

2050

© 2009 David Borland

Prologue

In 2040 the United States of America is officially dissolved by a Constitutional Convention. State referendums held in 2038 gave citizens the opportunity to decide what new country they would become part of in 2040. This historic event was a result of unprecedented immigration of Latino's into the U.S. and at the same time, a vast emigration of American citizens to new countries. During this same time, drastic climate changes has created historic draught conditions over most of the Northern Hemisphere, except in the Northern Appalachians, which is one of the world leader's in precipitation. This story combines these unprecedented changes of demographic and water concentrations in the world.

Atlantica, a new country formed from northeastern states of the U.S., now controls the world's largest man made aquifer that was built by the U.S. and is located in the Appalachian mountains. Atlantica decides to use the Aquifer System to gain economic concessions from neighboring countries in violation of its original intent and mandates established by the U.N. This decision would be a threat to peace in the Northern Hemisphere.

Kurt Sloan, the last of an Anglo Scotch-Irish family, decides to escape Atlantica. His journey, along a forgotten hiking trail, is filled with unexpected events and people, symbolizing the human and natural changes in the year, 2050.

chapter one

His mind was made up. He was leaving tonight. Kurt Sloan now knew how he would get to the small village of his ancestors in Scotland. Up to this point in time, the problem had been the execution of his plan. The time that he'd spent delving into the Sloan family history, had ironically provided him the way and means to leave his beloved homeland in the year 2050.

Kurt worked for the government of Alleghenia, which was the western most State in the new country of Atlantica. His job site was in the Castro Library in the University Center section of Pittsburgh. As he thought of his work station, he chuckled to himself. Most of his associates were either Latino or Africano, and the joke was that he was the token Anglo. In truth, he was. Kurt graduated from the University of Pittsburgh receiving both a Masters and Doctorate in Historical Research prior to the fall of the U.S. Kurt had then been hired by Alleghenia to work as a Historical Research Associate for Dr. William Alexander. As the years went on, even with constant assurances by Dr. Alexander that conditions for Anglos would improve, he realized he did not fit in with the new country. Kurt was an outsider in his homeland and his condition had become intolerable. After toying with the idea for months, he made up his mind to leave Alleghenia and go to Scotland. This had been a strange time in his life and he thought about how things had finally worked out.

For an Anglo in an Administration job it was extremely difficult to get a visa. Security was tight and he would never be permitted to take any data with him, family history or not. He had decided to handle the problem of leaving after he found all the information he wanted.

Kurt lived a quiet social life. In the past year he spent much of his off time in the basement of the Library, where the historical records of the defunct Carnegie Library were kept. On his off-days he searched for Sloan family records. He found numerous references to his family in the archives.

Recently he concentrated on searching for data concerning the Pittsburgh Aquifer System, where his father had been chief project engineer. He wanted this to be part of the Sloan history that he took with him. He could locate nothing definitive, just newspaper articles on the building of the Aquifer, until two weekends ago, when not only did he find data on the Aquifer, but the solution of how he was going to leave Atlantica.

Late on that Saturday, while continuing his research at the library, he took a break and began walking through the dark halls. He noticed a sign over one of the rooms that said "Planning Department." This meant nothing to him, however it aroused his interest. He entered and switched on the light which exposed a room full of metal cabinets. He browsed around and noticed one of the cabinets had a nameplate that read, "PLANNING SCHEMATICS, PITTSBURGH AQUIFER SYSTEM, 2022-2042". He was overwhelmed with his discovery.

Over the weekend, he scanned all the materials into his data-file, not spending any time to digest the contents. He was concerned Security monitoring would pick up his heat imprint or notice the download activity. The next day he returned to the library and his good fortune continued. While returning files to the archive room he saw, propped up against the corner wall, a very colorful advisement which he had never noticed before. It read, "THE GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE GRAND OPENING, MAY 1, 2008". He looked closely at the smaller print. It described the opening of a new trail that would go from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C. He remembered another cabinet he had seen before that was labeled "Allegheny Passage". He found it along a side wall. Kurt opened the top drawer and discovered maps and mileage descriptions of the trail through the Allegheny and Laurel Mountains into the Potomac River valley of Maryland. Its final destination was still Washington, however, this was now the capital of the new country of Columbia. He could not believe what he was looking at. He instantly realized that in these two days, he may have found the solution to leaving Atlantica.

His plan would be to leave as soon as possible. He knew once he left, Security would become aware of his absence. At that point they would download his work and personal data activity looking for clues as to why he left and where he was going. Normal travel routes would be impossible for him to use. The trail was his escape route and the Aquifer data that he previously retrieved saved could possibly be used to barter in Columbia for passage to Europe. He was aware that Columbia had been trying, unsuccessfully, to gain water access from Atlantica when the Aquifer opened early next year. Kurt would begin his hike on the old trail to Columbia. He thought of the journey ahead and the irony that the trail, opened in 2008, designed to go from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C., was his escape route in the year 2050. He knew his decision was dangerous, but absolutely necessary for him to achieve his goal of freedom.

Kurt was leaving the library for the last time. He walked down the wide, marbled steps rolling in his hand, the silver capsule that contained his family history and the Aquifer data. He hoped that its contents would be sufficient to convince Columbian authorities to grant him air passage. He hadn't studied the data in detail but one thing struck him as he remembered his first sighting of the documents. On the last page was his father's signature as Chief Engineer and the notation that "This System Is For All The People of Our Hemisphere".

The underground water system had been built by the United States government with the capacity to collect, deliver, and recycle water to most of the land mass of the United States. Because of a combination of factors: global warming, solar activities, and natural hemispheric changes in wind currents, the precipitation zones in North America had drastically changed over the last fifty years. Beginning early in the century, the Northern Appalachian mountains began to receive annually more precipitation than any other region in the Northern Hemisphere. The United States recognized this drastic change. Concurrently other areas of the Country were becoming drought ridden. A massive project to create the world's largest manmade aquifer system was designed and construction began in 2022. This system would capture and retain water from the various rivers and streams in the Appalachian area; six new retention lakes would be developed; a huge underground storage capacity would be constructed combining newly discovered caverns and lined abandoned coal mines; and a reverse conduit system that would return water to be recycled. It was the largest government project in world history. It was close to being completed when the United States ceased to exist and the country of Atlantica, within whose borders the Aquifer System was located, gained control of this state-of-the-art system.

Leaving the library, he looked across the empty street and could make out against the fading light, the ghostly outline of the gothic Cathedral of Learning, once the centerpiece of the University of Pittsburgh. It looked like a forty-four story castle in the sky. Kurt knew the story of its building and that funding was assisted with pennies donated by the children of Pittsburgh over one hundred twenty years ago. Tonight, it rose straight into the darkness. To Kurt it looked as if it came from the days of medieval England, instead of the days of the First Depression Era in the United States. A few lights were sprinkled about its base, but from there, all the way to the top, it was dark. He recalled as a young boy how the building would be a blaze in white light. In recent years, it had sadly reminded him of an abandoned cathedral in disrepair.

Five years ago, the Alleghenia Administration moved the University System to a new campus along the Monongahela River. Most of the buildings in this area were now government facilities like the Library where he worked. The Cathedral remained, too huge to move and too beautiful to destroy. To the old timers that remained it was a symbol of a city and an area that had created the industrial power of the defunct United States. The

Administration had decided to use the Cathedral as a receptacle for its records. Kurt was saddened by that news, but at least the Cathedral would remain standing, as it had for so much of the history of this area. Its darkened shadow was next to the other ominous looking structure in the old school campus, the Heinz Chapel.

The beautiful chapel seen this cool evening, gave Kurt chills, as he remembered meditative visits where he sat amongst its magnificent stain glass windows. In some ways, the Chapel symbolized what had become of Kurt's state of mind. What had been, was no more.

Kurt turned away from the Cathedral and Heinz Chapel, and began walking briskly toward the Panther Hollow. He passed in front of another relic of a long ago time, the shuttered Frick Museum. This area was where he had matured and learned about the world. Now, as he was leaving, it sadly seemed just a collection of antiquated buildings.

The walk was depressing, especially since it was probably the last time he would be on this sidewalk he knew so well. Shortly, he reached the weathered Panther Hollow Bridge, which now only had two walking lanes, vehicular traffic having been banned for the last few years. He picked up his pace, letting his long legs stretch free from their daily confinement in his office space.

He was born and raised in a secure old Scotch-Irish Pittsburgh family. Even as a child he had an avid curiosity as to how things worked. Early on, it was puzzles. Later in school, it was geometry; then engineering; then physics; and finally, any type operational system. Oddly with all his mathematical and logical interests, his first love became history, concentrating especially on how political and social systems developed. This passionate interest evolved into his professional work, now with the Historical Commission of Atlantica. The position gave him the authority to do personal research, which was, ironically, what enabled him to recently do his family research.

The history of his native homeland became his passion. As a young man, he was an idealist and sympathetic to the demands of the new influx of Latino immigrants that had begun early in the century. Slowly, then in a tidal wave, the Latino culture began to dominate many parts of the United States, including this area. When the U.S. was dismantled and Atlantica formed, the reality of the new culture gradually began to overwhelm him. By that time, a great majority of U.S. citizens had either emigrated. The emigration decisions made by citizens during this time were primarily based on their cultural, religious and ethnic similarities.

Kurt stayed on, but increasingly it became more difficult for him. He had to learn Spanish as a work requirement because it was the language of government and business. Few people spoke English. Six months ago, life became worse. The Administration tightened travel for Anglos, who worked in sensitive positions. For reasons that he could not understand, his position was included in this classification. From that point, Kurt experienced a confinement he hadn't felt before and realized he could no longer remain.

Kurt looked ahead. The bridge was empty, except for a light fog coming up from the valley below.

chapter two

Kurt began to work for the new government after the break up of the U.S. in 2040. He had graduated from his Masters Program and written his thesis on what he called, "Two American Revolutions". It compared the time of the 1770's to the 2030's and the forces that created both the beginning and end of the United States. The work was extremely well received by academia in Atlantica.

He was approached by Atlantica to work in their new Historical Review Commission. The work was recognized in Paris by the UN who was actively attempting to coordinate the collection of historical records of the U.S. Actually he found out afterwards that it was the pressure from the UN Historical Commission and Dr. William Alexander that almost forced Atlantica to offer him the position. At first he refused to consider the new country's work offer, thinking he may go to Europe like most of his friends had done. Some associates with whom he had become close while at the University of Pittsburgh and who were advocates of the new country, urged him to sign on with Atlantica. It was the "Wave of The Future," as one of them had said to him. This plus his idealism and the practicality of working in historical research about his homeland convinced him to accept

the offer. So he joined the Historical Commission and began his work with Dr. Alexander. Kurt found out in his first year working with the Commission, Anglo history was not a priority with Atlantica.

Kurt lived sparsely with only the basic necessities. He kept his prized personal possessions securely in his leather carrying case, which he had with him at all times. It was a sense of everything being temporary that Kurt felt. He remembered his father always had their most vital records and a set of emergency equipment, rations, and tools available in the cellar of their home. He said to Kurt that you should always have an emergency plan in place in case of any disaster, natural or man made. He never forgot this and the leather case contained his personal items, including his data-file with his complete ID required by all governments and the UN.

Citizens ID's contained DNA, photos, voicescans and a life profile. He also had a few personal keepsakes such as a gold piece from his mother and personal discs with long ago special events spent with his family, including several video scans with his father before he died. Also, in his leather portfolio was his hand written history of the times in which he was living. He began this project when he started working with Dr. Alexander. The work picked up from where his Master's treatise left off.

His parents always said his mind was his strongest personal possession. They constantly kidded him about living in his own world because so many times when, they were talking to him, he seemed to be somewhere else. His mind was always working on some new idea which he would write into his notebook. He preferred old fashioned way of recording, writing. It always felt more direct from brain to paper. Eventually, his thoughts, ideas and life experiences were written in his portfolio.

On the bridge, Kurt felt cool air hit his face as the temperature had dipped unseasonably low. He would need to dress warmer tonight when he began his journey. He stopped when he reached the center of the bridge. There were only two low-density light scans at either end and at the center it was dark. He thought of the old movies of London as he looked ahead through the foggy scene.

Kurt walked to the railing and looked down through the floating light at the abandoned roof of the skating arena, which had been built after the turn of the century. Beside the darkened arena were the yellow rail lights of the tram system. According to an article he read in the defunct Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, this was the most heavily used line of the old mono-rail system. That system went about thirty miles in six directions from the Golden Triangle, the center of the City. Now there were three tram lines which intersected in Center City where the three rivers met.

Kurt was suddenly aware of the sound of shuffling feet. He looked through the mist and could see a man walking towards him. He leaned over the bridge once again, as if unconcerned, then turned and began to walk towards the man. The shape ahead came into view as they both reached the center of the bridge. He was a large man with sloping shoulders. Kurt could hear his heavy breathing, as if the man was having physical problems. "Who are you, Mister?" came a deep, gruff voice.

"A worker, that's all", Kurt replied softly.

"Where are you from?"

"Greenfield," Kurt quickly answered. "Why do you ask?"

"I'm just checking. Couple hooligans ran over this way after trying to ransack a house over by the old CMU campus. The System picked them up, but they must have sensed the signal. Anyway I'm looking for them. Got ID?" he grouched.

Kurt reached into his data-file, pulled out his ID card and gave it to the man. He looked at the picture, read it the description, looked at Kurt, and then gave it back to him.

"Looks okay. Have you seen anybody in a hurry on the bridge?"

"Nobody, haven't seen a soul since I left work." He waited for a response. The man looked at him and didn't say anything.

"Can I pass?" Kurt said quietly, trying not to rekindle any anxiety in the stranger.

“Sure, get on with yah. I see a couple more coming across up ahead there. I’ll find those bastards.”

Kurt walked passed the man. He was a Publican, whose duties were like the beat patrolmen of many years ago. Most of them were Anglo ex-policeman from the U.S. time. Even though most of the Anglo population had left the area, some older workers with basic skills remained and were hired by the new government. As Kurt passed the man he could make out the uniform he was wearing. It was a blue with several red diamond shaped patches signifying External Security. This force had been highly successful in keeping the streets and businesses safe in the major cities of Atlantica, especially Pittsburgh.

“Keep your eyes open for those hooligans,” he called back to Kurt. Kurt picked up his pace as he crossed to the end of the bridge and headed his boarding house.

Kurt pounded up the narrow street with little light coming from antiquated solar street lamps. He knew this street brick by brick. As he reflected about his past and his upcoming departure, he thought of his best friend Raoul and Dr. Alexander his mentor and supervisor. He blurted out, “My God, Raoul and Dr. Alexander. I haven’t told them. Raoul will understand my leaving, but Dr. Alexander will not. I have to say my goodbye’s to them. They’re the only two people I have to see,” he continued.

Dr. Alexander, his eighty year old Anglo mentor, who taught Kurt everything there was to know about historical research. Dr. Alexander was his boss, and Kurt knew he would be upset at his leaving. He was a fascinating man, who had fought in the Terror Wars of 1991 and 2003 in Iraq. As a professor at NYU in New York, he was almost killed in the 9/11 Terror Attack of 2001 in lower Manhattan. It changed his life. He re-enlisted at age thirty three after 9/11 and went back to Iraq where he was wounded. After returning, he resumed his teaching career and was still going strong at eighty. He had been a patriot of the U.S. And as a teacher, he believed in the yearnings throughout history of human struggle for freedom. As he mellowed, he believed strongly that negotiation and compromise were preferred over the killing of innocents for any reason by anyone. Dr. Alexander’s wife was dead and his only daughter had left for England years ago with his grandchildren. It was shortly after his wife died, that he hired Kurt as his research assistant. In the ensuing years they had become close, both in their work pursuits and as friends. In the work place, the doctor researched historical events and their meaning, while Kurt supported him, especially in the data and analysis work.

Dr. Alexander was the only Anglo to head a department for the Administration. He was a world renowned historian and had been recommended for the position by the United Nations. His primary focus was to create a historical database on the new country and to develop a preservation program for the area’s history. This is the section where Kurt worked which allowed him to work late and on weekends without any apparent increased Security monitoring. Kurt realized that telling Dr. Alexander would be difficult and he would probably not want him to go. He had already said it on many occasions.

Raoul was a different story, knowing him he might want to throw a party. Raoul Lopez-Hernandez was a ‘life-liver’, as Kurt always called him. Raoul came from a humble background in Puerto Rico. He came to Pittsburgh and was hired by Atlantica because he was Latino with strong satellite communications skills. That was a positive aspect of the revolution when it had elevated a man of Raoul’s caliber to a top-level position. Kurt understood and appreciated Raoul getting this major professional break because he deserved all he ever received.

Raoul, his wife Luisa, and his youngest sister, Carla, lived in Squirrel Hill, not far from Kurt’s boarding house. Dr. Alexander lived on top of Browns Hill Road, also a short distance from his house. Kurt would be able to stop by their homes before he began his journey. Raoul’s other sister, Maria, with whom Kurt had an intense romantic relationship last year, was now pursuing her career in France. Maria had been a highlight of his last years in Pittsburgh, but was a woman on a mission that did not include Kurt. His friendship with Raoul had endured and their relationship and had actually become stronger. Raoul’s basic decency, honesty, and great sense of humor, endeared him to Kurt. For some reason, even coming from completely different backgrounds they had hit it off. Not to have that friendship would be painful.

Ironically, Kurt felt as strong in his bond with Dr. Alexander, who had become not only a father figure, but a life figure; someone whose life and ethics he wanted to emulate. To be as vital as Dr. Alexander at his age, was

what Kurt wanted with his own life at any age. It was going to be tough not to have these two men in his life in the years ahead.

Kurt's mind wandered from Raoul and Dr. Alexander to a sudden tightness in his gut. He wondered if he was doing the right thing by leaving his home and this country. A smile spread slowly across his face as he realized how various levels of one's thinking converged creating difficult choices for how one was to lead their life. He was confident of his decision to leave and how he was going to do it. It was rational, realistic, and probably more dangerous than he had anticipated.

Suddenly, light blossomed brilliantly as the full moon was freed from a quickly moving dark cloud mass overhead, a reminder to Kurt that no matter what humans do on this earth, nature just keeps rolling along. "Well, old man," as he looked at the outline of the same face he imagined he'd seen on the moon since he was a small boy, "I know I'll see you no matter where I go." He would be in his room in a few minutes and he walked even faster through the now dead black night as the skittish moon had disappeared once more.

chapter three

Kurt reached the bottom of the hill and looked up at the boarding house that sat astride a bluff above a curve in the Monongahela River. He knew the history of the house. It had been owned by the Bolena family, who had gone back to Bari, Italy, where the family had come from in the 1880's. They had deserted it seven years earlier. Last year Kurt found a few pictures of family members in a small attic room. Faces of great-grandfathers taken in Italy, then grandfathers, fathers and their grandsons. The whole family was gone now, either dead or back in the old country. The house was now owned by the Administration, who docked Kurt's pay each month to cover his rent and power charges.

Kurt entered the house walking over the creaking wooden outside porch and sliding his card into the security lock. He climbed the stairs and at the landing listened to hear for the only other person living in the house, Martin McDonald from Jamaica, a graduate student at the University. He'd told Kurt that he had finished his primary college degree and was now headed into the secondary level. McDonald told Kurt his objective was to get to Paris and earn a Masters Degree in Material Delivery Systems. In the past ten years, Paris had become the educational center of the world. "Special Graduates" sponsored by their countries went to the World Specialist Centers for Masters Degree. Paris had become in many respects, the world's de facto capital. Kurt realized that McDonald must be both extremely bright and ambitious. He had found out that he was also a super patriot of Atlantica.

Kurt continued up the stairs, walked down the hall past Martin McDonald's room, which was quiet and dark. Kurt quickly entered his room and plopped down on his mattress. He was tired and immediately began to think about his neighbor as he lay there with his eyes closed. During the time Martin and Kurt had shared the weathered frame house they rarely saw each other. Whenever they did, it was usually Martin who did all the talking. He would ramble on incessantly to Kurt about how he wanted to work for "his new country," as he put it, in trade and delivery methods. His goal was to specialize in material deliveries to poor countries in the world. After a few conversations, he began to throw jibes at Kurt for being part of the old, "slave way," a phrase he always managed to slip into the conversation.

Ironically, last night, Kurt had learned much more about Martin McDonald. McDonald had knocked on Kurt's door, shortly after he had returned to his room. "Got a minute, Sloan?" he had asked. Kurt opened the door and waved him in. McDonald sat down on the low bench in front of the window. They just stared at each other for a minute. Then Kurt began to unload his personal items on to his dresser. Finally he turned and asked McDonald what he wanted. The flood gates opened as McDonald went on about the future of Atlantica. How it was so unique in the world and that no doubt remnants of the old culture, referring to Anglo's, would do all they could to undermine the country. He went on a preaching tirade that loyalty to the country was above all, the most important value anyone should have. He railed about the past and the greatness of the future. He bragged about his upcoming appointment in Paris. McDonald then switched gears and began talking about how Kurt had an important job with the Administration and he should be proud that they had given him such a position. He mentioned specifically the Historical Commission and the research work he was doing with Director Alexander. This shocked Kurt as to how much he knew about his responsibilities. But McDonald changed subjects again,

when he asked him why he was still here in Pittsburgh. Kurt was stunned and couldn't respond, especially knowing that in his possession he had important data and was planning on leaving the country.

Before he could answer, McDonald again changed subjects by telling Kurt that he had informed the authorities that their house could be torn down because there would only be one tenant when he left for Paris to pursue his Masters program. McDonald explained the housing law required rental houses over hundred years be demolished unless they had a minimum of two residents.

Kurt sat there seething that this man would have taken such action without first advising him. He couldn't figure out why. McDonald lightened up as if trying to help Kurt by adding that there were many great old houses across the valley in Squirrel Hill. He suggested that Kurt move to one of those tenement facilities. Kurt remained silent, but his anger was building inside. A man he hardly knew was telling him where to live? Kurt remembered thinking that this strange man was irrational. He knew McDonald was a fiery patriot of Atlantica's cause, but he couldn't figure out why in the hell he seemed to be so interested in him.

Kurt finally answered by saying that if in fact they decided to tear down the house, he would find a place. His patience had run out and he slowly asked McDonald why he hadn't told him earlier? But before McDonald could answer, Kurt asked him point blank why he was so interested in him. He saw a half smile creep into his tanned face. McDonald mumbled something about how every citizen must always be alert at their work place and home for anything, or anyone not following the country's guidelines. 'We all must look out for the best interests of the community first, then the country,' Kurt remembered him saying. Then he had added, "We must follow the "new rules," as he put it.

Kurt had sized up this young, dark, narrow faced man. He barely knew him. For a few moments, nothing was said, as they both just sat looking at each other. Then McDonald again changed topics and attitude. His face grimaced, the sly smile returned to his face and he became openly hostile to Kurt. He repeated his earlier comment as to why an Anglo would still be here. "You don't seem to have any friends still here, so why remain in this new country", he asked. He then went one step further as if to goad Kurt by directly questioning Kurt's loyalty to the new country, referring to Kurt as a WASP, which was an even more derogatory slam than the usual Anglo.

At that point, Kurt waved his hand at McDonald and shouted at him, saying that he needed to watch what he was saying and he should get out of his room. As McDonald got up, Kurt sarcastically reminded him of the new constitution, which forbid ethnic slurs like "WASP".

This brought the half smile again to his face. In the back of Kurt's mind was the incredulity that this man was almost reading his mind, especially since he had in his possession, the data that would allow him to leave. It was as if McDonald knew what Kurt was going to do. His most provocative and insightful comment was a short sentence. After Kurt had countered with his racial slur rebuttal, McDonald said, "Anyone in a sensitive job just can't leave, you do know that, don't you?"

Kurt hadn't answered McDonald, he just stared at this man who stood looking at him with piercing eyes. Kurt finally said he was going to bed and McDonald had to leave. Without saying another word, McDonald went to the door. For a few seconds he just stared down at Kurt and then got in a parting shot. "No one", he said, "had better be disloyal to Atlantica". With that, he slammed shut the paneled wooden door. Kurt sat stunned on his bed, feeling the contempt and hatred still permeating from the absent young black man from the islands of the Caribbean.

As he lay there he thought about the past month. How he had found items disturbed in his room when he came back from work. Several times Martin was at his door, once as if he had just come out of his room. When he had asked Martin what he was doing at his door, Martin had made a snide comment that he was looking for his cat which they both knew was a lie because there was no cat in the house. From that day on Kurt kept his room secured. He could never figure out why Martin, this guy he hardly knew, would pay so much attention to him.

The whole business of Martin prying into Kurt's business first started a few months earlier when they were talking in the kitchen. It was a general conversation and for some reason, they had talked about going out for a beer. In the months they had shared this Greenfield house, they had never socialized. A week later Martin came

to his door and asked Kurt if he would like to go a 3-D bar in Shadyside, which used to be the chic area of old Pittsburgh. They spent over three hours discussing a variety of topics. What was memorable to Kurt was that it ended in a violent argument. Ever since that night, Kurt had gone over what was said and still couldn't figure out what had sent McDonald into such a rage. He kept thinking about the seething hatred that came to the surface in Martin, after a rather calm start in the evening when he vividly described to Kurt his upbringing.

For the first part of the evening they exchanged stories about their respective upbringings. Martin said he was twenty-three and was raised in a poor household with no father around. His home was a three-room shack without plumbing on the opposite side of the island from the capital, Kingston. He talked calmly and wistfully about the poverty, but also the peacefulness of the small village by the sea. He talked fondly of his grandmother who had raised him and had forced him into a religious school system where he excelled. He had stopped quickly, as if programmed and asked Kurt about his upbringing in Pittsburgh. Kurt told Martin that his life was a traditional one for the time. Somewhere in the back and forth conversation he had explained his alienation with what had become of his homeland. Martin, at first, didn't react to this longing for the "old America."

He told Martin how he had been chronicling the history of America in a ledger since graduating from university. At that point, Kurt had picked up his leather-covered ledger and placed it in front of him. He remembered clearly that moment because Martin sat up and stared at the large rough leather portfolio. Kurt went on to explain that it was his personal account of all that happened during the last days of the old country and the beginnings of Atlantica. Martin's interest was obvious and he wanted to know more about what Kurt had written over the years. Kurt felt an odd sense about his extreme interest in his ledger, so he changed the subject back to Martin's life. Kurt could still see Martin looking at the ledger for a few seconds before replying.

Martin then went on about his schooling and how he got accepted in the Atlantica University System, Alleghenia Campus, three years ago. "It was the true beginning of my life," he'd said forcefully. He emphasized that he was a dedicated believer in the country of Atlantica and the state of Alleghenia.

As the beer worked its ageless process of relaxation, this young man slowly became openly bitter, angry, and resentful of Kurt and what he represented. He went on about the old majorities, who he said several times had kept people, especially those of color, enslaved for hundreds of years. Kurt would look at him, take a sip, and let him go on. As it turned out he never did return to his early days. He spoke only about his future and what he was going to do with his life. Kurt remembered thinking what an admirable trait, but when he would bring up his own interest in history, Martin would become dismissive of anything to do with what had been in this land. He abhorred anything historical about the United States. As the night wore on, Kurt was getting tired physically and of this abusive, cocky young man. At one point as their obvious differences of viewpoint came to a head, they began to shout at each other.

"Why are you hanging around my city, if you're so goddamn nostalgic for the slave days, WASP?" he'd shouted.

At that comment Kurt got up to leave, but then sat down, looked Martin right in the eyes and in a quiet, forceful tone, said, "You ungrateful bastard. You got a perfect community. You took over everything that was already in place; schools, transportation, water supply, food distribution centers, everything, and in eight years this place is barely functioning. Maybe it's perfect for you and your fellow visionaries, or whatever you call yourselves, but it's not for those who for four hundred years built a society unique in the history of Man," Kurt bellowed in retort. "You've driven out the people that created all that you have today. I thought there would be some type of blending between us. Nothing old is valued," he shouted. There was the first silence.

A minute passed, Kurt rose and said, "I must go. I'm glad we met tonight. You know, McDonald, over the past five years, I've really tried to contribute something to this new country. I'm an idealist at heart. I wanted this new country, this new world, for that matter, to succeed even while regretting the loss of my own country, but the hatred and suspicion of the past, my past, makes living here impossible. The peoples of the world have retreated to enclaves of their own kind because they feared domination by those different than themselves. I guess you could say they are trying to avoid what you folks have endured for centuries. Isn't it an interesting phenomena we are living through?" he concluded wanting to continue.

Before he could continue, McDonald said tersely, “The oppressor fears oppression. What a laugh! What a joke on the history of this world. And you, the great white hope are scared and can’t handle what we have lived with for generations. Sorry, Anglo, it’s our turn, our rules. We lead, you follow. Get it!” he loudly screamed in Kurt’s face.

Kurt jumped up, looked down and retorted. “Do whatever you want. It’s your country now,” he thundered at Martin, who stared up at Kurt. A frozen grimace of hatred in his piercing black eyes glistened and reflected back at Kurt. Kurt couldn’t help seeing his half snarling smile that quivered vaguely at the corners of his mouth.

Martin kept that look at Kurt for what seemed like minutes. Finally he’d replied slowly saying that his government was now a country and a system for those who once were “outsiders”. “Now you are the outsider,” he’d said emphatically. He’d looked up at Kurt with burning contempt, got up, and walked past him without saying another word. Until last night, they had hardly spoken since that explosive evening, but McDonald’s unusual attention to Kurt and his room made him wary of the young man.

As he lay there now with his eyes wide open, he could picture McDonald looking at him with that sneer on his face. Since their row, he’d thought of him quite a bit and what a perfect recruit he was for this new government. Committed, and volatile, this was a man in the right place, at the right time. Kurt could still see his penetrating look of hatred, as if he embodied all of the oppression blacks had endured from whites over the past centuries. Conjecture, maybe, but that grim, tight drawn face with a hint of a smile at the corners of his mouth, was still in his mind.

He rose on his elbows and looked out the squared window into the night. He hoped he would not have to deal with his neighbor tonight. Kurt shook the thoughts of Martin from his mind, got up and began to organize his belongings for his trip. He had a long night ahead of him and he had to get out of there, now.

chapter four

Martin McDonald was found wandering about the island after a horrific hurricane battered Montego Bay. He was found by an elderly English teacher, who had lived in Jamaica her adult life. Constance Louise Mc Donald had taught at the Christian Seminary in Jamaica for thirty years. She had come from London via Glasgow in 1990, a young girl, abandoned by her only love, a pilot who had suddenly run off with an American girl studying in England. Constance McDonald came to Jamaica to work for the London based Christian Foundation. She was the Director when she found Martin wandering around the twisted, devastated resort town.

This middle aged, white woman took him in and since he was too young to communicate his name, she called him Martin after Martin Luther. Martin Luther was her hero, she felt he represented all that was wonderful and possible by man. Over the years she diligently attempted to locate Martin’s parents. She eventually learned that his mother, an African woman, had died in the storm. She had been a local teacher and her father had been a militant leader of his Zulu tribe in Africa. The story was that even after immigrating to Jamaica, he had been a marked man by a code of tribal revenge that still hadn’t died. According to locals, he remained a marked man, even in open and free Jamaica. Apparently one day Martin’s grandfather was found floating with his throat cut under a Kingston fishing pier.

As far as his father was concerned, rumor in the community was that Martin was born out of wedlock. His father was a British journalist named Thomas who worked for a newspaper in Kingston and locals believed his last name was Sutherland.

As it turned out, the religious Miss Mc Donald was a literal godsend for this handsome boy. Martin was bright, evident as soon as he entered school. No matter what grade he was in, he was the highest in his class. When he was old enough to understand his background, Miss McDonald shared with him what she had learned about his parents and grandfather.

In his young adulthood, Martin began to realize the inequities of his people. As he grew older, his own experiences began to haunt him. Deep inside he began to resent the treatment by the whites to the underprivileged of his country. To be black or mulatto, which he was, was still, near the middle of the 21st Century, to be at the lower end of the social spectrum. He learned early to play the “nice guy” role with the

Anglos and the Christian fanatics that he grew up with due to the environment created by Miss McDonald. She was truly a good person and he vowed she'd never be harmed by anyone because of all that she had done and sacrificed for him. Nevertheless, the more educated he became he realized that she represented all that he resented.

Because of Miss McDonald his life had been a good one. He received an excellent education from the best private schools in Jamaica. Martin was valedictorian from King George Academy and slated for Oxford. He played soccer and rugby. Not a large boy, he was compact, wiry, ran fast, and had excellent coordination. His peripheral vision would astound his teammates and drive his opponents crazy. He could come down the field with the ball and somehow fake to a forward while passing cross field to a streaking left forward without even looking. He was headed for Oxford, but several events occurred that totally changed his life.

Graduation from King George was a highlight for Martin. His speech was received with great acclaim by his fellow students. On graduation day he partied all day and night. Late in the graduation celebration he had finally scored with Patricia Cavendish, a classically beautiful white girl from Kingston, who also attended the co-ed King George. They'd dallied around for two years, friends and study group companions. It was all fun and nothing else until late that celebratory night. In the early morning hours on the North Beach, Martin and Patricia made love. It was his first real sexual experience.

Martin prepared himself as much as possible. Disease was the number one fear of the youth in Jamaica. Babies received shots for AIDS and other known venereal disease. The government had Sexual Establishments which offered clean sex, but what was one to do about the natural, impulsive sexual urges of youth? Martin had thought about Patricia's white body for sometime. When he touched her for the first time, precautions were lost in the passion of the moment like they had throughout the history of man.

Martin's conquest of her was a memorable moment. He and Patricia made love until the sun came up along the beach. In the early morning he dropped her off a block from her house and drove home. He collapsed into his small, quiet room in the home he and Miss McDonald had lived in all the years. In a few minutes he was sound asleep.

As he thought back on that experience with Patricia, he now realized that it had little or no value to his life plan. It was a conquest, an initiation. Now he analyzed it as a power issue. He appreciated her womanliness, but he loved the control he had over her. A black man controlling a white woman was a victory. In his mind he had won. She was desperately in love with him. In one day, however, she was gone. Her father shipped her away as soon as he found out about the relationship. This reaction by her father reinforced his growing awareness of the racial superiority and arrogance of the white race.

When he graduated from King George Academy he had a clear path for himself. His Jamaican government offered him a scholarship to Oxford, which he accepted. After Oxford, his final objective was to be accepted in the World Graduate Program in Paris, which allowed him to take his exam to study for his Doctorate. That was his plan.

Unexpectedly he received an offer from the new country of Atlantica which he perceived as an exceptional opportunity. They would provide him a scholarship to the University System in Pittsburgh, a government job and all expenses for three years. He could become a big fish in a seething cauldron of revolution.

Over the years he grew to resent the British sense of superiority, but what was odd, at the same time he'd gained a respect for them because they rallied and saved their way of life. They understood that the movement of populations in the late 20th Century and early in this century, would spell doom for their way of life. They acted strongly and decisively, expelling millions and closing their borders, while the opposite happened in the United States. Another irony of these movements was that over the past twenty years, Great Britain benefited from the masses of professionals leaving the United States when it was clear that, as a country, it was on the decline. The United States lost their vision and their identity while Great Britain rediscovered theirs. Martin became fascinated of all that was happening in this new world and he vowed to be in the middle of it all.

Something else occurred late summer that profoundly impacted the young man. He had come upon an article from the Atlantica Network in Nuevo York about the death of a world renown political writer, Thomas

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

