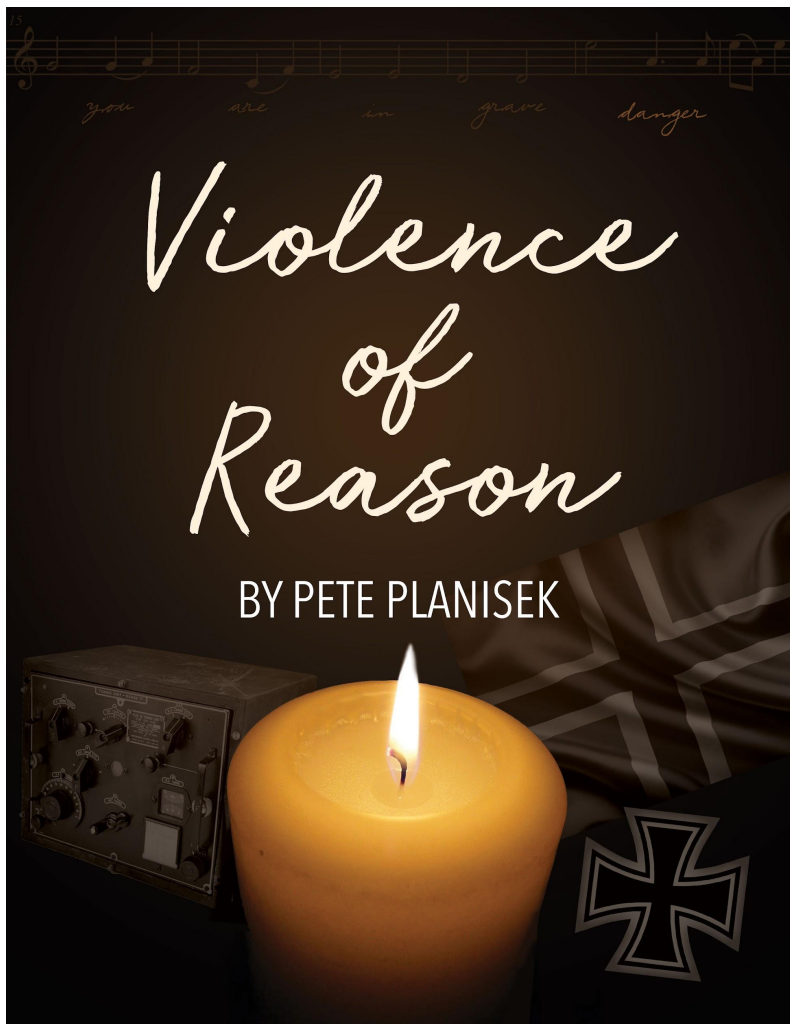
Right or wrong, people do judge a book by it's cover. Picking up a book from the shelf is like a blind date. The font, the blurb, the images, the quality of the printing and paper all make a quick and, in some cases, lasting impression. Publishers and authors spend a lot of time, money, and effort to make that impression one that will leave that potential reader wanting to stop flirting by the shelf and get them into a serious relationship with that work by having them walk out the door with a new treasure. What follows is the evolutionary journey of *The Violence of Reason's* book cover to give you a better insight into the process.



This is one of three early prototypes for the cover. All three used copyright free images of Norway and each set a unique, often, brooding mood. The problem was that while they were scenic, none of them really gave the reader any insight into the genre or any of the elements in the actual story. The cover engages the reader with visual storytelling. This is more compelling and encourages the reader to actually read the book blurb. If the cover doesn't grab, the reader isn't going to bother reading the blurb. So a new approach was adopted.

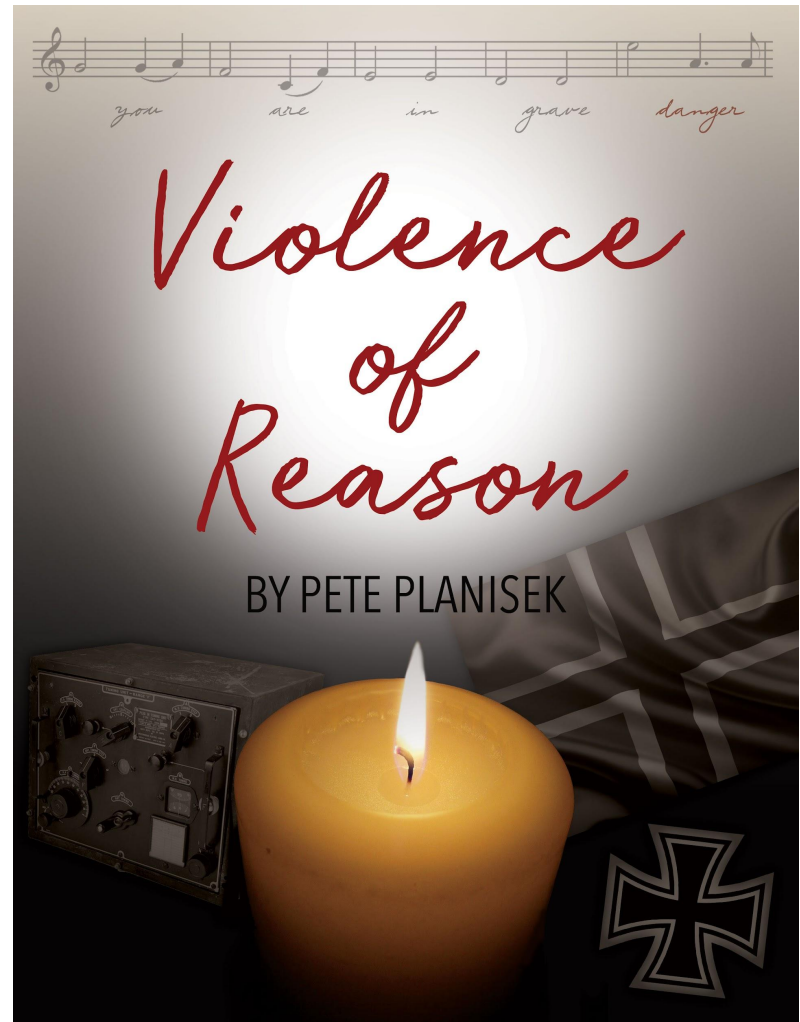
I enjoy sketching and wasn't doing a good enough job of conveying what I was after with my design team so I began to think of images linked to elements of the story itself. There was zero chance of me putting a swastika on the cover so I settled on using the German iron cross instead. The plot and setting needed to be conveyed so the Norwegian flag made sense. Spies and code use are in the story and made for an interesting visual. The radio likewise plays a role and finally the candle is meant to underlight the images around it to help create a mood. My best sketch? No, but it did the trick visually to move the project forward.





This was the first attempt at bringing the sketch into a graphic layout. The elements are clearly here but it is crowded and the lighting is dark, all but obscuring the music and words at the top. The musical notes were fun to figure out as was finding a usable pic for an era appropriate radio set. For all these reasons adjustments were made.

This next step mostly addressed the lighting of the cover. The images are much easier to see but it is still overly crowded and I began to see it as overly static. It needed more to it and to fix the overcrowding problem. I needed something unique to both my book and to Norway. I also wanted to keep playing with the font. I liked the color and general aesthetic but a little more tinkering might make it pop and solve the overcrowding issue. So ...





PETE PLANISEK

# *The Violence of Reason*

I was introduced to a wonderful woman named Debbie Skarsten, who through a mutual friend, agreed to let me stop by her house and paw through a treasure trove of photos that she and her husband, Kevin, had taken over the years on several trips to Norway. One of these was of a historic stave church, which I'd included as a key setting in the book. It provided the visual sparkle I was after and balanced nicely with the Norwegian flag. The radio image was dropped completely and the iron cross moved to the background, a looming shadow projecting over everything. A new font was also inserted for the title but the coloring remained the same. Only one final adjustment was needed.

A few final lighting adjustments and an updated Norwegain flag were the finishing touches to the process.

Each of the covers to my books have an interesting story behind them and it's fun to watch how prototyping ideas keeps getting you one step closer to seeing the image in your mind realized. I've been blessed to that family and friends have always been willing to lend their own creative talents to make projects a reality. And so a special thanks to Elizabeth Nordquest, Scott Coons, Trish Sanders and the Skarstens for this final cover.

