

20  76 AD



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This glimpse into the future, as well as the past is dedicated to a man who so loves America that he understands what is at stake if the present course of our nation doesn't change. His strength and courage are greater than his fame as he withstands attack after attack for no other reason than his sincere effort to protect individual liberty of countless citizens he never met. President Donald J. Trump is the only force keeping 2076AD from becoming a reality for which we should all be grateful.



George Washington

President: 1789 - 1797

***“As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light
here kindled hath shone unto many, yea in some
sort to our whole nation.”***

—William Bradford

Chapter 1 | THE BOOK

My name is George. I’m a traitor. At least that’s what I’ve been called. And, when it’s your mother who hangs the tag on you, you generally believe it. Let me begin by saying that my intent was not to be a threat to the country that I love. In fact, I thought that my actions were quite honorable. However, that’s not how others see it. Am I a traitor—you be the judge.

It all began four weeks ago. I just turned twenty-years-old which means I have only one year left before entering the Social Compensation Program. It’s going to feel good to be self-sufficient and on my own. Based on my school grades and curriculum completed, I will be a Level S7-1. Not bad for a kid from New York City. Unfortunately, I’m now in North Carolina because my father had to move for his employer, Standard Genetics. Because my mother is a Citizen Education Technician (CET), what used to be called a teacher, our family is at the F5-4 Level in the Social Compensation Program. That is, at least for the next year. When I start getting paid their compensation will drop to F5-3. I guess it’s only fair as they will have one less mouth to feed. And, as President Sandra Holmes says, “No one goes hungry, so everyone is happy.”

Phillip, my friend in New York, was pissed. He got classified as a Level S9-1. I told him it was a combination of screwing around and not getting good grades, as well as his choice of curriculum. Music? Really? What social value does classical music offer? He should have switched to entertainment when he had the chance. Level 9 will put basic food on the table, get him a small apartment in craptown, but not much more.

Level 1, the political class, is where you want to be, but you have to be born into it or marry into it. Compensation at Level 1 is

hard to imagine. Here, let me try. This year, 2075, the Congress increased the portion of the budget allocated to Level 1 to 35%. That means that 35% of the available International Monetary Units, or IMUs, allocated to the Social Compensation Program will be distributed to Level 1 recipients, or about 1% of the population. Add to that the “no earnings cap provision” they enjoy and Level 1s have unlimited income. No wonder they live like royalty. Well, he who controls the purse strings gets the lion’s share. That’s what my mother always says.

As for me, if I can land a job my lifestyle will get dramatically better. Think of it, 20% of what I make is mine free and clear. So, on top of my Single Level 7 compensation from the government I’ll have enough IMUs to maybe buy a used car. Of course, that means I have to go through the training program, pay environment taxes, get a vehicle voucher, and then find a car that I am allowed to buy. Man, they don’t make it easy.

I’m glad that I was a finance major. Money is what makes the world go around. If I get lucky, kiss the right asses, and make good connections I could earn a higher salary and someday become a Level 3. That would mean a home of my own rather than government housing.

This old farmhouse outside of Charlotte, North Carolina is in rough shape. I’m surprised that it’s still standing. Unfortunately, it’s the best my family can afford. However, it’s far enough from any public transportation to warrant an automobile. We have a ten year old Ford Mini Wagon. With both my parent’s gasoline allocation cards we are fortunate because we have enough fuel for all of our needs. Given the high price and limited supply of fuel we are lucky.

Up here in the attic there seems to be all kinds of dusty wood furniture that appears to be over a hundred years old. I have my eye on a desk in the corner behind a dresser and headboard. It might be fun to have an antique desk in my room. But, am I ready to crawl through spider webs, bat guano, and who knows what else to get to it?

When I reach the desk, I’m coughing from all the dust. The desk is relatively large and it will take a great deal of maneuvering to get it out of the attic. I decide to take out whatever is in the drawers to lighten the load. That’s when I find it. In the bottom drawer a real, hardcover, printed book, titled *History of The United States of America*. I’ve never held a real printed book. I’ve seen them in museums behind glass and in people’s private libraries, but to actually hold one is thrilling.

In the dark attic with only my LED light I carefully open the book. The pages smell funny. It’s a heavy book. In the front there’s a page

with a lot of information—Publisher, Library of Congress Catalog Card Number, ISBN Number, and copyright dated 1965. I'm amazed. The book I hold in my hand is 110 years old. I'm also intrigued. The title alone, *History of The United States of America*, is astounding. The book was written before the Reorganization! I return to my room carrying my new, uh old, treasure.

For the next hour I read the *History of The United States of America*. Only it isn't the history that I was taught in school. It begins with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus who we all know was an evil man who was a drunk and enslaved the natives. It ignored the fact that the pilgrims were rich businessmen who came to the New World to stake their claim on land they didn't own. There is one part, however, that I read twice. It's about the first form of government of the pilgrims who arrived at Plymouth Rock in 1620. The original governor of the colony, William Bradford, set up a system whereby each pilgrim was given a plot of land to farm. Whatever they produced went into a community store from which each was to take only what they needed. That sounds logical and fair. Yet, the book went on to say even in those harsh times with their lives at stake, there were parasites who realized that they didn't have to work for what they received. In addition, they took more than they needed and ultimately put the entire colony at risk. Productive hard-working members of the colony complained, but the non-producers claimed they were entitled to their share without having to work. William Bradford, the book says, was a man of great wisdom. He reassigned a parcel of land to each family and stated, "Whatever you do with this—you keep. It is yours. And if there's a surplus, you can sell it." This began an extraordinary time as the pilgrims prospered. Governor William Bradford wrote in his book, *Of Plimoth Plantation*, "This had very good success, for it made all hands industrious, so as much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been." This had never happened before in the history of mankind.

What I read doesn't make sense. We all know that the early colonists were greedy businessmen who grabbed up all the wealth, owned slaves, cheated people, and didn't care about the common man. After the first one hundred years the Liberal Party, the party of the people, slowly found ways to distribute wealth more fairly. It started with a graduated income tax, then Social Security, then Medicare and Medicaid which were replaced by single payer Universal Health Care, then the Income Equalization Agency (IEA) was formed, and finally after

the big corporations and the Conservatives destroyed the dollar the Reorganization of 2024. If it wasn't for the International Monetary Fund and World Bank big business would have destroyed our nation. Greedy CEOs simply didn't care. That's why the government had to step in and regulate business to level the playing field. Of course, it's kind of funny that the political class replaced the big business CEO class when it comes to extravagance. And, they have the power of the government behind them.

As I continue reading, the book keeps telling how pilgrims came to the new land in pursuit of freedom. But, somehow the definition of freedom is all out-of-whack. Being thrust out on your own with nothing to fend for yourself—that's not freedom. Freedom is having a government income when you turn twenty-one. This way you don't have to worry about making a living. You have freedom from hunger and freedom from seeking shelter and freedom to get free healthcare and a free education. Why would I want to start out naked with nothing? What is the value in that? And, if I choose to work it's only fair that the government get 80% to pay for all of the services we receive, as well as the cost of the Social Compensation Program. These pilgrims had no idea what is real freedom.

When I tell my mother about the book that I found, at first she seems interested. I tell her what I read and she nods and says that early in American history capitalism was experimented with but proved to be a complete failure. Without government regulations the gap between the haves and have-nots was enormous and immoral. The true patriots were those who made income distribution work. They stood up to the corporations that kept the average working-class people down. All of our freedoms come from the government and are protected by the government. Then she seems to get angry and tells me that I better appreciate what America offers me. I'm not looking for a fight so I agree with her. I just find history written over a hundred years ago to be interesting. As I try to end the conversation she tells me to destroy the book. "It's propaganda written by capitalists who were trying to protect their fortunes," she tells me. I nod, but don't say anything else. My intent is to end the conversation quickly without agreeing to anything. I have no intention of destroying the book.

At dinner my father says, "Your mother tells me you found something."

I hate when he does that. He knows damn well what I found, but he has to play this silly game.

I remember in high school he would ask, “Did something happen at school today?” Hell yes, I got suspended you already know that. He tries to make me confess. Well, I never fall for it. So, I reply, “Oh, what did she tell you?”

He gets all puffed up and indignant and says, “You found a printed book.”

“I did.”

“You can’t keep it.”

“Why not?”

“Because its propaganda,” my mother chimes in.

“It’s history,” I point out.

“From the perspective of a capitalist society that destroyed a nation,” she retorts with a noticeable degree of impatience. “All you need to know is what is in our history programs on your tablet.”

My father adds, “You have to give it to the government.”

“Why?”

“So they can put it in a museum.”

“Or destroy it,” I object.

“Perhaps,” my mother agrees, “but it’s for the best.”

“Why?”

“It’s sedition, it creates unrest,” my mother says angrily.

“It’s just history, mom,” I reply, “You’re a CET don’t you want to have as many sources of information as possible?”

“You’ll give it to the government,” my father ordains.

“I’m sorry, but I want to read it.”

“What could be so important that is in that book?” he continues.

“A view from the past. People wrote this book over 100 years ago while they were living history.”

My sister adds intelligently to the discussion, “Oh posh!”

All she cares about is who is on The World’s Most Talented Show or who singer Gwamie is shacking up with. And, oh god, those awful tattoos. How can my parents allow a fifteen-year-old to deface her body that way?

I try to steer the conversation back to a non-confrontational discussion among intelligent adults. “Listen, there is a story about Governor William Bradford and the original colony at Plymouth Rock. Everyone drew from a community store, but they were not making it. They were starving. So, Governor Bradford sets up a system where each family grows their own food and can sell any excess for profit. In this way everyone became productive and were rewarded for their labors. It

seems to make sense.”

“You are rewarded as specified by the government,” my mother offers.

Calmly, I reply, “Yes, but think about it. If I have a field and grow corn and my neighbor has a field and grows corn. Yet, I grow ten times as much corn but get paid the same as my neighbor. That doesn’t seem right.”

“Maybe your neighbor’s field wasn’t as good as yours or insects got into it. He still grew corn so he gets compensated,” my mother counters.

“What if he slept in a hammock while I tilled and weeded and chased the crows away?”

“Should he be punished for not being as good at growing corn as you?” she asks.

“Should I be punished for working harder than he did?”

My father shows his impatience as he states, “You’re not being punished. You get paid. Why do you care what your neighbor gets paid? Are you jealous? You should be proud that you did so well.”

“There you have it the evil of capitalism,” my mother says as she throws down her napkin. “Me, me, me! I don’t care about my fellow man. Me, me, me!”

My sister sings, “Me, me, me.”

“We have meat this evening.” My mother continues, “Do we ask if the rancher raised more cows than his neighbor?”

“I’m just saying that if someone is compensated for their success, they might work harder to have more success. If the rancher got paid by the cow he might raise more cows and we could have meat more than once a week.”

“You don’t know what you’re talking about,” my father states through a mouthful of corn. Yeah, that’s appropriate.

I turn to him and say, “You’re right. I don’t know. That’s why I want to read this book and learn more about pre-Reorganization history.”

“It will only bring you trouble,” my mother concludes.

Later in the evening I settle in my room in front of my computer tablet. I place my left thumb with my embedded Individual Identification and Data Chip (IIDC) on the authorization indent to access the Globalnet. A familiar screen appears with my name, photograph, and clearance level. As a student who just graduated, my clearance is relatively low. When I turn twenty-one my clearance will

change to give me more access to banking information and services, government services, and enriched entertainment—if you know what I mean. I type in Governor William Bradford and very little information appears. Simple facts are offered but no mention about his experiment with capitalism. So, I type capitalism and get the standard descriptions and position papers that I saw in school defining it as a failed form of government that allows one group to steal from other weaker groups. On a whim I search Pilgrims. Nothing of any value. Then way down the search list I find a website BradfordWasRight.info. I point to it and up pops a portrait of Governor William Bradford. Immediately, my computer flashes the FBI “dangerous site” icon warning me not to enter. I enter.

Before me is a picture of the Mayflower, the three masted ship that brought the pilgrims to North America. I scroll down to find numerous pictures of pilgrims working in fields, feasting, and meeting in the town square. It is as though I’ve entered another world. And, I have. We never heard anything about the pilgrim days in North America. Our history classes began with a quick review of Europeans’ invasion of the continent and the ultimate establishment of three nations; Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Of the three, the United States was the most aggressive imperialistic nation founded by rich capitalists who not only wanted to protect their wealth but to also obtain more from those who were weaker. For a short period of time the U.S. dominated the world with its military might. That changed when the dollar collapsed and the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the Reorganization Tribunal comprised of Britain, Russia, China, Germany, and the Arab League bailed out America. The dollar was no longer a reserve currency and was replaced by the worldwide International Monetary Unit. In order to pay the enormous debt of the United States of America many assets had to be sold to foreign entities. Great Britain, China, and Russia purchased a large portion of military assets. The Arab League gained ownership of all nationalized refining and power generating operations.

During the crisis, the *Constitution* was suspended and eventually rewritten giving the executive branch overwhelming power and the Senate and Congress more of an advisory role. Presidential elections are held every six years with candidates selected by the Candidate Review Board. This way, only candidates who support the new government structure are approved.

I become fascinated with early life in America as I navigate

BradfordWasRight.info. It seems so alien. None of what I read has ever been told to me before.

A message pops up on the screen. I actually jump because it was unexpected and I feel like I just got caught doing something I shouldn't be doing. The message simply asks, "Profit or loss?" It is signed "Dawn."

I'm confused. So, I stare at the screen like a hypnotized chicken. I try to come up with a logical, or at least humorous, response to the question. Profit is better than loss, but that can't be what Dawn expects. Finally, I simply speak into the microphone and my message is typed onto the screen; "Profit is nice but I'm at a loss."

DAWN: LOL. You must be new. Can I help you?

GEORGE: I don't know. I was reading about Governor Bradford and the pilgrims.

DAWN: Why?

GEORGE: Curiosity. I didn't learn much about them in school.

DAWN: Are you a student?

GEORGE: Just graduated from N.Y.U.

DAWN: Congratulations.

GEORGE: Thank you.

DAWN: Why the pilgrims?

I don't want to reveal my possession of a history book to a stranger. You never know where a government or law-enforcement agent might turn up. So, I keep it simple.

GEORGE: I came across a story about Governor Bradford and capitalism. Simply, wanted to know more.

DAWN: Understandable.

GEORGE: Is this your website?

DAWN: No. I monitor it at certain times.

GEORGE: Monitor it for what? Do you work for the government?

DAWN: LOL. Quite the opposite. I simply answer questions, if visitors have any.

GEORGE: Are you an historian?

DAWN: In a manner of speaking.

GEORGE: Why is it so hard to get information about the founding of the United States of America?

DAWN: Ignorance is bliss.

GEORGE: What does that mean?

DAWN: What you don't know can't hurt you.

GEORGE: Excuse me, is this clichés.com?

DAWN: No. However, you were inquiring about politics.

GEORGE: I was asking about history, not politics.

DAWN: It is one in the same.

GEORGE: I don't care about politics.

DAWN: "Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!" -- Pericles (430 B.C.)

GEORGE: I simply wanted to know more about the pilgrims. Not get into some right-wing argument.

DAWN: Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you.

GEORGE: What are you talking about?

DAWN: Oh George, you are curious and possibly a thinker. That combination doesn't fit the mold of a good citizen.

GEORGE: Why not?

DAWN: Are you using your own IIDC (Individual Identification and Data Chip)?

GEORGE: Of course, how else would I access the Globalnet?

DAWN: How long have you been on?

GEORGE: About fifteen minutes.

DAWN: GET OFF NOW!

GEORGE: Why?

There is no response. I'm confused but decide to heed Dawn's advice. I exit the Globalnet. It's getting late anyway and almost brownout time. If my parents want to watch Globalvision we have to shut down most appliances and lights. I decide to read my treasure by LED flashlight.

The early pilgrims had a difficult time and more than half died the first year. However, they persevered and built settlements in what they called the "New World." What I still don't get is why. Why give up everything to go into wilderness. Then I read what life was like back in England. People were poor and just barely surviving. It was a case where the nobles ate while the peasants toiled.

William Bradford was born into a family that owned a large farm and was considered wealthy and influential. He was just over a year old when his father died. His grandfather died two years later and when his mother died, he was an orphan at age seven. Seems like people were dropping like flies back then. He was sent to live with his uncle and developed an intellectual curiosity. When William Bradford was twelve-years-old he became friends with William Brewster, a bailiff

and postmaster, who introduced the teen to the church reform efforts taking place across England. In 1603 King James I took the throne and addressed the reform efforts harshly. As a result, a group of 50 reform-minded individuals broke from the Church of England and became known as Separatists. Many members of that congregation were arrested. Some were imprisoned in London and left to starve.

Members of the Scrooby congregation of Separatists decided in 1607 to illegally leave England for the Dutch Republic where religious freedom was permitted. William Bradford went with them. Unfortunately, they were betrayed by an English sea captain. Bradford and members of the congregation were put in prison for a short period of time. A year later they successfully made it to Leiden in the Dutch Republic. The Separatists lived in poor conditions because they were immigrants. By July, 1620 approximately fifty Separatists, including William Bradford, made plans to establish their own colony in the Americas.

Tired from reading I close the book, but what Dawn said haunts me, “Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you.” Without question, it will be prudent to hide my irreplaceable treasure. Silently, I wrap the book in plastic wrap and place it inside a waterproof backpack. In the dark I sneak outside and wander into the woods behind the old farm house. It is definitely spooky. However, led by my flashlight I find a hiding place and stow my connection to the past. In the daylight, I’ll find a better place.

The next morning at breakfast, my mother asks about the book.

“It’s gone,” I semi-lie.

“What do you mean, gone?”

“Gone.”

My father enters the room and asks, “What did you do last night?”

Here we go again, “What do you think I did?”

“I think you were surfing the web and visiting dangerous websites,” he answers. As he pours a glass of orange juice, he states, “We received an alert that you were monitored visiting potentially illegal sites.”

“Illegal?”

“Yes, that’s what the alert said.”

“I didn’t visit any illegal sites. All I did was research the pilgrims.”

“That again,” my mother complains.

“What is wrong with reading about the early history of the

United States of America?"

"It was an experiment that failed. Capitalists today are anti-America, radicals, and seditionists."

"You're playing with fire, son," my father warns.

"The only thing that I am doing is reading," I insist.

"It is what you are reading that will get you noticed and bring you trouble," my father insists.

My mind repeats Dawn's warning, "Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you."

"You're just starting out. Don't do something foolish that will hurt you," my mother adds.

"Let's not have any more alerts, OK?" my father says.

Against my better judgment I say to my parents, "You know, the pilgrims that lived in England were poor and had very little chance for advancement. They were thrown in jail because of their religious beliefs and suffered under an oppressive king. Finally, they risked everything to have a chance to make better lives for themselves. At first, I didn't get it. But now I understand. They wanted to be free. Free from someone else controlling their destiny. Free to pursue whatever they wanted. Free to read what they wished without it being illegal."

"You sound like an anarchist," my father spits.

"Worse, a traitor to the nation that gave you everything," my mother concludes.

So, there you have it. I'm an anarchist and a traitor. That, from my own family who love and support me. I'm glad that I hid the book. Without the Globalnet it is my only source for information about the history of the United States of America. This turn of events, though unsettling, in no way prepares me for what happens next.



John Adams
President: 1797 - 1801

“Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be maintained.”

—James A. Garfield

Chapter 2 | THE LETTER

I admit it—I returned to BradfordWasRight.info. Each time that I do up pops the FBI “dangerous site” icon. I enter. On two occasions I get messages from strangers who ask, “Profit or loss?” I ignore them. Then it happens, on my third return visit I receive a message from Dawn.

DAWN: Welcome back, George.

GEORGE: Why didn’t you ask ‘Profit or loss?’”

DAWN: Because you don’t know the answer.

GEORGE: OK, what is the answer?

DAWN: You’ll know the answer when you understand the question.

GEORGE: Do you always have to talk in riddles?

DAWN: It’s essential and it works.

GEORGE: Why?

DAWN: There are eyes and ears everywhere.

GEORGE: We’re not doing anything wrong.

DAWN: In your opinion.

GEORGE: And, what’s your opinion?

DAWN: You are doing something very right.

GEORGE: What is that?

DAWN: Seeking knowledge, pursuing the truth.

GEORGE: Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you.

DAWN: Very good. How long have you been here?

GEORGE: A few minutes.

DAWN: Go to this website, right now. www.61273???.edu

GEORGE: Why?

There is no reply so I enter the website address. When it opens, up pops a black screen with white lettering. There are instructions.

Memorize this address.

Do not write it down or put it in any device.

www.AuntPeggy1776.per

Before visiting the above site download this encryption program.

It seems simple enough so I store the web address in my memory. My brain—not my tablet. I am concerned about downloading an unknown program from an unknown source. It could damage my tablet or put spyware on it or be a government trap. There really is a great deal of risk to consider. I press download.

That done, I visit www.AuntPeggy1776.per. Up pops a face of a kindly looking old lady who smiles and says, “Would you like a cookie?”

I’m not sure how to answer. Or, for that matter, where to answer. I sit staring at Aunt Peggy and she smiles back at me. As I examine the web page, I see cookies and cakes and pies and other delicacies. Aunt Peggy continues to stare at me. Then I notice that behind her on the wall is a needlepoint with the words “Profit or Loss.” I touch the screen on the needlepoint. Immediately, the screen goes black. Aunt Peggy is gone and I’m sitting staring at a blank screen like a blithering idiot. How long I sit, I don’t know. However, in the middle of the screen a door slowly appears. On the door is a sign, “Peggy’s Back Room.” I touch the door and it swings open. Visually, I enter a room. Before me is an unfamiliar scene. Men in very old clothes are in the room. Some stand around a table while others are in a gallery of sorts. A message appears on the screen.

DAWN: It is a depiction of the signing of the *Declaration of Independence*, July 4, 1776.

GEORGE: That was covered as a paragraph in our history of America class.

DAWN: Fifty-Six brave men pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor to found the united states of America.

GEORGE: An experiment in capitalism that failed.

DAWN: Failed?

GEORGE: Yes, failed.

DAWN: Ah, you poor foolish lad. It was the greatest time in human history. More advances in technology, industry, medicine, exploration, entertainment, science, transportation, and human rights

were enjoyed under capitalism than any time before or after. It was a time when citizens enjoyed the greatest level of freedom in the history of mankind.

GEORGE: So, what happened?

DAWN: Over time, slowly, those who support socialism chipped away at individual freedom.

GEORGE: Why would they do that?

DAWN: In the beginning they believed they were doing something good that would improve people's lives. Then they fell prey to those who want control and power. It's hard to argue with someone who uses "we need to help those less fortunate or we need to make sure it is fair" as their arguments.

GEORGE: What's wrong with being fair?

DAWN: What's fair about being wrong?

GEORGE: Huh?

DAWN: Those in power begin to believe that they know what is best for others. They force their opinions and beliefs and will on others in the name of fairness.

GEORGE: Doesn't that create order?

DAWN: It depends on your point-of-view.

GEORGE: The government gives me compensation so that I can eat and live. It creates equality.

DAWN: Equality is a myth.

GEORGE: What does that mean?

DAWN: You're not ready.

GEORGE: You're frustrating.

DAWN: Why are you here?

GEORGE: I'm curious.

DAWN: Curious about what?

GEORGE: History.

DAWN: Are you interested in the history that you were taught in school or real history?

GEORGE: What do you mean real history?

DAWN: History is a chameleon.

GEORGE: Huh?

DAWN: He who controls the present—shades the past.

GEORGE: Facts are facts.

DAWN: Based on what facts are revealed and which are suppressed historical events take on different perspectives and support different philosophies.

GEORGE: I find it hard to believe that factual events can be so distorted.

DAWN: You are a product of a carefully planned and executed education program designed to indoctrinate you into thinking the way government leaders want you to think.

GEORGE: You're wrong.

DAWN: How many websites have you visited in your quest?

GEORGE: Quite a few.

DAWN: Were there many flagged as "dangerous?"

GEORGE: Yes.

DAWN: You must stop. You may already be on the SCL.

GEORGE: What's the SCL?

DAWN: Subversive Citizen List.

GEORGE: This is crazy. All I'm doing is researching history.

DAWN: Knowledge is the enemy of a tyrannical government. You are more dangerous than a man with a gun.

GEORGE: My mother calls me a traitor and you say that I'm dangerous. What the hell is going on?

DAWN: You are a seeker of truth. If the truth gets out the people will revolt. The government cannot have that happen.

GEORGE: I can't believe my interest in history will hurt anyone.

DAWN: George, it will hurt you.

GEORGE: You're nuts!

DAWN: Be careful. You won't believe what your government is capable of doing.

GEORGE: I have nothing to worry about.

DAWN: Goodbye, George.

GEORGE: Wait.

There is no response. I sit silently in front of the picture of the signing of the *Declaration of Independence*. From my studies I know it was considered an act of war and led to the Revolutionary War and independence of America. From then on, the wealthy landowners created a government that allowed them to control everything and get richer.

I give up on the Globalnet and find myself drawn to the book. There is something about reading a history written by people over a hundred years ago. They were closer to it. Somehow, for that reason, what they say seems more likely to be the truth. I sneak to my hiding place and retrieve my treasure. Then for the next hour in my room I read *History of The United States of America*. This time I read

about The French and Indian War. It's like reading an adventure.

The British and French were always fighting wars so it stands to reason that it would eventually spread to North America. British colonists occupied the thirteen colonies along the east coast while New France was mainly in Canada and western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Valley. Territorial disputes were common. The war began with a dispute over control of the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. When war broke out the French called upon their Indian trading partners from tribes in the Great Lakes region for support. The Huron, Mississauga, Ojibwa, Winnebago, and Potawatomi became their allies.

The British colonists had a significant number advantage in terms of settlers but neither side had seasoned troops. Twenty-two-year-old Major George Washington led Virginia Militiamen against the French but with little success. The French sent expeditions into the disputed area and built forts. On the open seas the British navy captured French ships and kept them from providing support to New France. At the same time France was busy with a conflict with Prussia. Finally, when William Pitt came to power, he increased the British military presence and the tide turned. France ceded its territory east of the Mississippi to Great Britain. France also ceded Louisiana west of the Mississippi River to its ally Spain, in compensation for Spain's loss of Florida to Britain.

The details in the book are better than a fictional novel. I become so involved reading that I don't hear my sister sneaking up behind me.

"You still have that book. Let me see it," she exclaims.

I'm startled, turn quickly, and hide the book behind my back, "No. What are you doing here? Leave me alone," I order.

"I'm telling mom and dad."

"Get away from me."

"Let me see it," she repeats but in a pleading and curious manner. "I won't tell. Promise."

For the next half hour, we read parts of American history that we were never taught in school. Finally, it's time for dinner so I have to hide my treasure, once more.

At dinner my father asks, "What have you been doing online?"

"Viewing porn," I say before I can stop myself.

"I'd feel a great deal more comfortable with that than getting warnings from homeland security that you are exhibiting un-American tendencies."

"What the hell does that mean?" I bellow.

My mother warns, "George you must stop this obsession of yours."

"What obsession?"

"This abnormal interest in capitalism and greed and individualism."

"My god. All I want to do is learn about the founding of America and how our early system of government worked. How does this make me a traitor and why am I dangerous?"

"No one said you are dangerous," my father replies.

"There are people out there, and you know it, preaching that capitalism and free markets are the best form of government. They want to tear down what has taken over a hundred years to develop," my mother states. She asks, "Do you want to destroy our government?"

"Of course not. But, how can my reading and learning about something translate into me wanting to destroy the government?"

My father chimes in, "I've been given a warning. You are still a minor and I'm responsible for your actions. Do not visit any dangerous websites! When that icon comes up you leave the site. Don't make me take any more drastic actions." His fist hitting the table surprises us all.

After dinner I sit in my room thinking about all that has happened in the past few days. I don't feel guilty about any of my actions. At no time have I done anything that would be a threat to America. Hell, I haven't even told anyone outside my family about the book. My tablet sounds a familiar chime telling me I have a message. I check my inbox and there is a message from the Social Compensation Board. My first thought is that I have more forms to complete. When dealing with the government there is an endless parade of papers. I smile as I think how we still call them papers even though paper correspondence were eliminated before I was born. An icon indicates a letter attachment. I click on it and before me is a formal letter with the Social Compensation Board letterhead.

Mr. George Clymer

RE: Case 07687743251

After review of your case The Social Compensation Board has deemed it necessary to reclassify you as 9-1. Upon reaching your twenty-first birthday you will receive monthly payments appropriate to this level of compensation as defined by the Economic

Appropriations Committee of The United States of America.

If you have any questions pertaining to this decision you may contact the Social Compensation Board office at 555-594-8832 or by written correspondence to: Admin@socialcompensationboard.gov.

Regards,
Amelia Loudermall
Executive Director

I sit staring at the screen. How did this happen? No one can live on what you are provided at level 9. It's below the poverty line. What did I do? Was it because I visited a few websites deemed dangerous? That doesn't make sense. And, who makes that determination? Some bureaucrat? I'm angry, and yet, filled with a feeling of helplessness. How do I fight back? All of my dreams and plans have been dashed with a single letter from a faceless, heartless, automaton that probably only sees me as a number.

Quickly, I go online and visit www.AuntPeggy1776.per. I enter the backroom and write a message to Dawn. There is no response. My hands are actually shaking. I'm angry. I want to punch someone but there isn't anyone to punch. Then I get a message.

DAWN: George, you're back.

GEORGE: I have to talk with someone.

DAWN: About what?

GEORGE: I just got reclassified as 9-1.

DAWN: I'm sorry to hear that. Most likely you are on the SCL.

GEORGE: But, I haven't done anything. I didn't even tell anyone about the book.

DAWN: What book?

GEORGE: Never mind.

DAWN: Tell me, please.

I feel like I just confessed to being a serial killer, but I have to tell someone. I don't know who this Dawn is but she has seemed to be honest and concerned about me. At least she warned me. But, maybe telling her all the details about the book wouldn't be a wise thing to do. I speak into the message converter program and my message appears.

GEORGE: I found an old history book in an attic. It was printed

in 1965.

DAWN: Wow!!! That's incredible. It's a treasure. Don't tell anyone about it.

GEORGE: A little late, I just told you.

DAWN: Yes. And, you shouldn't have because you don't know me well enough. But I'm glad that you did. Is that why you became so interested in history?

GEORGE: Yes.

DAWN: You must be very careful. Hide the book. Don't visit any more dangerous sites. It will bring attention to you.

GEORGE: What is going on?

DAWN: Without realizing it you have entered a dangerous area. Reclassification is the first indication. If they knew you had this book you would be arrested. Be very careful, George.

GEORGE: Why would I be arrested?

DAWN: Surely, you've heard of the Historical Integrity Defense of Education Act of 2033.

GEORGE: No. What is it?

DAWN: The socialist congress passed the Historical Integrity Defense of Education Act, better known as HIDE. At the time, they claimed it was designed to standardize education. Part of that legislation was the collection and destruction of all historical materials that did not tell history as they wished it to be told. Books, movies, electronic education programs, everything was confiscated. Even the Library of Congress was purged.

GEORGE: We were never taught that. How do you know all about it?

DAWN: It's in the Congressional Record. But, don't try to access it. You are already on their list. That would only add to your troubles.

GEORGE: Troubles?

DAWN: Per HIDE, if you are caught with that book you can go to prison for fifty years.

GEORGE: All this can't be true.

DAWN: It is far more true than you realize and I'm trying to protect you.

GEORGE: Why?

DAWN: Because persons like you are the only hope we have.

GEORGE: Hope for what?

DAWN: Freedom.

GEORGE: I thought we are free.

DAWN: Do you feel free?

GEORGE: Up until they find out about the book and put me in jail for fifty years.

DAWN: LOL. I'm glad you have a sense of humor. You are going to need it.

GEORGE: That sounds ominous.

DAWN: George, you have stumbled into something that has the potential to drastically change your life. You may want to consider getting rid of that book and going back to being a model citizen and hope they forgive you.

GEORGE: Forgive me? For what? Seeking facts? Wanting the truth?

DAWN: When you dig into the past, if you dig deep enough, you will become unhappy with the present. It will change you forever.

GEORGE: I was going to get a job, buy a car.

DAWN: Forget about a job.

GEORGE: What?

DAWN: You're on the SCL. You're flagged. No business will hire you. They don't want the trouble.

GEORGE: I can't believe this is happening.

DAWN: How free do you feel now, George?

I don't answer because, in fact, I don't know what to say. I'm pissed. My whole life is in front of me. I had so many plans. Everything was going my way. And now, I'm an outcast with no future. What the hell happened? How free do I feel, Dawn? I feel like nothing is in my control. I'm tangled in a spider's web that I didn't know existed. I'm not making the decisions—some faceless entity elsewhere is. Do I do as Dawn suggests? Go back to being a good citizen and hope that I am forgiven. Forgiven? For what? Finally, I answer Dawn.

GEORGE: Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you.

DAWN: Few have the courage to step out into that blinding light.

GEORGE: I guess I'm a deer in the headlights. I don't know whether to stand still, go back, or run.

DAWN: Yes, deer. But, if you look away from the headlights you will see that they illuminate the road ahead.

GEORGE: In my case it's a dead end.

DAWN: Only if you stay on the path others have set for you.

GEORGE: What choice do I have?

DAWN: You have more choices than you realize. Let your heart and your spirit guide you.

After my conversation with Dawn I'm bummed. How does she know that I can't get a job? Maybe, my reclassification had nothing to do with my web surfing. I might have screwed up in some other way. If there's a pile of dog crap in a field, I'll step in it. It seems I have a natural talent for stirring things up. I've never been a good follower. It's a curse. It must be in my genes. Naw, can't be that. Look at my father—Mister straight and narrow, follow-the-rules, do-what-you're-told, good citizen. I must be the cause of his high blood pressure.

With all this pent-up frustration and energy, I have to take a long walk to calm down. The North Carolina countryside is really quite picturesque. This whole area is so green. I try to turn off what's been happening and just enjoy the quiet tree covered road upon which I walk. A motorcycle comes up behind me. So much for quiet. I don't look back but I can hear it approaching. It gets louder but for some reason doesn't pass me. I turn and look behind me. A girl dressed in black leather pants and jacket is following me. Her long red hair hangs down past her shoulders as it escapes from her black helmet. A visor makes it difficult to see her face. I stop walking. She comes up beside me and also stops. For a moment we just look at each other. Finally, she turns off the motorcycle and raises the visor. Her features are sharp with high cheekbones a small nose and bright green eyes. She's the girl next door type. Well, the sexy girl next door type.

"Profit or loss?" she asks.

"Dawn?" Her smile is captivating, no enchanting, no mystical. Ah, hell, I'm in love.

"No."

"Who are you?"

"Get on." She pats the seat behind her on the motorcycle.

"Who are you?"

"Put this on." She hands me a helmet that matches the one that she is wearing.

I put on the helmet and ask once more, "Who are you?"

"Put these on." She hands me a pair of leather gloves.

I put on the gloves and try again, "Who are you?"

"Get on." She pats the seat, once more.

In the past few days I've had two women in my life. One talks in riddles and the other wishes to remain nameless. It's enough to make the priesthood look pretty good. I step over the black Harley-Davidson

motorcycle and situate myself behind “Red.” She starts the bike and off we go. I’ve never ridden on a motorcycle before, so I’m hanging on for dear, or is that deer, life. Then I hear her voice as clear as if we were in a quiet room. Inside the helmet her words say, “Loosen up, cowboy. I won’t let you fall off. But I have to breathe to do it.”

“Where are we going?” I ask.

“Someplace you’ll like.”

“Where’s that?”

“You’ll see when we get there.”

“Why the gloves?”

“So, you can go invisible.”

“What?”

“Your Individual Identification and Data Chip (IIDC) in your thumb.”

“Yeah?”

“It can be tracked. If they want to locate you—they can.”

“No way!”

“There is a micro-transmitter that runs on the heat from your body. If the authorities are looking for you, they can pick up your signal with a locator satellite. The gloves block the signal. You just went silent.”

“Is this true?”

“Yup.”

“Where are we going?”

“You’ll see.”



Thomas Jefferson
President: 1801 - 1809

***“Democracy must be something more than two wolves
and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner.”***

—James Bovard

Chapter 3 | THE INTERVIEW

We ride in silence on the big Harley-Davidson motorcycle. I’m feeling a little more comfortable so my grip on “Red” loosens. Now, I consider my predicament. I am riding with a stranger, lovely as she might be, to who-knows-where, for no apparent reason. It’s dark and I think my leg is on fire. Things just seem to be getting more and more complicated.

“What is the answer to the question ‘Profit or loss?’” I ask, but my future wife doesn’t reply.

“Where are we going?” No answer.

“Are those real?” I ask in frustration.

Her laughter fills my ears. Well, at least I know she is alive. Her laugh is contagious and genuine. If I had a ring, I’d be popping the question.

“How long before we get where we are going?”

“Soon.”

“Who will be there?”

“An important person.”

“Why me?”

“Dawn likes you.”

“Will Dawn be there?”

“No.”

We ride on surface roads to the city limits of Charlotte, North Carolina. Up ahead is a sign that reads, “Official vehicles only. No private vehicles.” We pass the sign without slowing down and head downtown on South Tryon Street alongside the trolley tracks. As it is late in the evening few workers are around to notice us.

“Do you work for the government?”

“No”

“The sign said official vehicles only. Private vehicles aren’t allowed downtown.”

“Yes, that’s what it said.”

“Are we an official vehicle?”

“Not to my knowledge.”

“Then we’ll get arrested.”

“You worry too much.”

Red makes a few turns and we enter a private driveway under a tall building. She drives up to an entrance door and stops.

“Twelfth floor. Elevators are on the right.”

“Then what?”

“Your future is in your hands.” She holds out her hand and I start to take off the gloves. “Keep the gloves on. Leave the helmet.”

On the twelfth floor there are large glass double doors leading to a business named STUS Corporation. There is no one in the reception area. As a matter-of-fact there is no reception area. Two nicely upholstered, comfortable-looking, chairs face a large video screen on which are fleeting images of various products. Of greatest interest to me are the missiles launched from submarines and from under the wings of fighter aircraft. Rather than sit, I stand and watch the screen. Farm equipment, computers, medical devices, flooring materials, clothing, and other products that I don’t recognize dance across the screen. There is no sound with the video which makes the room seem even more silent. I’m lost in the digital images when a voice explodes in the room.

“Mr. Clymer—welcome to STUS.”

I look around because the voice seems to come from every direction.

“Please, enter the door to your right.”

An indirect light glows above the indicated door that until that moment was not visible. I approach the door and it opens on its own. Inside is a corridor lit in various shades of blue from undetectable light sources. The walls could be glowing but somehow that isn’t exactly what is generating the light. The whole thing seems surrealistic. What have I gotten myself into? Wait a minute. I was walking down a rural road minding my own business. Dawn got me into this.

At the end of the corridor another door opens and before me is a large, plush, high-tech, office that is hard to describe. Let me try. It begins with ceiling to floor windows that make up one side of the

room. Outside the lights of the city create a perfect cityscape of light, shadows, shapes, and movement. Centered in front of the window wall is a large standing desk made of metal and glass. To the left is a large, round, glass table surrounded by six metal and leather chairs. Behind it the wall is a waterfall that resembles a rainforest. If I didn't know I was inside a building I would swear that I was looking at the real thing. On the right there is a smoked glass and metal cabinet on top of which are a number of objects that I cannot identify. Above the cabinet the wall appears to be a large monitor with numerous picture-in-picture displays. There are different scenes, rows of numbers, product shots, and security shots of the building. The room is lit with indirect lighting whose source I cannot determine. The floor is a dark blue rug with a gold STUS logo in the middle. The air has an aroma that I can't place but it is quite pleasing.

"Is that how you dress for an interview?" a man's voice says from behind me.

"I didn't know I was going to an interview," I respond as I turn around. I become self-conscious of my tee-shirt and jeans. That is until the man who entered from another door walks up to me wearing a golf shirt and shorts.

"I'm David Trufire. Welcome to STUS Corporation." He holds up his hand palm out in a sign of greeting. I've heard that people used to shake hands in the past. Dirty habit—glad that went away. My host motions for me to sit in one of the chairs around the glass table. I sit and he walks over to the cabinet. "Would you like a drink?"

"I, uh . . ."

"Decisive son-of-a-bitch, aren't you?"

"I'm not old enough to legally drink alcohol," I explain.

"I'm not a cop."

"I better not."

"Good. Keep a clear head. Soda, coffee, tea, water?"

"Water will be fine."

Mr. Trufire appears to be in his fifties. He is fit without any flab that I can see. His hair is brown with just a hint of grey on the temples. He moves with the confidence of someone who is successful and has money. I think I hate him. He sits across the table from me. We both sit in silence while he sizes me up and I feel like a ten-year-old.

"Take off those ridiculous gloves," he finally says.

"They're supposed to hide my IIDC signal."

"Nothing escapes from this room unless I want it to."

I'm not sure how to take that, however, I remove the gloves and once more we sit in silence. He sips the scotch, or bourbon, or cream soda that's in his glass.

"You need a job," he states rather than asks.

"How do you know that?" I ask.

"You have a friend."

"Dawn?"

"Yes. She likes you."

"So, I've heard," I say and then add, "I've never met her."

"Neither have I, but I value her opinion and insight. She is an uncanny judge of character."

"And, she told you about me?"

"You're on the SCL—congratulations. You are interested in history. Just graduated from N.Y.U. Have a sense of humor. And, just got reclassified. Do I have correct information?"

"Unfortunately, yes."

"Why unfortunately?"

"Well, I seem to have put an end to my career before it has even started."

"Quite the contrary, you've taken the first step away from slavery. You were about to embark on a journey that would enslave you to the state. Do what those in power tell you to do and they will allow you to nibble from the trough but only the amount they deem acceptable."

"I've got to eat—have a life. I need a career."

"That's not a career. It's a life sentence to slavery."

"What else can I do?"

"What can you do?"

"I don't understand."

"What are you good at?"

"Nothing, really."

"Oh, you are great at selling yourself." He sips his drink and we once again sit in silence. I know that I'm blowing the interview but I didn't even know I was going to an interview. Thanks Dawn!

"How are you at public speaking? Can you talk to a crowd?"

"I really haven't done much unless you count presenting on YouView on the Globalnet. I had to present my final exam."

"Impressive," he says sarcastically.

Once more, I retreat into silence. This interview is going nowhere and so am I. Hell, I didn't ask for it. Why the heck should I

feel so defensive? I start to consider how to get out of there and how to beg my way back into the good graces of The Social Compensation Board. If I'm humble and apologize maybe they would classify me as an 8. Trufire sits there with his burning stare. Hey, that's good. I'll have to use that sometime.

"What are you thinking?" he asks.

"I'm thinking that I am wasting your time. I wasn't told I was going to an interview. In fact, I was shanghaied. All I was doing was walking down a road and, bam, next thing I know I'm here."

"Can't handle surprises? Not quick on your feet? Unable to take advantage of opportunities? I was told you were a thinker. Yet, I haven't gotten a clear thought from you so far."

I stand. I'm going down in flames as a result of Trufire. I'll have to use that one someday, as well. So, I have nothing to lose. "Mr. Trufire, you are obviously a successful and powerful man. I believe you were misled about me. I'm not a genius and I haven't done anything of note. That doesn't mean that I am incapable of being a value to society or enjoying my own success. Right now, it seems like everything is lining up against me. OK, I'm a nine, probably starve, but it won't stop me. I won't sit under a tree and collect my checks and amount to nothing. Somehow, I'm going to make my life count for something. I'm on the SCL. I don't have any experience. So, maybe I'm out in the cold in a hostile land like the Pilgrims. They made it—so will I." I turn to leave but don't see any door.

"Where are you going?"

"Uh, I was going to leave."

"Nothing escapes from this room unless I want it to."

"I'm a prisoner?"

"You are invited to stay—leave it at that. Please, sit down."

I sit and again we duel in silence. Finally, he waves his hand over the glass top table and screens appear in the glass in front of each chair. The STUS logo glows in front of me. Then a short video outlining the many qualities and successes of STUS Corporation plays on the screen. It's well done and impressive.

When it finishes David Trufire asks me, "What do you think?"

"It's impressive."

"What were the key messages?"

"Key messages?"

"What points about STUS Corporation did it make?"

"Well. STUS Corporation is involved in a lot a different areas.

You have on staff very creative and innovative people who are shaping the future. STUS is a global company. There's something else, but I'm not sure how to express it."

"Try."

"It's a feeling, or idea . . ."

"Go on."

I stand and walk around the room. The logo in the carpet reaches out to me. STUS, I wonder what the letters stand for. Stick that underwear there—that can't be it. Skunks that use stink—no. See the useless situation—naw. Stop that up start—exactly. Sarcasm takes unusual strength—that makes me think. I turn to Mr. Trufire and say, "Strength. I get the feeling that STUS is a powerful force with a vision or direction. That it stands for something."

"Are you sucking up?"

"Huh? No. You asked and I gave you my opinion."

"Good." Trufire puts his drink down on the glass tabletop. He rises and walks over to where I am standing. "What's your interest in history?"

"I found . . ." I stop myself before revealing my treasure. I try to recover by saying, "I found the early pilgrim experience interesting but can't seem to get much information about them."

"You're lying," Trufire says but not in an accusing tone-of-voice.

"What?"

"George, there is one thing that I expect from my employees—honesty. You found something but you don't want to tell me what it is. I can live with that. Just be honest. Tell me you found something but you don't wish to reveal what it is. You live out on an old farm. Maybe you found an arrowhead, or a musket, or a button—it doesn't matter. It's about trust."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't apologize—it's a sign of weakness; John Wayne."

"Who?"

"A movie actor back in the twentieth century. His movies have been banned by the government. We have a complete collection in our library."

"Wow."

"Back to your interest in history. Have you learned anything new that you weren't taught through government lessons?"

"I haven't been at it long. The one thing that I've found interesting is the experiment that Governor Bradford did with capitalism. It seems

to have worked but then the whole idea of capitalism is based on stealing from the poor.”

“I see.” He motions for me to sit at the table once more which I do. “Allow me to tell you a hypothetical story. Then you draw your own conclusion.”

I nod.

“Say there is an island and three sailors end up marooned there. They have no tools, no food, no water. One sailor sits on the beach and looks out at the ocean hoping to see a ship that will save them. We’ll call him Beachcomer Bob. The second sailor walks around looking at the trees and flora. He is Lost Lou. The third sailor, who I will call Evil Ed, goes inland and finds a waterfall. He saves some water in a coconut shell and brings it back to his friends. They all drink.”

“Next, Evil Ed finds a flat clearing not far from the waterfall and he builds a crude hut. Beachcomer Bob remains on the shoreline watching. Lost Lou becomes fascinated with a butterfly. Evil Ed then figures out a way to fashion a net from vines and catches some fish. He’s cooking the fish over a fire that he started when Lost Lou arrives. They chat and Evil Ed says he will give the sailor some fish in return for Lost Lou bringing water from the waterfall and filling a container that he fashioned out of large leaves. That done—they both eat. Later, they visit the sailor on the beach. They invite him to join them and build a camp. He refuses and says he will wait for a ship.”

“Evil Ed then finds berries and other food sources on the island. Lost Lou wanders around looking at birds. Evil Ed shows Lost Lou how to make rope out of vines and puts him to a task. In return he feeds his friend. It starts to rain. Evil Ed and Lost Lou find shelter in the hut. While comfortable in the hut Evil Ed tells Lost Lou that he will pay him with food if he would do different tasks that he assigns him. They agree. Finally, Beachcomer Bob comes to the hut wet and hungry. They invite him in. He asks for some food. Evil Ed describes the agreement that he has with Lost Lou and offers the same to Beachcomer Bob. The man refuses asking what right Evil Ed has to all the food. It’s not fair he cries. Evil Ed tells Beachcomer Bob to go out and get his own food and build his own shelter.”

David Trufire takes a sip of his drink then asks me, “What has Evil Ed stolen from the other two sailors?”

I’m caught off guard by his question. After a few moments I reply, “Nothing. He found the water, gathered the food, and built the shelter.”

“Exactly, he didn’t take anything from the others. He created wealth in the form of food. They could have done the same.”

“But, what about his civic responsibility to help others?” I ask.

Trufire frowns and continues, “Over time they devise a system whereby Evil Ed keeps track of the hours of labor that Lost Lou puts in and creates a value number that he calls coins. He then charges a certain number of coins for the food that Lost Lou consumes. Because there are coins left over Evil Ed agrees to build Lost Lou a hut for that amount. Now, Lost Lou lives in a hut and has food as long as he does tasks for Evil Ed.”

“What about Sailor One, Beachcomer Bob?” I ask.

“The two sailors are not heartless so they agree that they will give Beachcomer Bob a small amount of food out of charity. They also build a small lean-to so that he can get out of the rain. Following that, Evil Ed builds a house out of bamboo that Lost Lou helps him harvest. Evil Ed pays Lost Lou an additional number of coins in return. As a result, they both have plenty of food and water and shelter. One day Beachcomer Bob comes by and complains that his lean-to fell down and he is hungry. Evil Ed tells him that if he will help gather rocks for a fireplace he is building that he will pay him in coins that can be used to buy food. Beachcomer Bob gets angry and asks why Evil Ed should live in a nice house and have plenty of food while he is near starvation. It isn’t fair. Then he points out that Evil Ed is exploiting Lost Lou by making him work for food and on Evil Ed’s big house. This strikes home with Lost Lou who points out that Evil Ed has far more than either of them even though he is working very hard. Evil Ed responds by telling the two sailors to catch their own fish, gather their own berries, and build their own houses. He shuts the door of his house. Here is my question. Does Evil Ed have a right to greater wealth than the other two?”

I find myself in a quandary and say, “Evil Ed did create the wealth that he has. However, I wonder if he took advantage of Lost Lou by not paying him a fair amount for his labor. Then I have to consider the fact that Beachcomer Bob has done nothing to take care of himself. Lost Lou has worked for what he gets but isn’t capable of catching fish on his own or he wouldn’t need Evil Ed. In fact, if it wasn’t for Evil Ed neither of the other sailors would have survived. Yes, he deserves his wealth.”

“If a man’s talent, drive, and labor create wealth which in-turn helps those less capable enjoy a lifestyle they could not have achieved on their own, why is he considered evil?” David Trufire asks.

“He isn’t.”

“Every class you took in school defined wealthy people as evil because they stole from those who are weaker. Is that not what you believe?”

“It was. However, that’s part of my confusion and corresponding interest in history.”

David Trufire waves his hand over the table and the monitors in the glass top come alive once more. The STUS logo glows before me. In seconds it is replaced with the image of a parchment on which is written “We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union . . .” It disappears and is replaced by a map of the world.

“We’re a large global organization. Opportunities are limitless,” Trufire says. He then states, “I’d like you to start in our research facility located on Morehead Street. We’ll see how you do and determine if there are other areas of expertise where you might be a value.”

“A job?” I ask in disbelief.

“You came here for an interview, didn’t you?”

“I was brought here, yes,” I stop myself and ask, “When do I start?”

“Start Monday. That will give us time to check your background and provide you with all of the employment requirements. You’re not on the SCL or anything like that, are you?” His smile indicates that he doesn’t care.

I like this man.

“Don’t you want to know how much you will be paid?”

“I’m curious but anything on top of Level 9 will be an improvement.”

“Well, that’s a bit of a problem,” Trufire begins. “You do realize that the Social Compensation Program is voluntary. That fact is rarely mentioned.”

I sit in silence, but can’t help but wonder why anyone in their right mind would turn down free money.

“One of the prerequisites for employment at STUS is non-participation in the Social Compensation Program.” He stares directly at me and waits for my reaction.

“What if I can’t survive on what STUS pays alone?”

In a serious tone that I can’t really get a read on he states, “The choice is yours. Sign up to be a slave of the state. Or, like the Pilgrims, risk everything to have the freedom to determine your own destiny.”

We sit in silence. It seems my life has become inundated in

games. Profit or loss. What the hell does that mean? Where are we going? You'll see. What's your name? Who is Dawn? Do I take the sure thing? Albeit a crappy level of compensation. Then it hits me. It is far better to make my own decisions than to live in a manner that some faceless entity decides for me. "I'm in," I say with conviction.

"Good."

"May I ask what my salary will be?" I ask in a more timid voice than I like.

"Not only may you ask—you should."

"OK, what will you pay me?"

"I'm going to pay you what you are worth," Trufire makes some motions on his monitor and before me a number appears.

OK, I should be mature enough to act professionally, but the number is comparable to level 5 which is what my parents are at so I spout, "Shit!"

"It's not shit," he replies.

"I'm sorry. It just caught me by surprise. That's very generous."

"George, I'm not giving you anything. We will work your ass off and expect a great deal from you." He stands and walks over to where I sit and puts his hand on my shoulder. "After spending a lifetime of being told what to think, how to act, and what you are capable of, you now are in an unfamiliar wilderness completely on your own. Don't worry. You are going to do fine." He goes back over to the cabinet and refills his drink, then adds, "If not—I'll fire your ass."

For the first time in a very long time I find my testosterone and reply, "That's not going to happen. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity that will not be squandered. Now, how the hell do I get home?"

David Trufire laughs and says, "Virginia will take you home." He then adds something that I'm not sure how to interpret, "You are going to learn the true meaning of profit and loss."



James Madison
President: 1809 - 1817

“The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of the blessings. The inherent blessing of socialism is the equal sharing of misery.”

—Winston Churchill

Chapter 4 | THE PLEDGE

I exit the STUS building and find “Red,” uh, Virginia waiting for me perched on her Harley-Davidson. “Welcome aboard,” she says in a non-committal voice.

“I feel like everyone around me knows more about what’s going on than I do,” I reply.

“We do,” she smiles and orders, “Take off those ridiculous gloves.”

“Don’t I need them to remain invisible?” I innocently ask. That’s when she gives me the finger. No—not that finger. It’s a sort of thumb glove. By the way do you know that the original use of the “middle finger” gesture originated in 423BC in Aristophanes’ play, “The Clouds?” Thought you should know. That’s history my friend.

“You don’t need gloves to interrupt the signal from your thumb,” Red smiles, “That doesn’t make sense.”

I nod acknowledging the fact that I have been the butt of a joke. Red laughs.

“Many don’t understand the physics of super low-frequency technology. They try to block the signal with aluminum foil, lead, rubber, you name it. It doesn’t work. The power is in the tracking device and on satellites. They locate and interpret low-frequency emissions. This thumb cover doesn’t block the signal it changes the identification code. You’re now a thirty-five-year-old female named Karen,” she laughs once more.

OK, high tech is not my forte. But, hey, I have a job! The ride back to the farm house just seems so much more pleasant. I have to admit having my arms wrapped around Virginia stirs something inside of me. What do I mean by something? You know what is stirring and

the vibration from the motorcycle isn't helping.

"You start Monday," Red's voice enters my ears within the helmet. "I'll pick you up at eight."

"You're giving me a ride to work?"

"How else are you going to get there, Chief?"

"Quite honestly, I haven't gotten that far yet," I admit. "My head is still spinning from getting a real job. A job I didn't know I was interviewing for, by the way."

"Sometimes it happens that way," Red says. She adds, "It won't be the last surprise."

"What does that mean?"

Silence. Here we go again—games. I'm excited. OK, stop that. I'm full of anticipation about having a job and money and a future—all because I got interested in the past. How is that for irony? However, there is so much mystery and intrigue about it all a part of me wonders what I have gotten into.

I arrive home pretty late. When I walk into the house, I find my parents waiting up with lots of questions. True to form my father asks, "Have you done something that we need to know about?"

Before I can answer my mother adds, "Was that a motorcycle that I heard?"

My father pounces, "Did you ever think of calling?"

"That would have been nice," my mother mumbles.

I look toward my father in anticipation of his next installment. He doesn't let me down, "Well, what have you been doing and are the police far behind?"

"Interviewing," I answer with a smile.

"Interviewing? Who? Why?" mother Clymer asks.

I sit down and state, "Interviewing for a job."

"A job?" they both say in perfect harmony.

"Yes, a job."

"What kind of job?" my mother asks.

"Do they know you are on the Subversive Citizen List?" my ever-supportive father asks.

I realize that I cannot tell all of the events that took place without revealing facts about Dawn, Aunt Peggy, Red, the book I still possess, the finger, and more. So, I lie. "I was told about an opportunity and jumped at it. The motorcycle that you heard was a friend who gave me a ride to the interview."

"You went to an interview dressed like that?" my mother asks in

disbelief.

“Well, at least it taught you a valuable lesson,” my father comments.

“It sure did,” I reply. Then in a calm nonchalant voice I state, “I start Monday.” I leave the two of them in the living room in stunned silence.

As fast as I can I start my tablet and get on the Globalnet. Without giving it a second thought, I go to www.AuntPeggy1776.per and navigate to Peggy’s back room. Then I wait. In a few seconds I receive a message.

DAWN: I was waiting for you.

GEORGE: I knew you would be.

DAWN: Yes, I guess so.

GEORGE: I don’t know how to thank you.

DAWN: In time things will become more clear. You are about to enter a world that you didn’t have any idea exists. Keep an open mind, learn, and use your intellect. That’s when you will show your gratitude.

GEORGE: I don’t understand.

DAWN: Exactly.

GEORGE: Why me?

DAWN: That will become clear in time.

GEORGE: How did you know that I would get the job?

DAWN: I didn’t. That was up to you.

I’m not getting anywhere with my questions, so I change the subject.

GEORGE: Who is Virginia?

DAWN: The person who got you to the interview.

GEORGE: So, more evasive answers. When am I going to get anything of substance from you?

There is a long pause. I assume Dawn is deciding what she can tell me. Then she responds.

DAWN: They are real. LMAO.

GEORGE: Thanks. Now I know I won’t sleep tonight.

DAWN: George, you have been given an opportunity that is going to take you in directions that you never imagined. There will be times when you will face challenges and have doubts.

GEORGE: It all sounds so ominous.

DAWN: The world is not what it seems. America is not what you think it is. There are forces at play that will impact the lives of every human being on Earth. And, like it or not, you will play a role.

GEORGE: What if I don't want to play a role?

DAWN: It's not in your nature. You possess a rare spirit that will not permit you to remain on the sidelines.

GEORGE: I guess you think you have me all figured out!

DAWN: If you came upon a burning house with a child screaming inside would you run in?

GEORGE: Of course, wouldn't anybody?

DAWN: America is burning.

GEORGE: I don't buy that.

DAWN: That's because you don't hear the screams.

GEORGE: How come I always end our conversations more confused than when I started?

DAWN: Be patient. It won't always be the case.

GEORGE: I start my job Monday.

DAWN: I know.

GEORGE: Somehow, I figured you did.

DAWN: Get some rest, George.

Red, uh Virginia, arrives at our farm house at precisely 8:00 a.m. Monday morning. Only this time she isn't riding a black Harley-Davidson motorcycle. She's driving a black 2075 Chevrolet Impala. I've been ready for half an hour. There's no way I'm going to blow this opportunity. I'm wearing my best, OK my only suit. It's dark blue. From photos I've seen and old movies suits used to have lapels and men wore ties—a waste of resources. I'm glad the style changed to where suits neither have lapels nor buttons. Jackets simply hang straight down without any material folding over to form a lapel. And, who needs buttons? They're not meant to be buttoned. Underneath my jacket I wear a cream-colored dress shirt. Here again, I'm glad that collars went out of style. Who needs them? Finally, I've seen that men used to wear a belt to keep up their pants. How silly is that? I guess elastic memory cloth in the waistband hadn't been developed yet. Well, here I am in my sartorial splendor and my ride awaits.

When I enter the automobile, I'm struck by the plush comfortable interior. I've never been in a new car before. Now, don't laugh, do you realize people used to strap themselves in when they drove or rode in a car. No kidding! They did. It was before the Contact Avoidance Total Encasement Cushioning (CATEC) safety system. Electronic body sensors in modern cars analyze and provide appropriate protection. It's kind of scary to think of being strapped into a vehicle.

Virginia looks at me and says in a monotone, "You should have

worn that to the interview.”

I reply sarcastically, “I would have if I knew that I was going to an interview.”

“Oh, yeah, that’s right.”

“In spite of that fact, I do appreciate you helping me get this job,” I say sincerely.

“My pleasure.”

Impulsively, I ask, “Have you met Dawn?”

“Why do you ask?”

“Because Mr. Trufire said he has never met her. Yet, the two of you, because of her, arranged for the interview that led to me getting this job.”

With a tone of admiration Virginia says, “Dawn is a very special lady.” She pauses and then adds, “If she likes you, that my friend, goes a long way.”

“What I don’t understand is why she likes me. I haven’t done anything noteworthy or anything that would impress her.”

“You must have done something because she is on your side.”

“I’m glad that she is, but I have no idea who she is.”

Red maneuvers the Chevrolet onto a highway that is more congested than one might expect. With all the talk about driverless cars years ago, even though the technology exists, people simply don’t want it. There is something seductive about being in control of all that power, as well as having the capability of impulsively changing direction. Speaking of being impulsive, I ask Red, “What do you do at STUS besides chauffeuring new employees?”

“I handle problems,” she replies with a hint of a smile.

“Am I a problem?” I ask.

“Not at the moment,” she responds, “keep it that way.”

Well, I guess I told her.

As we continue to ride, I consider the events of the weekend. I received a large number of forms from STUS that had to be completed. Some were basic informational documents, however, others were somewhat concerning. For example, one form was a formal request to be released from participation in the Social Compensation Program. It had to be signed using the IIDC chip in my thumb. While I know that I will be paid far more than I ever could get from the SCP it left me feeling vulnerable. In essence, I gave away my safety net. That single document left me out on my own much like the pilgrims in the New World. Only, in truth, I have it a lot better.

When I told my parents about my withdrawal from the SCP, my mother was horrified. She screamed at me accusing me of becoming anti-social and getting involved with criminals.

My father sat at the kitchen table shaking his head repeating, "What have you done?"

I learned something that isn't made public. When you participate in the SCP and also have a job, 80% of your income is forfeited as taxes. If you do not participate in the SCP your tax burden is only 40%. The average worker doesn't know this and the government doesn't tell them. Of course, in most cases, salaries are so low workers have to participate in the SCP just to survive. It makes me understand just how lucky I am. Once more I am grateful to Dawn.

Something else happened over the weekend. I was in my room working on all the forms when my sister entered. By the way her name is Darsey which is Irish for "dark one." I call her Dee. She sat on my bed and watched as I filled in the multiple forms.

"So, you have a job?"

"I start Monday."

"That's great. What do you do?"

A good question. I'm not actually sure. It is a little disconcerting. What if it's something I can't stand or I'm not good at? I'm stepping out into the world without a net not knowing exactly what I'm going to be doing. Talk about a leap of faith. How nuts is that? Dee sat patiently waiting for my answer. Finally, I told her, "I will be doing research."

"What kind of research?"

"I'm not really sure," I have to admit. Then I add, "Probably looking for information about products, or people, or events."

"Oh," she says, then surprises me with, "Where's the book?"

"Shhhhhh," I motion with my hands for her to remain quiet. I get up and close my door. "I told you not to mention the book. Mom and dad think I got rid of it." I walk over to the bed and sit next to Dee, "We could get into a lot of trouble if anyone knew about the book."

"Why?"

"It's hard to explain, but people are not allowed to own certain books."

"Why?"

"I don't know. It's just the way it is."

"What we read was interesting. Do you think it is true?"

"Yes, I do."

"Why don't we learn about things like that in school?"

"We learn what they want us to learn," I say as I see Dawn's email in my mind telling me the same thing.

"Don't we have a right to know the truth?" Dee asks.

I guess my sister is not as shallow as I thought. We do have a right to the truth. But, from where do we get that right? From the government? "He who controls the present—shades the past." Again, Dawn enters my subconscious. If the government decides to teach children that the sky is red, in time, it would change the meaning of the word red. The color of the sky remains constant. Each generation is a product of its particular education. I realize that I am a product of government supervised education, or is it indoctrination? A part of me is angry. I feel like a Guinea Pig that has been carefully shaped into "a good citizen." Shut-up Dawn!

"Why are you mad?" Dee asks. "Is it something I said?"

I look directly into the innocent eyes of my little sister. It strikes me that some evil force has a hold of her—of her mind. She is being molded and conditioned into what some bureaucrat decides, in order to keep her in check. "How free do you feel now?" Dawn won't let up in my mind. My imagination takes me back to the pilgrims. Dee and I could be among those souls who simply want to think for ourselves, live our lives the way we wish to live, to shed the shackles of those who seek to control us, to be, dare I say it, free. Dee is looking back at me with a look of concern. For some reason I reach over and pull her toward me and hug her. Trust me I don't often, or ever, hug my sister. She deserves the truth. I say in a low voice, "Darsey, you didn't do anything wrong. In fact, you did something very right." Just call me Dawn. I add, "You seek the truth. There is nothing wrong with that." Dee looks up at me but doesn't say anything. "Unfortunately, when we don't follow the rules, we are considered bad or dangerous."

"Like when mom yelled at you?"

"Yes, she thinks I shouldn't break the rules. Even rules that don't make sense."

"But you kept the book."

"Yes, and I plan to continue to read it."

"Can I read it with you?"

So, here we are at a crossroads. I have to make a decision. It is not my intent to put my sister in danger, however, she has a right to know the truth. I either throw her back in with the masses who do what they are told or let her decide for herself what is fact. There really isn't any question what I have to do. So, I say to her, "Dee, you and I

have to make a pledge to each other. We have to promise to never reveal to anybody the existence of the book. We also have to promise to be honest with each other, no matter what. I don't mean with little things—only the important things. So, here's what we will do. If I give you my word then you know whatever I say is true. Also, if I give you my word that I will do something, I absolutely will." I wait for her to comprehend what I said. Then I explain, "Your word has to also be sacred. If you give me your word, no matter what you tell me I will believe that it is true."

"What if it's something that I don't want to tell you?"

"Then don't give your word. It's not meant to force the truth out of you. It's meant to confirm the truth when you want to. If you tell me something and I'm having a hard time believing you and you say I give you my word then I know it's true. If we never break our word then it will always possess a special power."

So, we both make a pledge and agree to keep the book a secret.

Back to the book. On February 10, 1763 *The Treaty of Paris* ended the French & Indian War. This gave the colonists a lot to celebrate as they saw the land to the west ceded by France as a tremendous opportunity for growth. Unfortunately, *The Royal Proclamation of 1763* put an end to the celebration. After the war the British found that they had to continually put down rebellion by the Indians. In an effort to calm the unrest the King declared all of the territory west of the Appalachian Mountains as Indian Territory and forbade any settlement by colonists. In addition, any land occupied by Englishmen within that territory was to be abandoned. Understandably, the colonists felt betrayed. Finally, Parliament called for construction of British royal posts along the proclamation boundary to keep settlers from ignoring the Proclamation. Building and manning these posts was a costly undertaking and England was broke.

The First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord George Grenville got Parliament to pass *The American Revenue Act of 1764*. There were all types of provisions that, quite frankly, were boring. Bottom line they placed taxes on many products and regulated the export of lumber and iron. To make sure the colonists paid he increased Navy presence and instructed them to become more active in customs enforcement. The effect on the economy of the colonies was felt immediately as trade with other countries was hampered and purchase of goods from England became unaffordable.

The Pilgrims faced hardships to have freedom in America, built

colonies, fought wars, remained loyal to the crown, and then were treated as lesser citizens than those who lived in England. When Parliament passed the *Stamp Act* rebellion soon followed. The *Stamp Act* required a tax be paid on all printed materials, such as newspapers, legal documents, playing cards, etc. As a result of this tax in early summer of 1765 a group of Boston shopkeepers and artisans who called themselves The Loyal Nine got together to agitate against the *Stamp Act*. As the group grew they became known as the Sons of Liberty. Their motto became “No Taxation without Representation” because there were no colonial representatives in Parliament.

So, as it turned out, Dee and I made a pact over the weekend. I hope she understands the importance of keeping our secret.

When Virginia and I arrive at the STUS offices on Morehead Street I snap out of my reverie. Before me is a three-story brick building across the street from a seedy-looking diner. It is a far cry from the modern office building downtown where I interviewed. Red pulls into the parking lot and tells me to have a nice day.

I reply, “Thank you, dear.” A punch so quick that I didn’t see it connects with my upper arm causing it to momentarily go numb.

“Call me when you need a ride home,” Virginia states flatly.

If you ever started a new job you know how out-of-place one feels and how crazy it can get. That’s nothing compared to how crazy my first day gets. I enter the office of Celine Smith per my instructions. She’s on the phone. Upon seeing me she motions to a chair. I sit. Celine continues her conversation of which I hear only one side. “There’s got to be a trend buried in there somewhere. . . I know. . . No one said it would be easy. . . Take a step back you’re getting too close to it. . . OK. . . Let me go, I’ve got the new kid in my office. . . Yeah, Trufire. . . Kid won’t last a week.” She ends the conversation and turns her attention to me. “Clymer, right?”

“Yes.”

“We are the research arm of STUS Corporation. Data search, primary research, secondary research, investigations, analysis, we deal in facts. Who said ‘knowledge is power?’”

“Uh.”

“Wrong,” she stands and informs me, “It was Sir Francis Bacon.”

I nod. What else can I do?

“How much is Apple trading for on the New York Stock Exchange?”

“I don’t know.”

"You're of no value to me. An empty can. Why are you here?"

"To make money. To learn from the best," I reply.

"Sucking up, huh."

"Better than giving up."

She stops on the spot and thinks about my comment. Then she looks at me appraisingly and comments, "We'll see."

I won't bore you with endless details about my day like Aunt Sally is apt to do whenever I visit. However, let me hit the high points. I am given a really nice tablet that is programmed for my use only. Are you ready for this? No thumb slot—a password. How long ago did they go out-of-style? So, I choose as my password . . . yeah, wouldn't you like to know? The whole thing folds into a small package that I can carry in my pocket. And, best of all, it has unlimited clearance. I can go anywhere!

By the way Apple is trading at 327 IMUs.

I meet a lot of people whose names escape me. The one name I do remember is Walter Tize who is my direct boss. We hit it off immediately. He calls me an asshole, throws me out of his office, and asks for my resignation. All this before lunch. I'm really good at making first impressions. At least he doesn't call me an anarchist or traitor. That will be tomorrow.

Before you jump to any conclusions, let me explain why Mr. Tize is so inclined. I report to his office as instructed. When I enter, he looks up and asks, "What do you want, asshole?"

Even though caught off-guard—that has been happening a lot lately—I am able to react appropriately. I say nothing.

He asks, once more, "What do you want?"

This time I respond, "I'm sorry. I thought you were talking to yourself."

The result, an icy stare followed with intense laughter. It is as though no one has ever fought back before. I think he likes me.

We spend the next hour talking. He wants to know a great deal about me. What I've done, experience that I have, my opinion on different subjects—what is this another interview? I do find out the letters STUS stand for Strategic Technologies Universal Systems—whatever the hell that means. The corporation was founded in the year 2015 and seems to be everywhere. STUS is a privately held company. At around 11:30 a.m. Walter suddenly stops looks directly at me and says, "Get the hell out of my office, go across the street to Candy's Café and get me a Tize Special. Get yourself something, too. I want either

my lunch or your resignation on my desk before noon!" His smile tells me all I need to know.

Day one under my belt, I'm heading home. Virginia and I ride in silence. She rarely speaks anyway. I am pondering the final thing that Walter Tize said to me, "Tomorrow you're going to learn about STUS and the gang of cutthroats you've gotten involved with."



James Monroe
President: 1817 - 1825

"A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

—Thomas Jefferson

Chapter 5 | THE ARREST

My second day at STUS is completely different. When I arrive the computer screen greets me in a friendly tone, knowing my name. In return, I decide to call it Ethyl. Don't ask me why, the name just came to me. I say, "Good morning Ethyl, nice day, isn't it?"

"Enter, Mr. Clymer," Ethyl answers as the door lock slides open.

Walter Tize is in his office when I stick my head in. "George, you came back. Damn! I had one day in the pool. God knows, I did my best to make it happen."

"Come 'on, I'm going to make it at least a week," I reply.

The pleasantries aside I am ushered into a media room with a few comfortable chairs and a large flat screen. What I am told is I'm going to watch a short history of STUS Corporation. And, by golly, that's what I see while drinking a very fine tasting coffee.

After it's over Walter stands up in front of the STUS logo and states, "There you have it the public story, the PR presentation." He pauses then looks me in the eye and adds, "The bullshit."

"It's not true?" I ask.

"Factually, it is true, to a degree," Walter explains. "But you have to understand two things; 1) the world had become one big public relations, image over substance, great illusion and 2) American citizen's freedom was being siphoned off slowly so that no one noticed." He taps the screen, "Colonel Eastwood and Sergeant Shepherd noticed."

There is a change in Walter Tize's demeanor. He's not being a wiseass and his voice takes on a tone that reflects great respect. "Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood and Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd were friends. In spite of the wide gap between their ranks there was no divide between them in terms of attitude or opinion.

They served together in the Army Intelligence Division before the Reorganization. Often they did undercover work out of uniform. Sarge was a fire-eater who had a piercing stare that would scare the devil. He was so opposed to giving ground, stories had it, that his truck didn't have a reverse gear. Colonel Eastwood, on the other hand, had a calm reassuring manner that forged confidence. Colonel Eastwood was a WASP from the Midwest while Sergeant Shepherd was a black street kid from Newark, NJ. Oil and water, fire and ice, yin and yang, call it whatever you wish these two were as opposite as their skin color. Opposites; except in their love of their country, belief in the original *Constitution*, and sense of justice. In this they were twins."

"After retiring from the military, the two men remained friends. Colonel Eastwood became a consultant in the defense industry while Sergeant Major Shepherd became a police officer in Englewood, New Jersey. The two men met on a regular basis at each other's home. Together, they and their wives welcomed the twenty-first century at the Window on the World restaurant on the 107th floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. There's a part of history that you've never been told."

"One night at Sergeant Shepherd's house, over a few bottles of Ballantine Ale, Colonel Eastwood said to Sarge, 'Do you know that in 1948 the total of all taxes paid by a family of four amounted to 4% of income? Today, direct taxes and hidden taxes take over 50% of a family's income.' Sergeant Shepherd replied, 'And, with that money the government has its hand in everything. You can't take a piss without there being a government charge or regulation.' Both men agreed with President Ronald Reagan when he stated, 'Government is not the solution, it's the problem.'"

Walter Tize stops his story for a moment and says to me in an introspective manner, "By his very nature, man is corrupt. Given the opportunity he will grab power and force his will on others. Whether by force, economic pressure, laws & regulations, or deceit the powerful control those who are weaker."

"You make it sound hopeless if you're not in a position of power," I observe.

"There are those who argue that because man is corrupt government needs to control his actions." He stops and looks at me for a reaction.

I nod in semi-agreement.

That's when he pounces, "Wrong! You dumb shit. If man is

corrupt and you put the power of government in his hands what do you think is going to happen?"

"He'll use the power of government to force his will on others."

"Exactly."

"So, what's the answer?" I ask.

"In 1789 the original *Constitution for the United States* was adopted. It defined the role of government, separation of powers, process and procedures. It started with the sentence 'We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty, to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.' You've never read the original *Constitution*, have you?"

"I've never seen it."

What you have seen is the current *Constitution*. 'On this day 17 May 2024 this constitution has been adopted by the Congress of the United States of America and supersedes all previous documents and suspends all laws that are in conflict with the new government established herein with the powers and policies outlined in the following pages.'"

"Yes, I've read the *Constitution*."

"It gives all of the power to the government and establishes a socialist state."

"It levels the playing field."

Walter walks over to me and sits next to me. He asks, "You like baseball?"

"Yeah. I played some in New York."

"Think of the rule book as the constitution of baseball. It keeps the game honest and, dare I say, makes it fair."

"OK."

"Now, along comes a group of commissioners who feel that it isn't fair because some players have more talent, experience, or training than others, therefore, are more successful."

"Well, that's the game."

Walter ignores me and continues, "They decide in order to make the game fair, players with batting averages under 200 will get four strikes instead of three and walk on three balls."

"Wait," I protest, "that's not how the game was meant to be played."

“Oh, it gets better,” Walter says, “Players with batting averages over 300 only get two strikes and walk on five balls.”

“That’s ridiculous.”

“You’re right. What you end up with is a mess and the game becomes unwatchable, unplayable, and irrelevant.” Walter pauses a moment for me to see the point. He then explains, “Well, the same holds true for life. When you reward non-producers and punish productive members it destroys the society.”

I don’t say anything as I try to fully comprehend the analogy.

Walter returns to the history of STUS. “Eastwood and Shepherd were smart men and patriots. They realized that America was declining and had been for a long period of time. Decade after decade regulations, acts, and laws were enacted that grew the government and infringed on individual freedom. Concurrently, the tax burden grew and grew. The public adjusted and adapted until it was too late and they no longer had the power to fight back. Professional politicians became a ruling elite, hijacked the nation, and ‘We the people’ no longer guided their actions.”

“When I told my mother that the pilgrims wanted to be free from someone else controlling their destiny, free to pursue whatever they wanted, and free to read what they wished without it being illegal she called me an anarchist and traitor,” I tell Walter.

He looks at me appraisingly then replies, “Most likely, your mother was born after the Reorganization. She’s a product of a carefully developed government education. Don’t fault her for believing what she has been taught. Colonel Eastwood grew up in the 1960s and Sergeant Major Shepherd the late 1970s. They both witnessed the greatness of America. If you ever get clearance to enter the Ghost Room you won’t believe your eyes.”

“What is the Ghost Room?” I ask.

“Another time. At the turn of the century, Colonel Eastwood had a fifteen-year-old son and Sergeant Major Shepherd had a sixteen-year-old daughter. Both men were appalled by what their children were being taught, as well as what wasn’t being taught. It was then that they made the decision to take action.”

As I listen, I find myself having trouble picturing over seventy years in the past. Very little is available about those times. All I know is that America, before the Reorganization, was dominated by big corporations that took advantage of people and kept them down. The gap between the rich and poor was reprehensible. People lived on the

edge of poverty, couldn't get healthcare, were constantly in debt, and were cheated by big-business. They ran the country into bankruptcy.

"What are you thinking?" Walter asks.

"It must have been terrible in those days."

To my surprise, Walter laughs. He stands and says, "Son, if I could have lived in those times it would have been marvelous. You haven't been given a true picture of pre-Reorganization America. But, again, that's for another time. Eastwood and Shepherd began recruiting persons they knew and trusted who shared their political philosophy. They formed an organization that was called 'The Loyal Nine.'"

"Hey," I interrupt, "I remember that name. It was during the Revolutionary War. There was a group of nine Boston merchants and artisans who got together to fight the *Stamp Act* in 1765. They called themselves 'The Loyal Nine' which grew into the Sons of Liberty."

"Very good!" Walter says. Then he asks, "How did you learn that? It wasn't taught in school."

"I read it somewhere, but prefer not to tell where," I say hesitatingly.

"OK," his only reply. "So, you know the significance of the name Loyal Nine. The nine members in the Eastwood/Shepherd group were all very intelligent, driven, talented individuals who absolutely were statesmen, or if you prefer statespersons. They formed an organization that I consider the second miracle of America. The first, of course, our founding fathers."

There's something about this man that I like. He has sincere enthusiasm and a no-apologies style.

"When STUS was incorporated in 2015 these nine persons comprised the Board of Directors." He waves his hand over a sensor and nine photos, names, and areas of expertise appear on the screen.

Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood (M) (1950 – 2036)

Defense Industry Consultant

Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd (M) (1963 – 2063)

Law Enforcement

Asayo Nakahara (F) (1968 – 2056) Computer Programmer

Hector Santiago (M) (1955 – 2023) Mechanic

Hans Keller (M) (1962 – 2041) Designer

Erin Slattery (F) (1959 – 2054) MD Naturopath

Angelina Granelli (F) (1974 – 2064) Artist

Neha Crying Wolf (F) (1978 -) Naturalist

Benson Whittingham (M) (1957 – 2029) Financial Analyst

“They created STUS. If you survive more than a week you will learn more about each of them. Strategic Technology Universal Systems (STUS) went on to develop digital programs, mechanical equipment, technical approaches, new products, electronic devices, and technology that remains top secret. STUS created the Individual Identification and Data Chip (IIDC) embedded in your thumb. Essentially, this privately held company is involved in every industry in the world. STUS—revolutionizing the way we live.”

By the end of the day I’m certain about one thing; Strategic Technology Universal Systems embodies capitalism in a socialist world. This, of course, creates conflict in my mind. How does one ignore human suffering and injustice in the world? If man is by nature corrupt isn’t there a need for him to be controlled? Does a redistribution of wealth help anyone? If I was allowed four strikes and Billy Williams only had two would I be a better baseball player than him? What the hell is the Ghost Room and do I really want to know? You have to understand that things are happening so fast that I am having trouble digesting it all. Yet, there is something intriguing about STUS and I can’t help but wonder where does Dawn fit in?

Walter Tize said something else. After lunch I entered his office and he said, “Hi.”

I replied, “Hi.”

He said, “No idiot, H.I. I’m designating you as an historical Investigator—HI. Or is that hysterical investigator? Oh well, it’s all the same.”

“What does that mean?” I ask.

“Whenever there is a need to know what events have taken place in the past you will handle the request.”

“An historian.”

“More than that. You will have to delve deeper than what is readily available. You will uncover facts, reveal information, sight trends, and provide conclusions.”

“Is that important?”

“There is an old adage that says that history repeats itself. When you look in the mirror you see the future. Yes, it is important. You don’t understand it now, but Alice, you are about to step through the looking glass.”

“It’s only my second day,” I state with a little trepidation.

“No guts?”

“That’s not it. How do you know that I’m qualified?”

“Sooner or later, it’s going to Dawn on you that we know more about you than you realize. In some instances, we know more about you than you know about yourself. You, ya-pain-in-the-ass, are qualified.”

I don’t say much on the ride home and neither does Red.

At dinner the conversation revolves around the collapse of a bridge in Indiana. It’s just another example of the deterioration of a long neglected infrastructure. There is a knock at the door which my father answers. In a few minutes he calls me into the foyer. When I arrive my father says, “These two police officers would like to talk with you.”

Two large mean-looking law enforcers look at me. The bigger one says, “George Clymer, you’re under arrest. Turn around and put your hands behind your back.” He then asks my father to get my tablet. They attach thumb cuffs and lead me out of the house. Behind me I hear my father say, “I knew it.”

I’m in shock. All that I can mutter is, “What did I do?” I don’t get an answer. The police vehicle is big, militaristic, and intimidating. It’s painted black with the insignia of the National Police. I feel kind of numb like I’m going through the motions but I’m not really there.

One police officer opens the rear door and says, none too friendly, “Get in!” It’s not easy stepping up into the high vehicle with my hands behind my back. He grabs the back of my shirt and literally throws me into the back seat.

As we pull away, I look at the house and see my mother, father, and sister standing in the front door watching. What did I do, I wonder. Do they know about the book? Did my mother or father turn me in? Did Dee talk? Does it have anything to do with STUS? My head is spinning. I throw-up on the floor. The officer in the passenger seat curses.

We arrive at the police station and I’m led into a small interrogation room with a large mirror on one wall. I’m not stupid. There’s an observation room behind that mirror. In the center of the room there are a table and two chairs. I’m instructed to sit in one and then left alone. The thumb cuffs hurt and my shoulder is getting stiff. I wait. What have you done to me Dawn? In my heart I know that blaming her is not fair. I started my Globalnet search on my own. I found Dawn, not the other way around. Beware what you seek for the light that shines on the truth also illuminates you. Dawn warned me. I’m thirsty and have a terrible taste in my mouth. I wait. Voices and movement can be heard outside the room but I can’t tell what they are

saying. My mind jumps to a vision of Dee. What if they arrest her? She would be terrified. Like I'm not?

Finally, the door opens and a detective walks in carrying my tablet. He reaches around and releases the thumb cuffs. After he takes the other seat he says, "I'm Detective Muller."

I nod.

"Where do I begin?" he says while examining my file. "George Clymer, you are on the Subversive Citizen List, have visited un-American websites, went off the grid for a prolonged period of time, requested release from the Social Compensation Program, have unauthorized software on your tablet, and have infiltrated a company that provides technology for national defense." He puts the file on the table, looks directly at me and asks, "Are you a terrorist?"

"Me, uh, what, uh, no."

"You visited www.61273????.edu last week. That website doesn't exist. How do you explain that?"

"I visited a lot of websites. I don't know anything about that particular one."

"You have Suicide Queen Encryption on your tablet. We've seen it before. See the icon? That's a warning. If we attempt to recover any browsing history, emails, or downloaded data Suicide Queen will destroy everything on the tablet. Only you have access to the information. Where did you get that Program?"

"I, I don't know, know," I stutter. "I didn't know I had it."

"We've only seen it on computers and tablets used by anarchists and spies." He leans close to me and asks, "Which one are you?"

"Neither."

Detective Muller slams his hand down on the table, jumps to his feet and bellows, "You're lying! That program is so sophisticated that our best programmers haven't been able to find any way around it. This is highly sophisticated stuff on the international espionage level. You sure as hell don't have that kind of capability. Now, where did you get it?"

"I don't know how I got it on my tablet." Then something hits me. No, not Detective Muller. A thought. I ask, "If you can't access my browsing history how do you know I visited that odd-named website you mentioned?"

"Listen kid, don't play stupid with me. That will only get you in trouble. I can hold you indefinitely on national security suspicion charges. You will rot in the worst conditions possible with characters

you won't believe." He makes his point, "What's your dress size?"

I don't mind admitting that I am frightened. My mother warned me what could happen. I didn't believe her. My father probably can't wait to say, "I told you so." Maybe, I should have just fallen in line with the "good citizens" and quietly lived my life.

Detective Muller breaks into my thoughts, "Because you were flagged for visiting illegal sites your browsing record was tracked by our server. A funny thing happened, though. After you visited www.61273???.edu you went dark. Nothing. That's where you picked up Suicide Queen and ducked under the radar. What site did you visit after www.61273???.edu?"

I know it was www.AuntPeggy1776.per but I'm not telling. There is no way that I'm putting Dawn in jeopardy. If I end up in a hell-hole then that's the price of freedom. It occurs to me that the pilgrims were jailed in England before escaping to the New World. I guess Walter Tize is right, history does repeat itself. Am I the new pilgrim? Can't be. I'm just a kid from New York who found a book. Anyway, there isn't any New World to which to escape.

"You better start cooperating," Detective Muller warns, "There's more at stake than your lousy freedom." This gets my attention. "Your parents are still responsible for you. They could lose their jobs or get their Social Compensation Program payments reduced. Your sister could become a ward of the state. Do you want your family to be broken up or to live in squalor due to your actions?"

Two things happen; 1) I fear for my family and want to protect them and 2) I get angry. My mind goes to the parades on May 17, 2024 celebrating the adoption of the constitution of New America, where freedom shines bright. What a crock. We are free to follow the rules established by faceless ruling elite. Yet, the nation is presented as one designed to protect everyone and give everyone an equal chance. America—equality for all. "How free do you feel now?" Thanks Dawn. "We the people," have no voice and essentially no rights. King George might as well be in power. I look at Detective Muller. He is a tool of the state. Instead of catching criminals, he is questioning a twenty-year-old kid who may have visited a website that the government doesn't like.

"How did you fall off the grid?" Detective Muller asks.

"What do you mean?"

"Your IIDC disappeared Friday night. How did you pull that off?"

"I didn't."

"Where were you Friday night?"

"I was just out walking in the woods," I lie. I know I was at STUS interviewing but they don't. I'm going to keep it that way. Of course, my parents could reveal that fact. I can only hope that they don't.

"It doesn't add up. Two highly sophisticated technical events perpetrated by a nobody with no technical skills doesn't make sense. Who are you associated with? What the hell is going on!?"

"I'm not associated with anyone."

"You are and I'm going to find out with whom," he states. Detective Muller then asks, "Does STUS know you are on the Subversive Citizen List? One phone call from me and your job is history."

I smile. I can't help it—my job is history. Only Detective Muller doesn't know it.

"You think this is funny?"

"No."

"George Clymer you are an enemy of the state and I'm going to bring you down."

I feel like I'm stepping off the side of a mountain and falling into a dark abyss as I say defiantly, "I've done nothing wrong! You threaten me and my family for no reason? You should be ashamed of being an automaton doing the bidding of your masters."

Detective Muller's face turns red with anger. Maybe that wasn't a good idea. He starts toward me but stops when his telephone chimes. I hear him say, "I've got him on a slew of charges. Trust me, this kid is dirty. He's also toast." There is a pause, then he asks, "Why?" Finally, he says, "Damn it. Well, it's your call!" He ends the call and looks at me. With a distinct sneer he spits, "OK, get out of here!"

My only reply—the only reply anyone would make is, "What?"

"You heard me—beat it!"

"Am I free?"

"Yeah!"

I look at the table and ask, "Can I take my tablet?"

"It stays here. When we break that Suicide Queen code you'll be back here. Now, blow!"

I exit the National police station and to my surprise see Virginia sitting on her Harley Davidson motorcycle across the street. When she sees me she pats the seat behind her.

"What are you doing here?" I ask.

"How did you expect to get home?"

"How did you know where I was?"

"I asked you first," she replies.

"Who told you I was here?" I press.

"George, just accept the fact that I knew and came to take you home." She starts the motorcycle. "If you don't want a ride—I'll leave."

OK, I'm not going to get any answers so I climb onto the Harley Davidson.

On the ride home, Red decides to become talkative, "What did they ask you and what did you tell them?"

"They wanted to know about my web surfing and about a program called Suicide Queen."

"And, did you spill your guts?"

"Yeah, in the back seat of the police vehicle."

"What?"

"I threw up." Red laughs which causes her to swerve the motorcycle. I hold on tighter. That's the first nice thing that has happened to me this whole evening. I add, "I told them nothing."

"Did they ask about STUS?"

"They did make a comment about me being on the Subversive Citizen List and working for a company that does national defense technology."

"Did they threaten your family?"

"Yes, how did you know?"

"It's a tactic used quite often and quite effectively." After a pause Virginia says, "North Korea not only jails citizens who try to leave the country without permission, but they also jail their parents, children, and grandchildren. You think that keeps the citizens in line?"

"I can see how it does."

"Don't underestimate your own government."

"It's hard to believe."

"George, you didn't ask for this, but you are the right person. It is going to take courage. I just want you to know that I believe in you."

"What is going to take courage? And, what have I gotten into?"

As we ride into the darkness I can't help but wonder if this portends things to come.



John Quincy Adams

President: 1825 - 1829

“When the American spirit was in its youth, the language of America was different: Liberty, sir, was the primary object.”

—Patrick Henry

Chapter 6 | THE SIGNATURE

I arrive home late and the house is dark. Obviously, they didn't expect me to be released so quickly. Quietly, I let myself in and head to my bedroom. Without a tablet there isn't much I am able to do. How I would love to chat with Dawn. I'm still a little shaken up so I sit on the edge of the bed and stare into the darkness. It's funny how sitting in the dark allows one to think. All my life I've been told that America is the home of the free. Somehow now I feel that the facts don't support the image. I'm free to do what the state allows me to do. But, step one inch outside the lines and the state comes down hard. In reality, America is the home of the tightly controlled.

Freedom is a funny thing. People define it differently but in many cases the term is misused. The Social Compensation Program is positioned as making us free from the rigors and fear of making a living. It's the trade-off that is ignored. You give up the freedom to earn what you are capable of earning only to receive a level of lifestyle decided for you by someone else. Then I find that the Globalnet is free as long as you don't visit websites that are considered unacceptable. Unacceptable by whom? In essence, you give up freedom of thought. Finally, what the hell do they care that my movements couldn't be tracked for a few hours? I thought the chip in my thumb was a wonderful key to so many great things only to now realize it is a tether meant to keep me in line. I feel like a caged animal yearning to break free to take my chances and live my life on my terms.

A shadow drifts across my doorway. I focus and realize that Dee is standing there. Neither of us say a word. Then she runs into my room and hugs me. That's the second time we hugged this week. This nonsense has got to stop.

Dee whispers in my ear, "George, I was so afraid."

"So was I," I admit.

"What happened?"

"They asked me a lot of questions, kept my tablet, and then let me go." Then as an afterthought I ask, "You didn't tell anyone about the book—did you?"

"No," and, before I could ask, she adds, "You have my word."

"Good. It seems it is more dangerous to possess it than we thought."

"Are you going to get rid of it?" she asks with concern.

"No way, but we are going to have to be very careful. I'm afraid they might have me under surveillance."

"What can we do?"

"For now, we will be good citizens until I am no longer considered a threat."

The next morning Red, uh Virginia, drops me off at STUS corporate headquarters rather than the Morehead Street office.

"What are we doing here?" I ask.

"Mr. Trufire wants to see you."

Immediately, I know why, "Am I getting fired?"

"Twelfth floor. Go."

On the ride up the elevator I feel like a condemned man heading to the Termination Suite. When I arrive at his office Mr. Trufire says, "I see you got arrested last night."

"Am I being fired?" I ask timidly.

"What? Hell no!" He laughs.

At this point my head is spinning. All that has been going on is more than my underdeveloped brain can handle. One more surprise and my head will explode.

"Did they charge you?"

"No. They asked me a lot of questions and then just when I thought I was cooked they let me go."

"They were fishing," he comments as he walks around his desk and motions for me to join him at the table in front of the waterfall. "Did they confiscate your tablet?"

"Yes."

He slides a new tablet over to me and says, "Here's a new one. There's no thumb lock. It requires a password."

I look at it and recognize a familiar icon. "It has Suicide Queen."

"That's right. If the wrong password is entered three times in a

row or the government runs a break-in program she goes to work. All they get are a billion zeros. It's yours. I don't want to know the password. The right to privacy is inalienable."

"Thank you. But, I'm a little confused."

"You're a lot confused and that is understandable." He stands and waves his hand over the monitors on the table. They come alive. "Someone wants to talk with you. I'm going to a meeting. Stay as long as you like." Mr. Trufire leaves.

DAWN: Are you on parole?

GEORGE: Very funny. They just let me go.

DAWN: That's good.

GEORGE: Aren't you going to say that you warned me?

DAWN: I take no pleasure from the illegal acts of our government.

GEORGE: This is all like a bad dream.

DAWN: It's more like an awakening.

GEORGE: Awakening to a nightmare.

DAWN: Sadly so. George, you have a right to seek knowledge and do with your life what you choose—not what is chosen for you.

GEORGE: I'm starting to get that, but it's hard to do what you want from a jail cell.

DAWN: How did your parents take it?

GEORGE: As would be expected. My mother was horrified and worried about appearances. My father just shook his head and mumbled about me being on a path to destruction.

DAWN: If you choose to, you are on a path to realization of a dream that you have yet to have.

GEORGE: Do you take pleasure in confusing me?

DAWN: Absolutely.

GEORGE: Well, you're good at it.

DAWN: I know.

GEORGE: What is really going on?

DAWN: George, America was founded by brilliant men who cherished freedom. They created a free enterprise system that allowed every person to achieve whatever goal they were capable of reaching. To you capitalism is a dirty word because the government doesn't want you to think as an individual with unlimited potential. Capitalism is no more than an economic system where the means of production and distribution are privately owned. It rewards innovation, hard work, and effort. It is not greed driven—it is incentive driven.

GEORGE: If it was so good why did it fail?

DAWN: It didn't fail. It was a grand experiment that flourished for over one-hundred-fifty years and created the greatest nation on earth. Numerous accomplishments improved the lifestyle of millions of people.

GEORGE: Then, what happened?

DAWN: America was a shining light that attracted immigrants from around the world who had a desire for freedom. Then she was raped by those she trusted most—the leaders who took an oath to protect her.

GEORGE: But it was the big corporations that bankrupted the country.

DAWN: It was the politicians who wanted more and more control over the people, who abused their power, and destroyed the economy through fiscal policies that proved time and again to not work in nation after nation.

GEORGE: If they knew it wouldn't work, why did they do it?

DAWN: They were blinded by emotion, arrogance, greed, and lust for power.

GEORGE: Even if I am starting to understand the value of freedom and want more there is nothing I can do.

DAWN: The colonists faced a wilderness and a tyrannical government.

GEORGE: But I'm just one small insignificant individual.

DAWN: George, do you remember the infamous Ice Age project that got you a reprimand in school?

I remember the incident. It was a group project in Earth Science that examined the Ice Age of 2029. For years the government warned about global warming without any concrete proof that it existed. Then when the Sun's interior magnetic waves shifted, normal activity decreased by sixty percent. This hadn't happened for three hundred years. Yet, it was predictable if those in power weren't so focused solely on warming. From 2029 to 2044 summers were cool and winters were bitter cold. Because nations were unprepared, food supplies dwindled due to shorter growing seasons, energy reserves couldn't provide enough heating, infrastructure failures were common, waterways became unpassable, livestock perished, and most importantly over twenty million people died worldwide.

GEORGE: All I did was complain that the other four members of our work group did nothing while I did all the work. It didn't seem fair that we all got the same grade—that I earned.

DAWN: And, what happened when you complained?

GEORGE: I received an official reprimand and had to take a remedial Cooperative Attitude Group Education Development (CAGED) course.

DAWN: Group think and collectivism allows those who are not motivated to prosper by the efforts of others.

GEORGE: Bradford was right.

DAWN: Absolutely. George, you have a sense of right and wrong. In addition, you have the courage to stand up for your convictions. Don't underestimate the tremendous impact an individual can have.

All of a sudden it hits me; how does Dawn know about the Ice Age project? She would have had to do some investigating to turn up that little gem. What else does she know? I'm compelled to ask.

GEORGE: How do you know about the Ice Age project?

DAWN: Oh, George, it can't be a surprise.

GEORGE: Which shouldn't be a surprise, the fact that you investigated me or didn't answer my question?

DAWN: LOL. George, you have a job at STUS and you'll do fine. However, you are needed in ways that I cannot reveal at this time that go far beyond historic research. If you decide to become involved, things will become far clearer.

GEORGE: How can I make a decision about something that I don't know anything about?

DAWN: You'll know when the time comes.

GEORGE: More fog?

DAWN: LOL. Right now I have one request. I'm going to send you a replica of the original *Declaration of Independence* written in 1776 that you have never seen. It is against the law to have it. Please, read the entire document carefully—every word. After you finish, we will chat, once more.

As though on cue, Mr. Trufire enters the office. I look up briefly and when I return to the monitor Dawn is gone. Hey that sounds like a song lyric. Dawn is gone and the day is here to stay. Pretty bad, OK, I'm sorry.

Mr. Trufire sits opposite me and picks up my new tablet. While he examines it he says, "This tablet doesn't have a thumb lock for a very good reason. It can't be tracked."

"And, it has Suicide Queen."

David Trufire looks up and smiles, "We created Suicide Queen. There are over a million lines of code. A prefix appears on each line

that arbitrarily changes continuously. Because of this defense there is no way to access the code without setting the Queen in motion. Even we cannot defeat her. That's what makes her so beautiful." His pride in the technological achievement is obvious. To my surprise he adds, "No one knows we are the authors. That fact does not leave this office."

I nod.

He continues, "Once you enter your password this device becomes only yours." He stands up, walks over to the window, and looks out over Charlotte. With his back to me he reveals more confidential information, "That tablet operates on a different satellite network—not the government network. It's called the Black Pearl Satellite Network." He turns to face me and admits, "I don't name these things. The beauty of being on Black Pearl is that you can't be tracked, traced, or turned off. Whatever website you visit has no idea that you are there. You are invisible. On a website that requires an IIDC identifier to enter, you activate a program called "Back Door" and you're in. As I told you previously, we designed the IIDC technology. What is not known by anyone is the fact that we included a universal over-ride. So, when a website is created and locked only allowing access to certain approved IIDC individuals they place their thumb on a reader to register. Their IIDC code is saved along with the universal over-ride code. The locked website maintains a list of approved IIDC identifiers and one hidden digital key."

"Wait," I interrupt, "I don't want to know any more. The responsibility is too great. If I get arrested again, they might find a way to get all of this information out of me. That can't happen!"

David Trufire grins and walks over to me. "Son, they could pull out your fingernails and you won't reveal what you know."

"They even suggest pulling my fingernails out and I'm singing like a canary with its ass on fire."

Trufire laughs. "George, you underestimate yourself. In time you will realize that."

I'm not sure what he means, but somehow the way things have been going it sounds pretty ominous. I consider that all I did was find a book. Now I'm knee deep in intrigue.

"If you ever get arrested again," Trufire continues, "and they take your tablet and ask for the password give them the "Queen's Revenge" password that you will have saved that sets her in motion. In the blink of an eye all zeros."

"Mr. Trufire, I have to ask," I say with as much seriousness as I

can muster, “What is going on?”

He stands and leads me to the door. As he ushers me out he says, “The redcoats are coming.”

The rest of the day is uneventful and I’m glad to be home. Dinner is quiet and awkward. No one has anything to say and my parents have trouble looking at the jailbird. After dinner I go to my room, shut the door, and download the *Declaration of Independence* that Dawn sent me. I have to admit I do so with a little fear and trepidation. In my mind I imagine ten huge police storm troopers blasting through my bedroom door. You just shouldn’t mess with the government. They have the money, the weapons, the manpower, the laws, and the ability to ruin your life—or end it.

OK, I’m not a scholar as any school that I attended will attest. So, reading this document isn’t as easy as you might think. After all, it was written in the eighteenth century. Those characters spoke and wrote differently. For example, run-on sentences, was there a shortage of periods in those days? I feel a joke coming on but better be prudent. Anyway, I find the ideas expressed to be compelling. It begins by explaining why they have to “dissolve the political bands” with England. I’m surprised that they mention God and Creator. Those are not allowed in government documents, today. Now, bear with me as I try to work this concept out. Every human being has certain rights that come from nature or God. Like a bird has a right to fly and a fish has a right to swim—it’s natural. No government can pass a law that prevents the bird or fish from doing what they are meant to do without becoming illegitimate. In fact, governments are supposed to exist to protect individual rights. Thomas Jefferson stated that these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I Really like the way he put it, “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—”

I hear something outside and quickly hide my tablet. Are the police here? Should I hide? I clench my fists to protect my fingernails. Thanks, Trufire! When no one comes crashing through my window I return to my reading.

The *Declaration of Independence* goes on to list the many grievances the colonists have with King George III. As I read these my mind starts listing the grievances that I have with my government.

- They control what I am allowed to read
- Determine how much I’m allowed to earn
- Misrepresent history

- Constantly lie to the public
- Control my healthcare
- Tell me what car I'm allowed to buy
- Censor entertainment
- Arrest people without cause
- Threaten and intimidate citizens
- Control who can run for office
- Regulate everything
- Tax everything
- Elite live like a bunch of King George III's

In conclusion—I AM NOT FREE!

I come to a word, consanguinity. What in the blue hell is consanguinity? I hit define and find that it means having the same ancestors. OK, I'm smarter now. Then I read the actual declaration, "... declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States..." For a moment I sit and think about that sentence. It's another run-on sentence, but indeed is the ultimate act of treason in the eyes of the king while a consummately brave act that set in motion the founding of a free nation. What incredible people these colonists were. What divine forces came together at that exact time to cause them to recognize the natural right of every individual to pursue their destiny as a free unencumbered citizen protected by their government rather than threatened and coerced by those they entrusted to its leadership. Ha, a run-on sentence. I've been reading Jefferson's document too long. These brilliant men took the first step in creating a ship of state for free men. Unfortunately, it is a ship that has run aground.

The final sentence of the *Declaration of Independence* reveals a level of patriotism that I have never witnessed in my lifetime, "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." Who were these remarkable men? They voluntarily risked everything for a cause that they so valued. People like that don't exist, today. I scroll down and start to read the signatures on the document. I have to remember that they were using a quill tip pen dipped in ink. However, the signatures are clear and bold. For the most part each man's signature is unique and expressive with many having flourishes. A part of me wonders what went through their mind when they placed their name upon that document. Did they know what they were starting? Were they afraid? Or, did they

have a vision of a better future?

As I scan through the signatures, I come to one that is familiar—it's mine! There on the *Declaration of Independence* is the signature of George Clymer representing Pennsylvania. Even more disturbing is the fact that my actual signature is a lot like the one that I am staring at. In school we were taught to write our signatures with a stylus on our tablet. It was done just in case there wasn't any electronic device available at the time. My signature has many of the characteristics of my ancestor without the final swirls. I continue to stare at the paper and wonder who was George Clymer.

Naturally, I've searched my name on the Globalnet to see what comes up and never has there been any mention of George Clymer signer of the *Declaration of Independence*. As a matter-of-fact if you put in *Declaration of Independence* what generally comes up is "a document used by wealthy businessmen to steal the colonies from England." That's about all we were taught in school.

Then it hits me—the book. No, I wasn't hit by the book, come'on. I sneak out to my hiding place and retrieve my history book. In the index I find George Clymer. Literally, my hands are shaking as I leaf to the indicated page. And, there it is a part of American history—of my history.

George Clymer (March 16, 1739 – January 23, 1813) an American founding father. He was one of the first colonists to advocate independence from Britain. As a Pennsylvania representative, along with five others, George Clymer was a signatory of both the *Declaration of Independence* and the *United States Constitution*.

Holy crap! I've got to know more about this man. But first, I have to contact Dawn.

DAWN: George, it's late.

GEORGE: Did you know?

DAWN: Know what?

GEORGE: No more evasion—did you know?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: I think I deserve a straight answer!

DAWN: You do. Yes, I knew.

GEORGE: Why didn't you just come out and tell me?

DAWN: Sometimes discovery is more effective.

GEORGE: I keep getting this feeling that I'm being played.

DAWN: You are.

GEORGE: I am? And, you're admitting it?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: What is the purpose? What are you trying to accomplish? Why me?

DAWN: Slow down—tiger. Right now, it is important to take our time and be cautious.

GEORGE: Don't you think I have a right to know why and how I'm being manipulated?

DAWN: What did you learn from reading the *Declaration of Independence*?

GEORGE: DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT!!!!

DAWN: That is the subject.

GEORGE: Not to me! I am tired of being a pawn. What the hell is going on?

DAWN: Good night, George.

The link goes silent. Now, I'm angry and confused and amazed and frustrated and hungry. I sneak into the kitchen to look for a snack. Out of nowhere Dee joins me. Together we look at a nearly empty refrigerator and cupboards that aren't any more promising. Finally, we grab an almost empty bag of peanuts.

"Come with me," I whisper.

Once we are in my room with the door closed I show Dee the *Declaration of Independence* and the signatories. To my surprise she doesn't react. She sits there looking at the screen. I don't say anything. In silence, we sit in front of the glowing display. After a few minutes she sits back and surprises me by saying, "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—“ She looks at me and asks, "Is that even possible?"

"I don't know," I answer honestly.

"Wouldn't it be nice to not worry about all the rules we have to follow? To be able to make our own decisions. To . . ."

"To be free," I interject.

"Yes," she smiles thinking about the unthinkable.

I show her the paragraph in the book about George Clymer. There is an intensity in her eyes as she reads about our ancestor. When she finishes she looks at me and states, "Let's write a *Declaration of Independence*!"

"What?"

"It's a family tradition. We are born rebels. Our tyrannical government is treating us like the King treated the colonists."

"You're kidding. We'd end up in jail."

“We are in jail, only there aren’t any bars.”

Now, keep in mind this is my fifteen-year-old sister. She’s starting to sound like Dawn. Albeit, she is correct about our government, but the danger is too great to even consider. When I look at her I come face-to-face with an angry young woman ready for a fight. There is something about all of this that lit a fire deep inside of her. She is hungry, better yet, starved for something and I know what that something is—freedom. It is clear that I have underestimated her. Darsey Patricia Clymer has a depth of character that, until now, has gone unnoticed. I want to hug her, but, damn, that would be three times in a week. Instead, I say, “Dee, this isn’t a game. I’ve already seen the inside of a jail. The government plays for keeps.”

“Then we’ll work underground. We can start by spreading the truth about the history of the United States and the *Declaration of Independence*.”

“You’re going to get us killed.”

Once more she surprises me. This time by her memory, as she says, “Remember that quote that we read by Patrick Henry, ‘Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.’”



Andrew Jackson

President: 1829 - 1837

“There’s a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: as government expands, liberty contracts.”

—Ronald Reagan

Chapter 7 | THE FLAG

I’m really having trouble sleeping. First, I feel like a caged animal that wants its freedom but have no idea how to escape. And, where would I run? It’s not like I can dream of going to America. OK, STUS and Dawn are working together. That is clear. They want me to get involved. That is also obvious. However, I don’t know what they are trying to accomplish or how I fit in. And, how did all of this happen? I found a history book, searched the Globalnet, and opened Bradfordwasright.com. It was then that Dawn and I met—strictly by coincidence. She couldn’t possibly have orchestrated all of the steps necessary for us to meet. Maybe she discovered my name on the *Declaration of Independence* after we started chatting. Yet, I can’t help but wonder.

Moonlight coming through my window creates eerie shadows on the wall. I watch them and my imagination melds with the movement. In front of me is a group of men arguing over independence. It reflects what I read in the history book. It seems that the colonies did not rise up together in one dramatic quest for freedom. It happened slowly and in steps. South Carolina’s new constitution opposed those loyal to the crown, called Tories. Other colony legislatures approved independence. In Massachusetts, town hall meeting after town hall meeting supported independence. However, there were a large number of colonists who wanted to remain attached to England. Some historians estimated that it was one third for independence, one third loyalists, and one third undecided. Then on June 7, 1776, three hundred years ago, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia brought before the Continental Congress the resolution for a declaration of independence. After heated debates the vote remained indecisive. South Carolina was against independence.

Go figure, considering their constitution. George Clymer and Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania were outnumbered as they vehemently argued in their delegation for independence. Delaware's delegation was divided while New York's waited for instructions from home. Arguments continued in what seemingly was a futile endeavor. Finally, a dying Caesar Rodney arrived and swung Delaware's vote in favor of independence. In the Pennsylvania delegation, two delegates didn't attend and one was convinced to change his vote, leading to that colony voting for independence. Finally, South Carolina switched its position and Congress voted unanimously for independence on July 2, 1776. John Adams wrote, "patricians stamp and foam and curse, but all in vain . . . The decree has gone forth."

Oh, would I love to have been there to be a part of such noble history. But, would I have had the courage demonstrated by these men? Could I really risk everything for an ideal? Is that what I'm being asked to do, now?

Before me the shadows change. I see men and women sitting around making declarations of new regulations and laws all for the "good of the people," that promise to make things fair, and that ultimately will keep liberty at bay. As my mind sees present day American government at work, I conclude that essentially, we have no voice in our government, no representation, and little individual freedom. The royal class pulled off the greatest hoax in history—a bloodless coup whereby they conquered an entire nation by claiming to be doing everything for the good of the people. If you ask me, they pulled the goods over on the people.

So, there you have it. I am a traitor. No, they are the traitors. No, based on the *Reorganization Constitution*, I am indeed the traitor. I guess, more accurately, I am a patriot for a country long lost that I never knew. It makes me wonder, "What was it like in a real free America?" All I know is what I've experienced in my lifetime or been taught in a misleading history class.

I'm tired from lack of sleep when Virginia picks me up. Fatigue makes it difficult to be logical or for-that-matter tactful. So, without thinking I ask, "You're part of this conspiracy—what's really going on?"

"What do you think is going on?"

There's a surprise, a non-answer question to my question. "Come'on Red," oops, that was a slip, "I feel like a horse being trained for the big race and I didn't even know I was a race horse."

"Red?"

"I'm sorry, that's what I called you before I knew your name." I see just a glimmer of a smile so I bravely continue, "Apparently, I'm needed for some reason or some task but no one will tell me what it is. How can I decide whether or not I will make a commitment without knowing what it is for?"

"If you had a secret that was very important would you tell just anyone?" Virginia asks.

"Of course not."

"You'd want to know first whether or not you can trust those you confide in, correct?"

"Is that what this is all about? Determining if I can be trusted?"

"Listen Skinny, that's what I called you before I knew your name," this time a real smile, "When we first met, I was told to pick you up. How I knew where you were should be obvious. Remember the gloves? Quite fetching, I must say," this time a quick laugh. "What transpired in your interview or with any other interactions that you've had is none of my business. My job is to get you to and from work and to protect you."

"Protect me—from what?"

"At present, from yourself."

"So, once more, I don't get any answers."

"Think George."

I really like Red. Yeah, I am attracted to her, as well. For crying out loud, I'm twenty-years-old I'm supposed to be a wild stallion. There's that horse analogy again. Freud would have a field day with my psyche. I just spent a sleepless night thinking and all I came away with was that we have a tyrannical government that is posing as the good, kind, nanny. The politicians, noble class, have enslaved an entire nation, rewritten history, molded complaisant citizens, and taken away . . . what was it that Jefferson said . . . We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . . that's it, our unalienable rights. The government has denied me my God-given rights. "I know one thing . . ." I start.

"I figured that was about your limit."

"Stop that! I know that I have certain rights that our government has taken away that they do not have the authority to do." I pause, then add, "But, when someone holds a gun to your head how do you stop them from robbing you?"

"You take away their gun," Virginia says flatly.

"Or die trying."

"Not if you are smart."

"OK, we have a tyrannical government. I get it. And, some of you don't like it. I understand. But this government is all that I've known in my entire life. I'm not sure what real freedom would be like or if it is worth dying for. Heck, if you're dead, freedom doesn't really count, does it?"

"Millions of brave souls died to protect American's freedom over the years. While they were being noble, some unscrupulous, venomous con artists defrauded the American people and gained power over them that they subsequently abused. Freedom is so dear that it is worth dying for even if you die to insure another's freedom." There is a look on Virginia's face that tells me that she sees the awesome value of this thing called freedom.

Now I'm at work and Walter is his pleasant self, as he says, "You look like shit."

"I'd say that's a fair assessment," I reply as I flop into one of his guest chairs.

"Tough night?"

"I kinda snapped at Dawn."

"She's a big girl—she can take it."

"Have you met Dawn?"

"Nope," he replies, "but I have a message from her about you."

"Am I in trouble?"

"You are not!" Walter stands and leads me through his door and down the hall. "What you are in for is an education." As we walk down the hall Walter asks, "Do you ever wonder why I treat you so poorly?"

"Yeah, you don't like me."

"Well, besides that." He stops and turns to face me, "When STUS was founded in 2015 things had gotten completely out-of-hand. It was long before I was born, but I've seen the videos that you are about to see. After you view them you will know why I talk to you the way that I do."

We enter the small screening room where previously I watched the PR video about STUS. Walter punches in a code and a number of video selections appear on the monitor next to his chair. He selects one and the video begins. On the screen is a simple title: STUS Board Meeting 2015-001. It fades to a gentleman standing at the head of a

conference room table. It is a plain room with a long wooden table that seats six along each side and one at the end. There are eight persons seated at the table. The man, whose back is to the camera, begins.

“It’s been a long five years and now the real work is about to begin. We all know why we are here, but for posterity, if you will indulge me, I will reiterate our motivations and intentions. America is dead. That fact is sadly without question. It has been replaced by Socialist America with a tyrannical federal government. What the founding fathers feared most has happened. Every day laws are passed that diminish individual freedom. Unelected regulators establish arbitrary rules with abandon. The legal system is corrupt. Politicians have formed a cabal of thieves, murderers, and elitists. Media are biased, fools, and liars. Public education is inadequate and used to dumb-down and indoctrinate each new generation. The economy has been completely destroyed. Morality, honor, and individual responsibility are now vague long-lost concepts. Entertainment is used to pacify the masses much as was done when Rome was declining. And, most important of all, the *Constitution* has been abandoned.”

Walter Tize leans over toward me and says, “That is Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood one of the founders of STUS. At that time he was 65 years old.”

Jeffrey Nathaniel Eastwood was born in Newton, Iowa on June 25, 1950 the day North Korea invaded South Korea to begin the Korean conflict. He was an avid reader spending many hours in the local library pursuing his love of westerns and fascination with history. From his studies he became a firm believer that history repeats itself. As a teenager during the 1960s he also became consumed with the space race. At the age of seventeen Jeffrey got his parent’s permission and joined the Army. He served in Vietnam from January, 1968 to July, 1969 arriving home in time to watch the moon landing. In 1970, at the rank of Sergeant, he became a drill instructor. The United States Army Intelligence Center was established at Fort Huachuca, Arizona in 1971 as the home of the military intelligence branch. Staff Sergeant Jeffrey Eastwood was assigned to this post in 1974 and quickly became a valued asset to both enlisted personnel and officers. His knowledge of history, tactics, and human nature served him well in this branch of the Army. In 1976 Jeffrey Eastwood entered Officers Candidate School and graduated as a Second Lieutenant. For the next eleven years Eastwood worked in United States Army Intelligence in various locations around the world. During this time, he met a young Sergeant, Demarcus

Shepherd, with whom he was impressed. Whenever there was a dangerous assignment Major Eastwood would request that Shepherd be on the team. By 1987, Lieutenant Colonel Eastwood was head of a classified counter-intelligence group and Master Sergeant Demarcus Shepherd was on his team. More than once they saved each other in life-threatening situations. Eastwood retired from the Army with honors in 1997. Due to his knowledge and international contacts he was perfect as a consultant to the defense industry. With top level clearance Eastwood became privy to weapons and technological advances that remained classified. This endeavor also proved highly profitable.

Eastwood continues, “We, The Loyal Nine, came together with one objective; to resurrect America and re-establish the original *Constitution*, to overcome the forces that have taken control and illegally perverted our system of government, and to once more make America a beacon of freedom.”

“Damn right,” Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd adds from his seated position.

Once again Walter leans over and explains, “That is Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd, he was 52 and in great shape by what I’ve been told. His nickname was ‘The Fist.’ He lived to be 100 years old.”

Demarcus Wilma Shepherd was born in Newark, New Jersey on February 17, 1963. Across the Hudson River in Brooklyn, New York another child was born on that day named Michael Jordan. Demarcus never knew his father. He and his four siblings were raised by his mother and grandmother. Both women worked hard to instill in their children values. The streets of Newark taught Demarcus what it takes to survive and maintain those values. Gangs were always looking for new recruits. They tried to intimidate Demarcus but quickly found out that this young man was not to be messed with. He lived his teenage years during the 1970s. It was an interesting time with social, economic, and political changes taking place at an accelerated pace. Scientific advances also occurred at a brisk rate. They were also tough years with a recession, high inflation, and social unrest. Because jobs were rare, when Demarcus graduated high school, he joined the Army. Physically, it was easy for the young man. Discipline growing up also was an asset in the military. Demarcus Shepherd quickly became a standout and advanced in rank. In 1984, at the age of twenty-one, he was assigned to temporary duty in the Far East in Army Intelligence under Major Jeffrey Eastwood. From the beginning the two men hit it

off. Even though Jeff Eastwood was an officer and older, age 34, there was something special that they shared. Call it philosophy, values, or perspective, Eastwood and Shepherd made a formidable team. Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd retired in the year 2000. Shortly after, he became a police officer in Englewood, New Jersey. Demarcus and Jeff Eastwood remained friends and often met at each other's home. They discussed everything but were mainly focused on the changing state of America. The land of opportunity had become the land of opportunists. Politicians lined their pockets while making an unstoppable power grab on individual rights. The two patriots were not fools. They could see a trend that was leading to an uncertain and most likely disastrous future. Together, they began developing an organization that could not only survive the coming crisis but also be a force aimed at restoring America to where it values individual freedom. When the Reorganization occurred in 2024, Sarge was 61 years old with a 40-year-old daughter and 16-year-old grandson. He remained an integral part of STUS until his death at the age of 100.

I can see in Walter's eyes and hear in his voice that he sincerely admires these people.

Colonel Eastwood nods in the direction of Demarcus Shepherd and responds, "Damn right, it is. Step one was the nine of us getting together and sharing our philosophy and vision and forming The Loyal Nine—a secret society. If you recall your history, the Sons of Liberty another secret society was formed in 1765, eleven years before the *Declaration of Independence* was written.

Asayo Nakahara adds, "And the *Constitution* was written eleven years after that."

"Asayo Nakahara," Walter states, "was a computer genius who was so far ahead of her time she gave STUS an immediate edge in technology and the marketplace. She was 47 at the time."

"Time is not on our side," Colonel Eastwood warns, "The slide into oblivion will continue. Within the next five years America will fail."

"Five point three years," Benson Whittingham projects.

My host states, "A financial analyst, Benson Whittingham was a stereotypical accountant type complete with a round pudgy face and thick glasses. The man could see trends, and shifts, and opportunities that big name banker types never dreamed of. He could turn a dime into a dollar faster than those in the government could turn a dollar into a dime. Benson Whittingham gave STUS financial strength beyond their wildest imagination. He predicted America's failure almost to the

day.” Walter sits back and adds with a touch of sadness, “He was 58 at that time. When the Reorganization occurred, he worked 24/7. Literally, lived at STUS in a small apartment. It eventually killed him at age 72, but he kept the dream alive.”

On the screen Colonel Eastwood looks around the room, then says, “If there ever is going to be a new America based on the original founder’s vision we have to start the process, today. We will not see the fruits of our labors, but we will plant the seeds of freedom. Our success will depend on secrecy, strategic planning . . .” before he can continue each member of the board adds an attribute.

Benson Whittingham says, “Business acumen.”

Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd, “Strength.”

Asayo Nakahara, “Imagination.”

Hector Santiago, “Perseverance.”

Hans Keller, “Courage.”

Erin Slattery, “Confidence.”

Angelina Granelli, “Humility.”

Neha Crying Wolf, “Loyalty.”

Colonel Eastwood finishes it with, “and Divine guidance. STUS Corporation is our sword. It will remain an invisible sword until those who join in the distant future deem it time to wield it. Until then, we have to create the path and provide the tools for future patriots.”

Walter pauses the video. He stands and walks up to the screen and turns to face me. I get the feeling that he wishes he could step through the screen into the room and be among those he admires so deeply. Finally, he says, “When STUS was founded things in America had gotten so warped and misguided that liberty was being attacked from every direction. If someone chose to run for office their opponent immediately had an army of researchers looking for any dirt that could be used for the purpose of character assassination. And, if they didn’t find enough they either made it up or misrepresented innocent events. Much like today, language was weaponized. Say the wrong thing or for-that-matter something that could be misinterpreted and you become an outcast or evil person. The term racism was used as a club to bludgeon anyone who didn’t follow the party line even when the person spoke the truth. Truth became subordinate to emotional appeal. And, fear replaced freedom as individuals were silenced or coerced to show support for unreasonable positions.” Walter returns to his seat and restarts the video.

I’m not going to tell you every detail of what I saw, but I will

enlighten you to one fact, while in the public the corporation STUS letters stand for Strategic Technology Universal Systems for the secret organization behind it STUS stands for Save The United States. More interesting is that in the logo the Latin phrase, “conditorum visio in aeternum” means “founders’ vision forever.” Right from its inception STUS had a hidden purpose.

There is another thing of interest that strikes me. At the end of the meeting all of the board members stand, place their right hand on their heart, and recite a pledge of allegiance to a flag. Here’s where it gets weird. It is the stars and stripes—the very flag that is a symbol of imperialism, militarism, racism, arrogance, and hate. In school we were shown how President Jamal Clay made an impassioned speech to Congress stating, “Symbols of hate and division have no place in our government. It’s time to stand up for what’s right and take down the stars and stripes!” That was 2022, during the dark days of the Reorganization.

I say, “That flag is illegal.”

“It wasn’t then,” Walter responds, “and, God willing, it will fly over a free America, once more.”

“We were taught . . .” I begin.

“Stop there!” Walter interrupts. “The key word is ‘taught.’ You were taught the original American Flag is a symbol of evil. That’s because it represents freedom and socialists hate freedom. Control is their mantra.”

Just to mess with him I press on, “But, America under that flag went all around the world conquering weaker nations and stealing their wealth.”

He doesn’t react as I expect. Instead, he smiles and says, “You don’t believe that—not anymore. In fact, you are ravenous to learn more about pre-Reorganization America. You want to come out of the darkness of ignorance and know what really happened. All in good time, my friend. However, since you brought up the subject of the flag,” he punches some buttons, “watch this.”

A video begins titled; *Old Glory* starting with an image of a tattered and filthy stars and stripes flag laying in the dirt being trampled by boots as an army passes. A voiceover states, “When liberty fell, no one protested. It happened slowly—going unnoticed—until it was too late. And, as is a standard tactic of tyrants, once a takeover is complete, they remove as much reminder of the past as possible. History books are rewritten, street names changed, cities renamed, those who

complain arrested, news turned into propaganda, entertainment strictly controlled, and images of the past scrubbed clean. The flag of the original United States of America fell victim in 2022.”

In a more uplifting manner the video provides a history of the original American flag. The voiceover explains, “In late May of 1776, during the Revolutionary War, three men; General George Washington, Robert Morris, and Colonel George Ross—the uncle of Betsy Ross’s recently deceased husband, John—visited her and asked her to create a flag. They showed her a design that featured 13 red and white stripes and 13 six-pointed stars. Betsy had been acquainted with Washington and Morris, as they attended the same church as she. With the suggestion of using five-point stars and arranging them in a circle, she agreed to make a flag.”

“On June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, passed the *Flag Act of 1777*, creating an official flag for a new nation that had yet to win its independence.”

“The American Stars and Stripes were filled with symbolism. Red is for valor, zeal and fervency; white for hope, purity, cleanliness of life, and rectitude of conduct; and blue for reverence to God, loyalty, sincerity, justice and truth. The star is a symbol of dominion and sovereignty, as well as lofty aspirations. A constellation of stars, one for each state, is emblematic of States’ individual sovereignty except as to rights delegated by them to the Federal Government.”

A colonial fort appears in the video. The kind voiceover tells me, “The American flag was first flown over Fort Stanwix in New York State on August 3, 1777. Three days later it came under fire in the Battle of Oriskany.”

“When two new states joined the union Vermont (1791) and Kentucky (1792) the number of stars and stripes was increased to fifteen. Quickly, it became clear that adding stripes would not be practical so in 1818 Congress decided that the number of stripes be restricted to thirteen representing the original colonies while a new star would be added each Fourth of July for each additional state. That remained the law until the flag was outlawed.”

An interesting side note appears on the screen; it was the 15-stripe flag that Francis Scott Key saw flying over Ft. McHenry during the War of 1812 that inspired him to write the poem that later became known as the *Star-Spangled Banner*.

“The name ‘Old Glory’ was given to the flag by Captain William Driver a master merchant mariner who sailed around the world twice.

He was born in Salem, Massachusetts March 17, 1803 and was given an American flag made by his mother on his twenty-first birthday.” I can’t help but think I don’t believe that I will be receiving the stars and stripes from my mother on my twenty-first.

The video continues. “Driver moved to Nashville, Tennessee bringing with him the flag he called ‘Old Glory’ and would display it on special occasions. When the Civil War began he remained loyal to the Union while Tennessee joined the Confederacy. To protect his flag he hid it inside his quilt until Union forces marched into Nashville February 25, 1862. It was then that William Driver brought “Old Glory” out of hiding, and it was raised over the Tennessee Capitol. News of the event spread throughout the north and the name Old Glory was attached to the stars and stripes from then on.”

The video starts showing different images as the voiceover says, “America became a major world power—a power for good. Wherever there was a disaster, anywhere in the world, the stars and stripes usually flew over the first to arrive to provide aid. The American people were by far the most generous in the world offering significant assistance to those in need or suffering. When World War I broke out in Europe, America provided supplies and military support to defend free nations. In World War II, when Hitler and Hirohito almost conquered the world, America supplied its allies with weapons and material without being compensated. And, the American military led the fight to defeat the Axis powers. Throughout history millions of American lives have been lost defending the freedom of others. And, never once did America seek to take control of conquered lands. In fact, America helped rebuild its enemies and promote economic growth and competition. Even after the Venezuelan War of 2019 America helped rebuild that nation. Yet, America’s enemies, foreign and domestic, worked tirelessly to foster an image of an imperialistic nation symbolized by the stars and stripes.”

At the end of the video President Jamal Clay’s speech to a joint session of Congress is shown. It was June 14, 2022. He says capitalists brought the nation to the brink of destruction. Then adds the vilest things about the flag and how it represents hate. I have to admit that my stomach turns when the members of congress cheer and support the outlawing of the stars and stripes and replacing it with a friendlier and more appropriate flag. The new flag is blue with a large red stripe on top and bottom and three white stars representing equality, social justice, and peace. It is considered more in line with the new world order of the future.

The final scene is a painting of Washington crossing the Delaware with an American Flag. A quote from George Washington appears, “Our cause is noble; it is the cause of mankind!”

Walter and I sit in silence. There is a feeling I am experiencing that is foreign to me. I’m proud of these wonderful people who so long ago fought and died to found a nation unlike any other that ever existed in history. In a strange way I feel connected to them. I’m getting to know them—the real them—not the sterile characterizations taught in history class. And, I like them. I respect them. If I was sitting in a tavern and General Washington walked in seeking recruits, I would join them. I’m proud to be an American—a pre-Reorganization American. Then it hits me, STUS is winning me over. Only, in my head I keep hearing the clank of a jail cell door. Finally, I turn to Walter and ask, “Is our cause noble?”

“Our cause?”

I nod.

“Son, Americans today, have no idea what they lost because they never have had it. For a brief time in history fortunate generations of Americans lived in greater freedom than any nation in the world as the result of the brilliance of the founding fathers. Through divine guidance they approached government from the perspective of the rights of individuals.”

I recite a line from the *Declaration of Independence*, “Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

“Exactly. Is our cause noble? Trying to replicate the miracle of the founding fathers is the noblest thing you or I will ever do in our lives.”

Next, I watch news programs from 2015 that demonstrate how words were twisted, taken out of context, or motive attached that cast a negative shadow on what a person said. No wonder people were afraid to express themselves.

Walter explains, “The founders of STUS decided that within the halls of our organization free speech meant free speech. If someone got offended they could say so. At least everyone would know where the other stood. Sergeant Major Shepherd was quoted as saying, ‘I’d rather be insulted by someone and know where I stand than to have them pat me on the back while hating me.’” Walter smiles, “I don’t hate you. In fact, I rather like you. It’s just that STUS turned into a big Tourette Syndrome petri dish with cursing, insulting, and off-color

verbiage common among the inmates. It's freedom and it works."

Walter leaves me to watch two movies from pre-Reorganization days. The first is a musical titled *1776*. It's not 100% historically accurate but very good and inspiring. The second movie is a comedy that is designed to show me what America was once like in the 1950s. The title is *American Graffiti* and it really is hard to believe that people had so much.

After a long day it's good to be home. And, yup, you guessed it I have to contact Dawn.

DAWN: George, how was your day?

GEORGE: Very educational and inspiring.

DAWN: Did you pull back the veil of omission about America's past?

GEORGE: I want a 1958 Chevy.

DAWN: LOL, *American Graffiti*, good choice. I'd have thought you would want the white T-Bird.

GEORGE: Did people really live that way?

DAWN: That and more.

GEORGE: Did Walter Tize contact you?

DAWN: No.

GEORGE: Then I should tell you—I'm in.

DAWN: Very good. Profit or loss?

I now know the response to that question. Maybe, I'll share it with you, when you are ready.



Martin Van Buren

President: 1837 - 1841

“The art of healing comes from nature, not from the physician. Therefore, the physician must start from nature, with an open mind.”

—Paracelsus

Chapter 8 | THE PILL

Dee comes into my room and plops down on my bed. “You were quiet at dinner—something wrong?”

“Dee, I’m getting involved in something that it might be better you don’t know about.”

“Oh, it sounds intriguing,” she replies. Dee flops over on her stomach, legs bent up behind her back, and her chin on her hands, “Is it dangerous, illegal, traitorous—you can tell me. Remember we have a pact.”

“It is probably all of the above and more.” I explain, “I’m trying to protect you. Remember those police officers who dragged me away?”

“I thought one was kinda cute,” she teases.

“Well, they weren’t cute to me. And, you wouldn’t like it if they came for you.”

“Agreed. Now, what have you’ve gotten yourself into?”

“I really don’t feel I should tell you.”

“Look, you’re going to, eventually. We both know that. So, skip the protests and spill your guts.”

I can’t help but laugh. She’s right, you know. See—I wouldn’t hold up under interrogation. George, spill-your-guts, Clymer—that’s me. So, living up to my name, I tell Dee about all that I learned at STUS and my joining the cause. At first, she just stares at me. I fully expect her to jump up and run down the hall yelling, “Mom, guess what George did.” I do have historical experience with that sort of thing. Instead, she rolls off my bed and stands before me and says, “George, I think we really do have to write a *Declaration of Independence*.”

In the end, I agree to keep Dee informed about my traitorous

activities and she leaves my room.

When I turn on my tablet there is a formal message in my inbox from the Social Compensation Board. Even though I'm not participating a cold chill runs down my spine. A letter from them is never a good thing. These people are ruthless.

Mr. George Clymer

RE: Case 07687743251

Pursuant to your voluntary non-participation in The Social Compensation Program this is to inform you that you do NOT qualify for Socialized Healthcare And Management (SHAM). It is your responsibility to arrange for health coverage within the next thirty days or you will be in violation of the American Pursuit of Health Act, Section 32 punishable by imprisonment or fine or both.

Effective immediately, you will no longer receive a monthly supply of Daily Immune Reinforcement Therapy (DIRT) tablets. Reduction of this therapy will put your health at risk. Please be sure to make separate arrangements for therapy as the Center of Disease Management Bulletin 65982, issued 17 February 2074, indicates that the American Citizen Immunity Defense (ACID) index remains below 7%. Your body's ability to fight disease is essentially non-existent.

Your immediate attention to these matters is strongly advised. It is your responsibility to act as a good and productive citizen of The United States of America.

If you have any questions regarding this subject you may contact the Social Compensation Board office at 555-594-8832 or by written correspondence to Admin@socialcompensationboard.gov.

Regards,

Amelia Loundermall

Executive Director

OK, so now they cut off my healthcare. I quickly check my supply of DIRT tablets and find that I have eight left. In eight days I will become a target for every disease known to man, if I don't find a new source. So, of course, you know where I turn.

DAWN: George, back so soon?

GEORGE: I just received a letter from the Social Compensation Board. They have stopped my healthcare and my DIRT tablets.

DAWN: Oh my. Do you have a will?

GEORGE: What does that mean? That's no help!

DAWN: Relax, George. STUS provides healthcare coverage.

GEORGE: What about DIRT tablets?

DAWN: I've never taken one.

GEORGE: Aren't you afraid of disease?

DAWN: No.

GEORGE: Well, I am, my immune system is at 7% effectiveness.

DAWN: I guess without your daily fix, you're in a fix.

GEORGE: This isn't funny. My life is at risk.

DAWN: There are greater risks to your life than a pill.

Visit www.collectingrocks.org

GEORGE: Why am I collecting rocks?

DAWN: Don't interrupt. On that website go to the rock formations page and click on the lower right corner of the plant growing out of a rock photograph. The password is profit-or-loss.

I follow Dawn's instructions. What I find is a request form to fill out to make contact with a Naturopath Doctor in my area. I make the request and after a few minutes I'm sent an email from a local doctor.

In the morning, Red, uh Virginia, and I head to STUS. I inform her that I have an appointment with a doctor in the afternoon. When I tell her I'm going to get a new supply of DIRT tablets, she says, "Don't count on it."

"What does that mean? There are viruses, bacteria, mold spores, and who-knows-what just waiting for my weak immune system to put out a welcome mat. This is serious."

"You're cute when you're scared," she observes with a slight smile.

"How cute will I be when I keel over and die?"

"Stop with the drama. I'll get you there. Just keep an open mind."

My education at STUS continues in the morning but my mind is on the afternoon. For some strange reason, I keep checking my pulse.

Virginia takes me to my appointment. It is not in a large clean brick medical building or at a hospital. Instead, we arrive at an old two-story office building in a neighborhood that has seen better days.

"This is it?" I ask.

"Have fun," Virginia replies.

Reluctantly, I leave the car and enter the building. There are a number of small businesses listed on a directory on one wall. There I find William Pace – Suite 207. When I enter, I find a small unimpressive man in his, I guess, sixties. He has short gray hair, is clean shaven, and wears glasses. In front of him is an old-style laptop computer. He stops pecking away at the keys and looks up. I have to admit that I'm having real reservations about this visit. I announce my arrival, "I'm George Clymer. I have an appointment."

"Yes," he confirms. He is soft-spoken, almost so low you have to strain to hear him. "Please, have a seat." There are two comfortable looking chairs against a wall facing his desk.

I sit and state, "I need a supply of DIRT tablets."

Instead of answering he asks me a question, "If you had a burning sensation in your stomach after eating, what would you do?"

"I'd take an antacid," I respond somewhat confused.

"Oh, no, that's very bad," he shakes his head slowly. "The problem is not too much acid, it is too little acid. The burning sensation is caused by food remaining in the stomach longer than it should." He runs his hand across his chin and continues while demonstrating with his hands, "If you take a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar, mix it in a glass of water, and drink it the problem will go away. Your food will be digested and leave the stomach." He smiles.

I'm not sure what to say or think, so I nod and return his smile and ask, "Are you a doctor?"

William Pace replies, "Yes. A naturopath. We take all of the same courses as medical doctors with the exception of surgery. Then we receive naturopath training in a foreign country."

"Why a foreign country?"

"Young man, what I do is illegal in America. We are breaking the law."

"That seems to be my role in life these days."

Once again, he smiles. It is a knowing smile rather than humorous one. William Pace explains, "Between 2012 and 2025 over six hundred naturopath doctors disappeared, were murdered, or reported to have committed suicide. Then in 2027 the practice of natural or holistic

medicine was outlawed.”

“Why?”

“The official reason was that natural therapies were unregulated and unproven, therefore dangerous. In reality, the medical profession had become a business. The bottom line became more important than the electrocardiogram line. Pressures from every direction changed the dynamic. Malpractice lawyers drove up the cost of everything. Medical equipment prices soared. Pharmaceuticals became the standard treatment with ever increasing costs and dosage. The government got involved which introduced massive waste. Boards of directors focused on profitability. Medical professionals closed their minds and protected their turf.” William Pace shrugged, “Naturopaths became the enemy.”

“Why, what did they do?”

“Remember my question about the burning in your stomach? If people start using a teaspoon of apple cider vinegar, sales of antacids would plummet. The manufacturers of those products cannot allow that.”

I shake my head, “That doesn’t make sense.”

“No, it makes dollars. Of course, that was before the collapse of the dollar and introduction of IMUs,” he waves his hand in dismissal. “Before I continue, I must ask you; profit or loss?”

I answer, “. . .” ah, you thought I was going to reveal the answer. Not yet. You’re still not ready. I respond correctly and William Pace provides more history. “In 2015 a group of naturopath doctors in Florida discovered two important things. The first was that an enzyme N-acetyl-galactosaminidase, commonly called Nagalase, blocked vitamin D from binding to the Gc protein. Why is this important you ask?” I didn’t—I swear. “Vitamin D is essential in preventing cancer and other diseases. These naturopath doctors determined that Nagalase disables the immune system. It’s also known to cause Type 2 Diabetes. In fact, Nagalase is a protein created by cancer cells. In the constant war being waged in our bodies this enzyme is one destructive little devil.”

I check my pulse again.

William Pace looks around as if to make sure no one is listening, leans forward, and whispers, “The second thing they discovered was that the Nagalase enzyme protein was present in immunizations being injected into children.” He sits back and concludes, “They were destroying the immune system of every child in America. I’d like to think it was by accident, or through ignorance, rather than something

more sinister. I'd like to think that, but all of the Florida doctors who made this discovery and wanted to go public disappeared, were murdered, or committed questionable suicides."

A cold chill runs through me. I'm not sure what to think. It's very difficult for me to believe that the government or some special interest group could take such an evil step—murder honest people for trying to do something good. In the end, I conclude that it was a long time ago and we may never really know the facts?

"You, my young friend, have an impaired immune system. You must take those cockamamie tablets to stay healthy." William Pace stands and his voice is raised, well raised by his standards, "Not so! The body is a magnificent machine. It self-regulates, self-diagnoses, and self-heals—given the chance. Your body is designed to be healthy. It is outside forces that threaten it or make it ill. Those pills try to do the job the immune system is far more capable of doing and in the process make the immune system dependent on them. You don't need those pills. You need to let your immune system take over."

"If I don't die first," I say.

"Yes, that is a concern."

"You think?"

He smiles. "In the beginning you will require GcMAF therapy." My blank stare causes him to explain, "Gc stands for a type of protein molecule and MAF for Macrophage Activating Factor." If it's at all possible, I present an even blanker stare. William Pace is undaunted, "Macrophage cells are a type of white blood cell that engulfs and digests foreign substances, microbes, cancer cells, and other cellular debris. They play an important role in the immune system." He's getting a charge out of my massive confusion. "M1 macrophages metabolize arginine to the "killer" molecule nitric oxide. M2 macrophages metabolize arginine to the "repair" molecule ornithine." OK, my head hurts. "Macrophages produce a wide array of powerful chemical substances. They also present antigens which are crucial to initiating a proper immune response." I think I swallowed my tongue. "You will need weekly injections for about six months, then once a month, and finally you will have a healthy immune system."

"How can my immune system suddenly be normal after a lifetime of taking DIRT tablets?"

"When you take the crutch away the body gets stronger."

This whole thing is a little more than scary. First, I'm supposed to let a stranger inject some unknown substance into me. Then I stop

taking the little yellow tablets that have been protecting me all my life. Finally, I go out into the germ-infested world and take a deep breath. I take my pulse. One hundred fifty, that's about right.

"This will hurt," William Pace says as he approaches me with a nasty-looking needle.

"Aren't you supposed to say this won't hurt?"

"OK, this won't hurt," he motions for me to roll up my sleeve.

"But, it will hurt."

It did.

"I need to take a few samples from you so that I can develop a bio-terrain analysis."

"What's that?"

"It helps me determine if you have any vitamin, mineral, enzyme, or hormonal deficiencies. I can then develop a therapy program to get you to optimum health—naturally."

I give William Pace saliva, hair, urine, and feces samples. Don't ask.

In the end, I must admit that I like this man. If I survive, I may grow to trust his approach. The thought of being healthy without chemicals is rather inviting. When I leave I show him proper respect by saying, "Thank you, Doctor." He smiles.

Virginia takes me back to STUS headquarters instead of the research building. I don't have an appointment so I ask, "Why are we here?"

"Orders from Trufire," she says.

"Do you know why?"

She doesn't answer which tells me she knows, but won't tell me. At least this time I'm not worried. After all, I'm onboard, up with the cause, part of the team, a patriot . . . that shot must have done something to my brain. After a short wait in the reception area Mr. Trufire invites me into his office. When I enter, I notice a large man sitting at the round table with his back to the door. He stands, turns to face me, and Mr. Trufire says, "I believe you know Detective Muller."

OK, now I'm worried. That son-of-a-bitch Muller was telling the truth. He's going to get me fired, destroy my family, and put me in prison. All I can do is glare at him. Trust me, it's a hateful glare that makes clear my animus and anger. It turns into a staring match. Silence hangs in the office with only the sound of the waterfall discernible.

From behind me I hear Mr. Trufire say, "Andy Muller tells me you have quite a temper."

Before I can answer, Detective Muller says with a humorous tone, “It took me quite a while to light the flame, but when I did our boy stood up to me quite well.”

Our boy? Whose boy? Why our boy? Oh boy, I’ve been played again. I look back at Mr. Trufire, then Detective Muller, then Trufire and finally say with a touch of anger, “That was a setup? Some kind of lousy test? What the hell am I a lab rat? My parents think I’m a shit-faced criminal! That I’m a traitor!”

“Well, that you are,” Detective Muller says. He smiles, looks at Mr. Trufire and adds, “But, everyone in this room is.”

“I believe the word is patriot,” Mr. Trufire corrects as he hands Detective Muller a drink. He also hands me a drink that appears to be hard liquor, “George, I believe you need this.” I take it. “Yes, it was a test. Not a loyalty test, but one to determine if you can handle certain levels of pressure or threats. In this case, you did well. However, what Detective Muller did was nothing compared to other threats you will face in the future. What we are doing is not a game—it’s deadly serious. There have been countless disappearances and outright murders of individuals who have opposed or questioned the government.”

Detective Muller says in a serious tone, “Your arrest was real. We get alerts to questionable activities by local citizens from the National Security Alert Center. I made sure that I caught your case. It actually is a rather sensitive case as you were hired by a high-profile National Defense Contractor.”

“Primary National Defense Contractor,” David Trufire corrects Detective Muller.

“Exactly. Right now, you are on their radar screen. What you have done is small potatoes, nothing serious, but enough to raise a few eyebrows.”

I take a sip of the battery acid in my glass as I glance back and forth between the two men. When the warmth reaches my stomach I think of Dr. Pace. Apple cider vinegar won’t help with this.

Detective Muller states, “George, I’m going to stay on you. You will be invited down to headquarters for follow-up interviews. Bring this tablet with you,” he slides a tablet toward me. “Use it for innocuous tasks. As you can see it doesn’t have Suicide Queen. Do some shopping, check out some porn, follow a football team, write your aunt, just put enough on it so that it reflects a good citizen going about his business. Don’t visit any dangerous sites.”

“Use your company tablet for questionable browsing,” David

Trufire adds. "Remember it's on the Black Pearl Satellite Network therefore can't be tracked."

I'm getting dizzy. Is it all the information circling my head or the brown liquid circling my stomach?

Mr. Trufire continues, "We are going to enhance your image to that of a loyal, gung-ho, no-questions-asked, statist. Your loyalty will be beyond reproach. Eventually, you will be rubbing elbows with the elite."

"You see, son, there are more of us than they suspect," Andy Muller says.

"But, never forget, they suspect everyone. They are paranoid. Our saving grace is that we are on their team. That can never come under suspicion," Mr. Trufire refills our glasses. "Are you up to the task?"

I nod because I've misplaced my tongue.

"I have one more surprise for you today," Mr. Trufire tells me. "Your position at STUS is about to change. Once we get the final report from Detective Muller that officially clears your name you will join our customer relations department." He emphasizes the next statement, "On the fast track. We need to develop your skills and train you to be a liaison between our technical development group and key government entities. It will be a challenge and you will be put to the test. Though, don't worry, you won't be alone." He waves his hand over a console and orders, "Come on in."

The door opens and Virginia walks into the office.

Mr. Trufire states, "I'd like to introduce you to your new boss, Virginia Morris. I believe you know her."

To quote Alice in Wonderland, "Things keep getting curiouser and curiouser." I smile at Virginia and nod. Remember my tongue is missing.

David Trufire continues, "I've already given Virginia an outline of what you must learn. She is aware of the need for you to progress quickly. Follow her lead."

"Just don't call me Red," she deadpans.

After dinner at home Dee and I sneak into my room and read the history book. We are up to the beginning of the Revolutionary War which was actually fought from 1775 to 1783. There are a lot of dates and names and places mentioned. I'm glad I don't have to take a test on it. Here are the steps that led up to the war. I'll be brief. The colonists hated all of the taxes that had been heaped upon them by the

British Parliament. Due to protests and resistance from the colonists British soldiers were sent to Boston in 1768. Tensions grew until a cold, snowy night two years later on March 5, 1770 when a group of approximately 50 colonists gathered at the Customs House in Boston and began taunting British soldiers who were guarding the building. British Captain Thomas Preston ordered his men to fix their bayonets and join the guards outside the building. In response, the colonists threw snowballs and other objects at the soldiers. When Private Hugh Montgomery was hit he fired his rifle into the crowd. Other soldiers followed his lead and also fired. Three colonists were killed immediately; a black sailor named Crispus Attucks, a rope maker Samuel Gray, and a mariner named James Caldwell. Two other colonists died later of their wounds; Samuel Maverick and Patrick Carr. These five men are considered the first casualties of the Revolutionary War.

Colonists in a town meeting demanded that Captain Preston and his men be tried for murder. A trial was held with future President John Adams and Josiah Quincy II acting as defense attorneys. Ultimately, all were acquitted, however two British soldiers were convicted of manslaughter. As punishment, their thumbs were branded with a letter M.

This event turned many undecided colonists to be in favor of independence.

We stop reading and Dee asks me, “Do you think what is happening now will lead to violence and war?”

“I really don’t know what is going to happen. I don’t even know what is being planned. What I do know is the desire for freedom and willingness to die fighting for it is as strong today as it was in the early colonies.

Dee gets up, looks at me for a long time, then says, “You’ve always been a rebel. I think there’s a lot of that spirit to be free in you. Just do me a favor and don’t die fighting for it. Be careful, George.” She winks, smiles, and leaves.

This time Dawn contacts me.

DAWN: How does your arm feel?

GEORGE: It hurts.

DAWN: Take a pill.

GEORGE: Ha! Is that why you contacted me?

DAWN: Of course not. I have some information to share.

GEORGE: Am I going to like the information or be totally confused?

DAWN: I think you will be intrigued.

GEORGE: OK.

DAWN: Your new boss, Virginia Morris is a descendent of Robert Morris, signer of the *Declaration of Independence*.

GEORGE: You're kidding.

DAWN: It's a small club. Let's hope the two of you have some of the divine spark that guided your ancestors.

GEORGE: Given a choice between comfort while on a leash and infinite possibilities while facing hardships and the unknown I choose to live unfettered on my own.

DAWN: Well said.



William Henry Harrison
President: 1841

“Action without vision is only passing time, vision without action is merely day dreaming, but vision with action can change the world.”

—Nelson Mandela

Chapter 9 | THE GAME

“I found a history book, a printed book from before the Reorganization. It really opened my eyes.”

“I did too,” I say before I can stop myself. Here I tell Dee not to spill the beans and I just did.

Virginia looks at me for a moment, then returns to her driving. “It’s hard to believe that the government has hidden the facts, rewritten history, and removed any trace of how great America once was,” she states. “Do you know in the late 1900s there were stores called supermarkets that had shelves filled with food of every imaginable kind?”

This is the most friendly and open that Red, uh Virginia, has been. Maybe now that the cat is out of the bag and we are working together we’ll get to know one another.

“USMart stores were once called Walmart and had more food, clothing, electronics, and other items than you have ever seen in one place. Not like the over-priced slim-pickings in today’s stores.” She pauses, then adds, “All the Walton’s were arrested, died, or disappeared.”

“Is that in the history book?” I ask.

“No, I saw it in the Ghost Room.”

“Walter Tize mentioned that room. Do I get to see it?”

Virginia ignores my question, “Do you play chess?”

“I have.”

“We should play.”

I finally ask, “When am I going to find out what my role is in this, uh, exercise, uh, campaign?”

“It’s called a revolution and will be the third in American history,

not counting the Reorganization.”

“The third?”

“I wish I could tell you that things will get much clearer, but I’m afraid everything is going to become more complex and vague.”

“That’s encouraging.”

Virginia smiles and replies, “Yes.”

Virginia’s office is on the ninth floor of the STUS headquarters building. She pushes open the door and I find myself entering another strange world. To begin, there is a fish tank wall—very cool. On the other side I enter what looks like a traditional Japanese room. There are two steps up to a wooden floor covered with bamboo mats, in the middle of the room is a square black enamel low table, against one wall is a black side board cabinet, various cushions are spread about, and two walls are shoji rice paper sliding panels. Virginia kicks off her shoes and climbs the two steps. Out of respect, or fear, I do the same.

Virginia sits on a pillow on one side of the table. I sit opposite her.

“How many states are in the United States?” she asks.

“Thirty,” I reply correctly.

“You know that there used to be fifty,” she says matter-of-factly. She then goes into detail about the restructuring of the United States. “The state of New England was once made up of six states; Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Maryland absorbed Delaware. Virginia and West Virginia became Virginia, North and South Carolina became Carolina, and North and South Dakota became Dakota.” Virginia presses a few buttons and a monitor on one wall comes alive displaying the map of New America. “The State of Hope was once two states Illinois and Indiana. Hawthorn was once Kentucky and Tennessee. Mississippi and Louisiana became Delta. Oklahoma and Arkansas were combined to become Clinton. North of there, Missouri and Iowa became Midland.” She pauses, then points at an area in the north, “This is New Mecca. You don’t want to go there. It was once the states of Michigan and Wisconsin.” Her voice becomes brighter as she points at the northwest, “Here you have Wilson that once was Washington and Oregon. Moving south, two states Nevada and Utah were combined to form Roosevelt. And, here on the southern border is Promise that is an amalgam of Arizona and New Mexico. Finally, the Outlands made up of the two states that are not part of the Continental United States Alaska and Hawaii.” Virginia looks at me and says, “Do you notice something?”

I don't know how to answer because the map on the monitor is the United States I have seen my entire life.

Virginia provides the answer, "The three states that are named after presidents are named after those who promoted socialism before the Reorganization. After the Reorganization using a common tactic of tyrants, states, streets, buildings, etc. names were changed to remove or rewrite history. There was a time when almost every town had a Washington Avenue, Washington School, or other building named after the 'Father of our Country.' Today, you will have to search far and wide to find anything named after him. Our capital Wilson, D.C. was originally named Washington D.C."

"You certainly have studied history."

"Texas was once a state? Do you know how Texas became the Republic of Texas?"

"Something about a vote during the Reorganization," I say not really sure how it occurred.

"In 1762, France ceded to Spain most of its land in the interior of North America which included Texas and Louisiana."

"I read about that. It was after the French and Indian War," I remark.

"Correct. Spain then returned the Louisiana Territory back to France which sold it to the United States. Texas attempted to become a republic in 1813 but that didn't last as it was considered to be a part of Mexico. Sometime around 1823 Stephen F. Austin and a group of American settlers gained the right to homestead in Texas, but seven years later Mexican President Anastasio Bustamante outlawed American immigration to Texas. Then in 1835 Mexican President Antonio López de Santa Anna revoked the Constitution of Mexico and began to consolidate power under his leadership. Because of this the Texians, as they were called, formed their own military. There were numerous skirmishes during this period of time. When Texians captured San Antonio, General Santa Anna was angered and arrived February 23, 1836 with a huge army. That's where 200 Texians defended the Alamo for thirteen days. During the siege, on March 2, 1836 the provisional government of Texas declared independence and formed the Republic of Texas."

"Then they became a state," I conclude.

Virginia stands and walks over to the black side board cabinet as she says, "Not exactly. For ten years Texas remained a republic but constant battles with Mexico drained their finances. Then after a year

of negotiations Texas entered the Union on December 29, 1845.” She returns carrying a hand carved wooden chess set.

“You have a real chess set,” I exclaim in surprise.

“It’s so much better than playing on a screen.” She sets up the board and puts a white and black pawn in one of her hands behind her back. I choose a hand and receive the white pawn. I guess I’m starting. I decide to use the King’s Indian Attack and move the king’s pawn up two. Virginia immediately answers by moving her knight to f6. I answer by moving my knight to f3. While looking at the board Virginia asks, “Do you know why I told you all about Texas?”

“Absolutely . . . not.”

“When a State entered the Union of pre-Reorganization United States of America they agreed to an *Enabling Act* which required that all unappropriated lands be granted to the Union for its disposition. As a result, the federal government controlled the land.” Virginia moves her king’s pawn up one. “The Republic of Texas never ceded its lands to the United States.” Virginia looks up, “This created a unique situation. When Texas made the decision to return to being an independent republic there were numerous legal battles during the Reorganization. Finally, it took an international court to determine that Texas was a sovereign nation and could separate from the United States. That’s why The Republic of Texas exists today.”

“We don’t hear much about Texas in the news,” I admit. I move my knight to d2.

“Well, you’re going to learn more about it—we’re going there.” Pawn to c5.

“Uh, wait, that’s a foreign country. I need a passport, permission to travel there, shots, travel vouchers,” I try not to sound panicked but, come’on, I’ve barely traveled around the east coast of the United States.

“It’s your move,” Virginia states flatly.

I sit in silence staring at the chess board. My mind is not on chess. Going to Texas actually is intriguing. But you have to remember that just a few weeks ago I was happy with my stipend from the government and planning to find a job. Everything that has happened since then is making my head spin. I move my pawn up to e3.

“Relax, we’re not going tomorrow,” Virginia says as she moves her pawn to b6.

“When are we going and for what purpose?”

“STUS has business there,” she tells me, “and it will be an

education for you.”

“I’ve had more education in the past few weeks than in an entire semester in college,” I move my bishop to d3.

“Yes, it probably has been a lot to digest,” Virginia moves her bishop to b7.

I’m looking at an odd board. It’s not your typical configuration. I decide to castle on the king’s side. “When are we going and who is making the arrangements?” I ask.

Virginia moves her bishop to e7. She then says, “Chess is a game of strategy. You have to stay keenly aware of your opponent’s moves and strengths, think three or more moves ahead, and do the unexpected.”

I move my pawn to c4. All this action and no pieces have been taken. I’m trying to envision what strategy Virginia is developing.

Virginia continues, “What we are attempting to do is going to test all of our intellects.” She castles on the king side. “It is going to be a complex, dynamic, enigmatic, dangerous game on a massive scale with the future of the world at stake.”

I decide to be cautious, move my pawn to b3, and am compelled to ask, “Why me? I haven’t done anything noteworthy to indicate that I’m a world mover.”

Pawn to d5 is Virginia’s move. She explains, “George, you and I are pawns—no more no less. You don’t have to be a world mover—just a patriot. We are a very small part of a great and honorable endeavor. The powers that chose us did so after serious consideration. Whether or not it has anything to do with our ancestors having signed the *Declaration of Independence* I don’t know. My impression is that it does. Maybe they believe somehow that insightful divine spirit is hereditary. Maybe we are born rebels.” Red looks directly at me as if sizing me up to judge my rebel index.

It’s time to get my powerful pieces into the game so I move my queen to c2. Virginia smiles. I don’t like that smile. Is she congratulating me, giving me a false sense of security, or pleased that I fell into a trap?

“Remember this movement began decades ago,” she continues. “I can tell you this much there were earlier attempts to restore the original *Constitution* that fell short. Lives were lost.” Once again, she looks at me and states, “More lives will be lost.” She moves her knight to c6.

“STUS was founded in 2015, correct?” The bloodless battle continues as I move my pawn to a3 and continue my question, “If they

couldn't achieve their goal in 60 years what makes you think it can be done now?"

"Our goal," Virginia corrects as she fires the first shot by taking my pawn with her pawn d4. Now, here's the problem. There are two pawns that I can take. However, when I take one the other will be free to take my pawn. I study the board and decide to take her pawn on d5 to open a line for my queen. She then explains, "When America failed economically there was chaos, martial law, violence, and international intervention. A lot of people got hurt. The founders of STUS had all they could do to keep the company afloat and the secret society functioning. The collapse and Reorganization was a game changer." She moves her queen to d5 taking my pawn.

"Am I in the secret society?" I take the other pawn on d4.

"You're in the waiting room." Knight to d4 taking my pawn and threatening my queen. Well, the bodies are dropping now.

"What is the name of the secret society?" Queen to b1. I don't like what I see. Virginia controls more than half the board. She forced me to retreat. I wonder if she would get upset if I happen to knock the board over.

"I can't tell you that." Rook to d8.

"I thought that I was in." I continue to regroup by moving my knight to e1.

"You're a pawn. You don't get into the back row that easily." Queen to h5.

"OK, when do I get my secret decoder ring?" Bishop to b2.

"Say you owned a restaurant," Virginia says matter-of-factly, "that offered the best meat, poultry, and fish in town." Bishop to d6.

Huh? Where in the blue blazes did that come from? I move my pawn to g3.

Virginia continues, "You search far and wide for the best vegetables and fruit. Then you recruit a world-renowned chef." She moves her knight to g4.

If I don't do something her next move will be to bring her queen down for mate. I move my pawn to h4 to prevent it.

"The décor is inviting and service outstanding," Virginia surprises me by moving her queen to h4 taking my pawn but leaving her queen threatened by my pawn.

No matter how I look at it I'm in trouble. There is one thing I know for sure if I don't take her queen she simply moves to the corner and it's mate. I take her queen h4.

"Prices are reasonable," she continues, "Sounds like a formula for success, doesn't it?"

"Absolutely."

"What if you forgot to budget for advertising and nobody knows about Che Clymer?" Red moves her bishop to h2—checkmate. "That's mate. Good game."

"Good game for you. Me, not so much." Virginia smiles.

"Back to Che Clymer, what would you do?"

"I'd walk the streets with a sandwich board."

"A sandwich board, huh? I'd like to see that." She leans back and asks, "So, after walking the streets for two weeks no one visits your restaurant—what happens?"

"I guess I go out of business."

"Exactly." Virginia puts the chess set away and as she returns to the table she asks, "What if you did have a budget for advertising and still no one visited. Do you know why?"

"I'm sure that you're going to tell me."

"Because until they taste the food they have no idea how good it is and what they are missing."

"So, while I walk with my sandwich board I'll give out free samples," I reply.

"Good idea. Che Clymer might just make it."

"That's a load off my mind," I smile.

Virginia leans forward, looks at me, and asks, "What if they started a revolution and nobody cared?"

At home at dinner I'm still thinking about my conversation with Virginia. Has the population been so conditioned to not even consider that there is a better way to live? Have they been taught to accept their station in life and not expect more? I decide to attempt to find out with a little experiment. My subjects—mom and dad. I ask my father, "If you could do anything at all for a job what would you do?"

"Why do you ask?" he replies.

"I'm just curious. It would give me a better understanding of your interests."

He gives me an odd look, but attempts to answer, "Well, I was always interested in airplanes and flying."

"Really? That's so cool. Have you ever flown?"

"Of course not, I neither have the clearance nor the money."

"If things were different, would you have pursued that direction?"

My father sits looking at his plate. The scientist in him weighs all of the variables. Then he answers, “No, the number of slots available was limited, there were endless regulations and fees, and far too many individuals had government connections.”

“So, you looked into it?”

He nods.

“If there weren’t so many obstacles in the way is that what you would have done?”

“I believe so.”

“Do you feel cheated?”

“Cheated? Why? It’s just the way things are.” He puts down his fork and looks directly at me. People seem to be staring into my eyes a lot. Next time someone does, I’m going to pick my nose. My father says in a stern voice, “Now, don’t go chasing butterflies again. It will only lead to trouble. Remember your arrest?”

“Oh, yeah, about that, it’s all cleared up.”

“I’m glad to hear that.”

“Listen, dad, all I want to know is whether it bothers you that there are things denied you and if you could change it—would you?”

“I can’t change it, therefore, it’s not worth discussing.”

“What if a candidate ran for president wanting to give more freedom to the people? Would you vote for that person?”

“To get more freedom you give up security. No, I wouldn’t vote for that person.”

Wow, we are definitely on different tracks. I want to break loose and spread my wings while he’s content to remain in the zoo and be taken care of even though it means they clip his wings. I turn my attention to my mother who is staring right at me. OK, I know what I said, but she’s my mother. This time I take a different approach. “What do you know about The Republic of Texas?”

“Very little,” she admits, “what I do know is it is a violent, corrupt, immoral, greed-driven, and dangerous place. Big corporations run everything and keep the population uneducated, misled, and enslaved.”

“I’m going there,” I say nonchalantly.

“You’re what!” my father barks.

“I’m going to The Republic of Texas for business.”

“No, you are not,” my mother bellows. “No son of mine is going to that hell hole.”

OK, do I pursue this and keep the argument going or use good

judgment and let go of it? By now, you know me so what I do might come as a surprise. I look at my mother and say gently, “I understand, mom. I’ll see what I can do.” There, end of argument.

My father chimes in, “You’re lying!”

“What makes you say that?” I ask innocently.

My mother answers, “Because it’s not like you to give in. You’re headstrong, stubborn, and an anarchist.”

In this corner Mom The Socialist, this corner Dad The Grounded Birdman, and this corner George The Punching Bag Clymer. You saw it, I tried. So, with fists flying every which way I state with conviction, “I said I would see what I could do. But, if my job requires me to go to The Republic of Texas—I’m going.” I stand up from the table and add, “I won’t tell either of you how to live your lives. But I know there is more out there for me—for us. Dad, you have as much right to be a pilot as anyone. You weren’t even given a chance. That’s wrong. We’re all human beings. What gives one group of human beings the right to control the lives of other human beings?” I look at my mother. She picks her nose—just kidding. She doesn’t say anything as I add, “OK, I’m stubborn and an anarchist but my ancestor and namesake was probably called the same thing. When he signed the *Declaration of Independence* he was a traitor and risked being hung. It’s strange how you get accused of being evil when all you want to do is give people a chance at a better life.” I leave the room.

Virginia is right. Nothing will happen if people don’t care. You know where I turn next.

GEORGE: What happens if you start a revolution and nobody cares?

DAWN: God cries and innocent people perish.

GEORGE: I fear that most Americans have been lulled into a state of passivity and submissiveness to such a degree that the thought of rebellion never enters their minds.

DAWN: In 1818 John Adams wrote, “But what do we mean by the American Revolution? Do we mean the American war? The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments, of their duties and obligations...This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution.”

GEORGE: The colonists wanted freedom and valued liberty.

DAWN: Exactly.

GEORGE: But that's not the case today. American citizens are more interested in what television programs are on, what their sports teams are doing, and whether or not the Social Compensation Board will increase allocations.

DAWN: A few weeks ago, those were your concerns.

GEORGE: I feel as though a veil of ignorance has been lifted from me.

DAWN: You're welcome.

GEORGE: OK, OK, thank you. But, I'm one individual. That's not a very big revolution.

DAWN: During colonial times communications were mainly done through newspapers, pamphlets, and word-of-mouth. It was a very slow process. Today, we have communications capable of reaching millions of people instantly.

GEORGE: Great, but how do we get them to become interested in freedom?

DAWN: You tell me.

GEORGE: I don't know.

DAWN: Then find out.

GEORGE: You're doing it again.

DAWN: I know. I have faith in you.

GEORGE: You wouldn't if you saw how poorly I played chess, today.

DAWN: Don't feel badly, Virginia is a chess master. Didn't she tell you?

GEORGE: No, she left that little fact out. People seem to have this annoying habit of leaving things out.

DAWN: True.

GEORGE: It doesn't change the fact that I have no idea how to reach the minds and hearts of the people.

DAWN: You'll figure it out.

GEORGE: How do you know?

DAWN: There was a young boy who came upon a little girl with a lemonade stand. She was crying because two police officers told her she was breaking the law and that her parents would be fined. This boy not only convinced the officers to overlook the infraction but to also buy a cup of lemonade.

GEORGE: I remember.

DAWN: What you don't know is that those officers told others and after you left the little girl sold lemonade to police officers all

afternoon.

GEORGE: I didn't know that. Wait, how do you know?

DAWN: You have talents of which you are not aware. We wish to use them.

GEORGE: You didn't answer me.

DAWN: George, I believe the sun heals all wounds.

GEORGE: And, the shadow of darkness keeps being pulled over my eyes.

DAWN: What happens if the people start a revolution? Good night, George.

I remember the lemonade incident. What I don't remember is what I said to the police officers. Something about, if this was their daughter would they make her cry? There was more but that was a long time ago. Now, this is perplexing, how in the world would Dawn know about that incident? Did someone follow me around with a camera all my life? What the hell is going on?

Dee enters my room. "Quite a show, brother."

"Yeah, well, I was just trying to do an experiment that obviously didn't work."

"You didn't ask me anything."

"I know where you stand."

"Do you?"

"Yeah, you want to write a declaration of independence, to lead the charge, to be free."

"But, do you know why I will not do those things?"

"No, why?"

"Because—I'm afraid. Like dad said to get freedom we have to give up security. We are safe as long as we hide in the shadows. When we, uh you, thrust us out into the prison spotlight we are sitting ducks. I fear for you, and mom, and dad, and—I hate to admit—myself. You already went to jail for visiting a website. If you do anything to threaten the government I'm afraid that I will never see you again." Dee looks into my eyes—shut up—and says with tears in her eyes, "I'm sorry, I'm not a very good patriot."

I hug Dee. This is becoming standard operating procedure. "Fear is their weapon, the truth is our defense. Yes, I'm afraid. Remember, I threw up in the police vehicle." Dee chuckles. "However, I also remember our ancestor who risked his life, his fortune, and his sacred honor. I can't help but think this is my only shot at life. Who the hell are those who would cheat me of my God-given right to live my life

to the fullest? They hijacked my life. That pisses me off.”

“Me too.”

“Now, if I can only find a way to get the entire population of the United States pissed off,” I smile.

Dee whispers, “I pledge my life, my fortune, and my sacred honor.” She leaves my room.

For an hour I surf the Globalnet. I’m not really sure what I’m looking for. As a matter-of-fact I’m hoping some divine power will cause me to land on a website that will give me guidance. Electronically, I’m throwing darts at a dart board.

There’s a knock on my door. I look up and my father walks in.



John Tyler

President: 1841 - 1845

***"Should the citizenry be inattentive to public affairs
officeholders shall all become wolves."***

—Thomas Jefferson

Chapter 10 | THE PEOPLE

My father sits on my bed and looks at me. He doesn't say a word. Neither do I. There is a look upon his face that is unlike any that I have seen before. It's an uncomfortable silence but one we both know is necessary. Sometimes you just have to reflect on your thoughts until one or the other is compelled to speak. It's not a duel as much as an acclimation—getting used to the water, as it were.

"I lied," my father confesses without emotion.

"You did?"

"Yes. Not having the opportunity to pursue aviation did, uh, does bother me."

I could get on my soapbox and pontificate about freedom, but this isn't the appropriate time. I reply, "I'm sorry that you didn't have the chance. You probably would have been a good pilot."

"Maybe. Would have been nice to find out." He then changes the subject and surprises me with a question, "How do you know that your ancestor signed the *Declaration of Independence*?"

"And the original *Constitution*," I add.

"Oh? And how do you know that?"

In my head I see a flashing yellow light—caution, caution, caution. There is far too much that I cannot reveal even to my father. It is at this moment that I realize how far I have come and what I know that must remain confidential. Too many people would be hurt and the future of America put at risk if I become loose with the information that now resides in my head.

My father asks, "Are you positive that your information is correct?"

I realize that he doesn't know. Of course, why should I have

assumed that he did? He and my mother were born during the Reorganization. By the time they went to school, history had been wiped clean. It's my turn to ask a question, "Have you ever seen the *Declaration of Independence*?"

"Of course, a photograph of the document was in our history books," he pauses. "Yes, we had printed books up until I went to middle school when everything went digital." He thinks for a second, "Let's see, that was during the cold years 2031 or 32."

"So, you never saw the signatures?"

"And, you have?"

"Yes."

"That was probably an illegal act."

"Are you going to turn me in?"

"Don't get wise!" he snaps. "Where did you see the *Declaration of Independence*?"

"Dad, I'm not going to lie to you," I start, "I've had access to information and, legal or not, I've seen the *Declaration of Independence* including the signatures." He doesn't say anything. "My name is on it." He shows a definite reaction of surprise. "So, unless I'm a time traveler one of our ancestors put that signature on that document."

"Someone's playing a joke on you."

"No. It's as real as you and me sitting here." I know that I have to tread lightly. "My interest in history will probably get me in trouble—most likely fired—but I just have to know." Hopefully that will direct him away from STUS.

"George, you have to stop this."

"Profit or loss?"

"What's that?"

"Oh, I was just thinking out loud." I stand and look out the window. "Dad, there's a big wonderful world out there that is being denied us. I want to know why." I turn to face him, "Our ancestor signed those documents in hopes of providing us with freedom and opportunity and protection from oppression. His attempt failed. I want to know what happened."

As if in a trance my father stares at me. It's another of those long silences you just have to allow happen. Finally, he rises, walks to my door, then turns back to face me, "Be very careful, son."

The next morning on the way to work Virginia drops another bombshell on me, "You have to get a license and a car. I'm not your damn chauffeur—I'm your boss."

“There’s a whole lot of red tape to go through to get a license and buying a car takes money,” I protest.

She swerves to miss a man leading a horse cart, then explains, “George, in America there are two ways to get things accomplished. The first is you trudge through the endless bureaucratic steps, pay outrageous fees, and get treated like shit.” I laugh and nod my head. “The second is that you swim in the right circles to get things done quickly and without stress.” She tosses a piece of plastic at me. It’s a small thumb drive with a thumb slot. I know enough to place my left thumb in the slot. Nothing. However, Virginia says, “OK, now that you have your license, you’ll have to choose a company car.”

Instinctively, I stare at my thumb. In that pudgy digit is my driver’s license and I don’t even know how to drive. “That easy?” I remark.

Virginia pulls into the parking lot at the Morehead office, turns to me, and states, “George, keep in mind STUS is in the inner circle. We are part of the chosen elite. It took decades to get here. They need us, but more importantly they trust us. We are beyond reproach which is why we are able to operate and get things done. Those in the ruling class are too busy watching their backs and building their wealth to pay any attention to us. After all, we are a valuable tool that has never let them down.”

“Doesn’t that mean that we have been helping the wrong side?”

“Strategies are sometimes hard to understand until the final move”

I remember the chess game and shut up.

Walter Tize is waiting for me when I enter the office. He greets me with a friendly comment, “A company car for a young know-nothing putz like you? I don’t get it. Morning in Bedlam.”

I hold up my finger. Not that one, you twink, my thumb, “I got my license.” I smile.

He shakes his head and walks toward his office. I follow.

“We still have business to do in this office,” Walter snarls. “Here is a request for an analysis of United States population trends during the twenty-first century.”

I stand there looking at him.

“You have no idea where to begin,” he states rather than asks.

“Correct.”

“But you got your driver’s license,” he mocks. “OK, drive yourself to Room 287, log onto the computer, and start a search. Do ten-year

intervals by demographic. Project population to 2080.”

Do you have any idea how many numbers there are in population studies? I’m staring at row after row of numbers. What I should do is go through each cell and bore you to tears. Instead, because I’m a nice guy, I’ll just hit the high points.

YEAR	POPULATION	% CHANGE	YEAR	POPULATION	% CHANGE
2000	274,520,227	----	2050	326,648,178	1%
2010	308,745,538	12%	2060	342,980,587	5%
2020	348,882,458	13%	2070	351,555,102	3%
2030	313,994,212	-10%	2080	358,586,204	2%
2040	323,414,038	3%			

There was significant population growth between the years 2000 and 2020 averaging 12.5% growth over each ten-year period.

The Reorganization began October 12, 2024. During this time Texas became a sovereign nation removing 8.5% of the population of the United States. There was also a dramatic exodus of Hispanic aliens as jobs became extremely scarce and government scrutiny relentless. Between 2020 and 2030 over 27 million jobs disappeared and more than 13 million aliens left the country. In 2020, 137 million adults (55%) had jobs. By 2070, 104 million adults were employed (40%). I guess I should consider myself lucky to have a job—very lucky.

Population decline between 2020 and 2030 was 10%. After the Reorganization population growth has been modest averaging approximately 2.8% growth over each ten-year interval. Part of this slow growth is due to the emigration of educated adults seeking better employment in more successful nations.

There are other relatively significant changes between 2010 and 2070.

Ethnicity changed as the white segment went from 72% to 66%, Black from 13% to 12%, Hispanic from 10% to 9%, and other races from 5% to 13%. This is a result of foreign ownership of utilities and numerous businesses.

Employment shifted away from Professional (59% to 33%) moving to Blue Collar (25% to 33%) and service jobs (14% to 32%).

Education of the population also shifted from College graduates (22% to 14%), Some College (24% to 11%) to High School Graduates (27% to 41%) and sadly Non-High School Graduates (27% to 34%). Apparently, there is no need for education when there are so few jobs

and the government provides enough financial support to survive.

There's a lot more but your snoring is distracting me. What is clear, though I had no idea, is it appears that life was better before the Reorganization. Yet our history lessons painted a picture of a glorious rebirth and new beginning achieved through the Reorganization.

Curiosity gets the better of me and I research The Reorganization on this super computer in Room 287. What comes up first is a citizen's personal account of the dramatic events.

"One Monday morning I woke up and the banks were closed. I learned this watching the morning news. The morning anchor stated that all banking and banking services, such as debit and credit were not operating. She read a statement from the government.

Due to an ongoing serious economic emergency on a global scale, a State of Emergency has been declared in the United States of America on this date, 14 October 2024, to remain in effect through resolution of the crisis. In order to protect all citizens the following steps have been implemented.

- a. Marshall Law has been enacted
- b. The *Constitution of the United States of America* has been suspended
- c. Presidential election scheduled for November indefinitely postponed
- d. All financial transactions in the United States of America discontinued until further notice
- e. All printed and minted currency issued by the United States of America devalued to zero
- f. All commerce ceased until government control is fully activated
- g. All travel to be curtailed
- h. All utilities are immediately nationalized
- i. All financial institutions will immediately be regulated by the Federal Universal Monetary and Banking Legal Exchange (FUMBLE)
- j. All media to be managed by the National Office of Public Enlightenment (NOPE)
- k. Food will be distributed by FEMA through designated government centers
- l. All gasoline sales are prohibited
- m. All citizens must return to their homes as rapidly as possible and remain there

- n. All internet providers are prohibited from operating
- o. All telephone operations both landline and cellular are temporarily interrupted
- p. All citizens are required to view broadcast television networks for further instructions
- q. Failure to follow all instructions will be punishable by prison and fine
- r. All military personnel, active and reserve, are to report to their commands immediately
- s. All public education is temporarily ceased
- t. All universities and colleges will halt operations and maintain student residences
- u. The judicial system of the United States of America is dissolved immediately
- v. All law enforcement is now under the command of the Federal Justice Department
- w. The stock exchange will be closed indefinitely
- x. All firearms are to be surrendered to law enforcement personnel
- y. Any action taken or expressed against the State will result in arrest
- z. A new government will be introduced in the next ninety days

To aid citizens during this emergency the State will issue to every adult a United States Treasury Card with a subsistence allotment of International Monetary Units (IMUs). These funds are to be used for food only. Every citizen is to report to a Designated Review Evaluation And Determination (DREAD) center for classification. Failure to do so will result in imprisonment. Essential American Services Yeomen (EASY) will be given priority in order to keep critical functions of the State operating.

A Statement From President Clinton Franklin Wilson

My fellow Americans, we are embarking on a glorious new era that will ensure that every citizen enjoys a life without care or stress or inequality. Our New America will provide a safer, fairer, more welcoming environment for you and your family. We will enable you to live the

life of your dreams free from hunger and fear, with access to housing, healthcare, education, employment, and entertainment. Gone are the days of the rich taking advantage of the poor, of ethnic bias and hatred, of gender inequality, of thoughtless ruin of our planet, of disregard for your feelings, and of a government that doesn't care.

My fellow Americans—we care. Our New America is your new opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and venture confidently into the future. It is your future. A future filled with hope and promise awaits. Your government is the peoples' government. Together we will create a new definition of equality.

I ask only one thing—Trust America.

“There was no way of knowing what was taking place across the nation. We were all imprisoned in our own homes. The only news available was that which the government provided on the broadcast networks. Some of us ventured out to talk with neighbors. They were as much in the dark as we. A few decided to go to city hall and demand answers. We never saw them again.”

A chill runs down my spine. I'm experiencing what a citizen went through. How frightening it must have been to be cut off from the world, to not know what was going to happen next, and to have to wait and do nothing. I continue to read the account.

“The first day I imagine everyone sat in front of their televisions hoping to see what was happening. Only we never were shown any events around the nation or the world. All we received were updates, new rules, and government statements from New America. I picked up my landline telephone to see if there was a dial tone. A high-pitched squeal greeted me. I returned to my television and waited for the next set of instructions.”

“On the second day a FEMA truck arrived and gave out small food parcels. It was barely enough to keep us alive. I was tempted to try to go to a grocery store to attempt to get more food. Reality set in as I remembered that all currency was worthless. So, I sat in front of the television. On this day they started showing government officials working together and scenes of happy citizens. It definitely wasn't

filmed in my neighborhood. Then a commercial stating ‘New America Your Better Future’ ran showing carefree families walking along a lake.”

A voice causes me to jump. It’s Walter Tize on an intercom, “Clymer, did you have to take off your shoes to count the numbers? How long does it take for a simple request?”

Quickly I email all of the data. I’ll have to return to the citizen’s account of the Reorganization, later.

At dinner, I tell my parents that I got my license. My father almost chokes on a piece of corn bread.

“It takes months to get a license,” he states. “How the devil did you get one so quickly?” Then abruptly he adds, “Do you even know how to drive?”

“I was hoping that you would teach me,” I attempt to change the subject.

“If you don’t know how to drive how did you get a license?” he presses.

“I think someone pulled some strings because she wants to stop chauffeuring me.”

“A pretty face and a wink, huh? Just what are you going to do for a car?”

“I’ve been told that I will be able to get a company car, if I’m lucky.”

“You’ve been lucky more than you know,” he states with a slight tone of envy.

Alone in my room I contact Dawn.

DAWN: Did you start a revolution?

GEORGE: Not yet. I did read about the Reorganization from a citizen’s point-of-view.

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: It was scary and hard to believe. You wake up one morning and everything that you were accustomed to has been taken away. How could something like that happen overnight?

DAWN: It didn’t. The financial collapse was anticipated ten to twelve years before 2024. In fact, it was precipitated by actions of the government. Those in power decided to expand their power by destroying the mechanism that gave the people a voice, albeit a small voice that was steadily being diminished, in how their government was run. Then once the wheels were in motion and couldn’t be stopped secret negotiations took place beginning in 2020 for how to dismantle the broken nation. The fiends who the people trusted to protect them

sold them like cattle and brought them to the slaughter.

GEORGE: It's hard to believe that such evil went unrecognized.

DAWN: Throughout history it has happened again and again.

GEORGE: How could intelligent people sit back and let it happen?

DAWN: What choice were they given?

GEORGE: The police should have refused to trample on the rights of individuals.

DAWN: Given the choice of their families eating or not eating they followed orders.

GEORGE: Some must have fought back.

DAWN: There are graveyards in every state where bodies are buried stacked six high. On those graves are small plastic markers with the letters E.O.T.S. Do you know what that stands for?

GEORGE: No.

DAWN: Enemy of the State. Individuals who protested too loudly, actively fought the Reorganization, made the wrong enemy, or broke one of the many new laws are buried in those nondescript graves. Their names were removed from all records as if they never existed.

GEORGE: Obviously, none of that is taught in history class.

DAWN: In some ways capitalism became a capital offense.

GEORGE: All we were ever taught is how the government is benevolent and the protector of our rights.

DAWN: A dog feels safe and cared for as long as he doesn't tug too hard on his master's leash.

GEORGE: At least I understand now why we have to be so secretive.

DAWN: E.O.T.S. was also adopted by a secret group as their name. It stands for Equal Opportunity Traitors Society.

GEORGE: Are you a member?

DAWN: No one is. Lol.

GEORGE: What does that mean?

DAWN: All in due time.

GEORGE: I got my driver's license today.

DAWN: Lord help us.

GEORGE: Very funny. I have to learn how to drive and then will get a company car.

DAWN: A word to the wise, don't pick a Buick.

GEORGE: Why?

DAWN: Trust me or not—it's up to you.

GEORGE: I have a concern.

DAWN: What is it?

GEORGE: My parents are getting suspicious. There is far too much happening too quickly for them not to wonder what I have gotten into. I believe they think I've gotten involved with criminals.

DAWN: You have.

GEORGE: I have?

DAWN: In the eyes of the government, if they knew. What have you told your parents?

GEORGE: As little as possible.

DAWN: Good. However, there is one solution.

GEORGE: What is it?

DAWN: Move out.

After my conversation with Dawn I start investigating apartments. With my salary I can afford a relatively nice place closer to work. I decide to ask Virginia where she thinks I should live. Dawn is right. If I am on my own I won't have to explain my every move. Of course, I'm not very domesticated. There is a whole lot I will have to learn.

Dee walks into my room. "I need a ride," she jokes.

"Buy a horse."

"I don't think mom and dad know about the George Clymer signature," Dee concludes.

"He seemed surprised."

"I don't think I should tell them that I saw it, as well."

"Good idea."

Dee sits on the floor, smiles, and asks, "So, what kind of car are you going to get?"

"I'm not sure," I reply. "Anything but a Buick."

"Don't you have to get some kind of approval from the government?"

"I guess they'll only show me cars that I'm allowed to drive." I wait a moment then say, "Dee, I've got something to tell you that you shouldn't tell mom or dad, yet."

"What is it?"

"I'm thinking of moving out, getting an apartment, you know."

"Wow, big brother is really growing up," she surmises. Then she looks at me with a concerned expression, "But, what about the book and our reading it together?"

“We can still do that. I’ll come out here quite often.”

Dee looks at me as though it is the first time that she has seen me. After finishing her evaluation, she asks, “George, what are you doing—really?”

“I work in the research department at the STUS Corporation.”

“What are you really doing?”

“I just got assigned to be a customer relations liaison with the government. That’s why they have me getting a license and, I guess, traveling to Texas.”

“Everything has happened so fast.”

“Maybe I impressed the right person.” I can’t help but think about Dawn. Her hand is without question directing all this. Right from the beginning she has taken me down this incredible road. I only hope that her confidence in me isn’t ill-advised. I wish that I could share more with Dee, but for both of our sakes it is better that it remains a mystery.

After Dee leaves, my mind drifts back to the day America stopped or, more accurately, ceased to exist. In a single day over three hundred million free people were made vassals of a state ruled by a chosen few. The unthinkable not only happened it happened literally overnight. One thing has become painfully clear. The American people made a costly mistake. They forgot to watch their back.



James K Polk
President: 1845 - 1849

***“The more you know about the past, the better
prepared you are for the future.”***

—Theodore Roosevelt

Chapter 11 | THE GHOST

I seem to be doing a lot of introspection, lately. Part of it is trying to comprehend all that has happened in such a short period of time. Another cause is this growing unyielding need to be allowed to live my life on my terms. Last, but maybe most important, is my futile search for the George that all these persons believe I am. You’ve come to know me, so you know I’m not a genius. I’m neither a great strategic thinker nor courageous. Let’s face it, they will never erect a statue of me in the town square—any town square. Deep down I realize I’m not the guy they should be depending upon. I’m a name on a piece of parchment. How does that qualify me to be a leader in a revolution?

Those poor souls who woke up on a Monday morning to discover that they’d been enslaved by the very state they in essence asked for. Whether it was through negligence, ignorance, abstinence, or connivance the leaders who were elected by the people stole everything they had. It was in the hands of the people to stop it, but they didn’t. Their freedom was at stake and they gave that precious jewel away. I am a product of the indoctrination that followed. All hail the state, the giver of life, the protector of the downtrodden, the source of all that is good, the great equalizer, the definer of right and wrong, and the thumb from under which there is no escape.

Today, Walter Tize has a surprise for me. When I enter his office, instead of his normal coarse insult, he smiles and tells me I am about to become intoxicated. Of course, first thing in the morning, that doesn’t seem like a good idea.

“This is the kind of high you don’t recover from,” he states.

“Then maybe I don’t want to participate,” I reply.

“No. You definitely want this. And, you want the permanent

hangover.”

“I’m not feeling well. I think I should go home.”

Walter stands up from his desk and orders me to go with him. We enter an elevator and he presses on the panel where there isn’t any button, the doors close, and we go down. I didn’t know there was a basement in the building. When the doors open, before us is a dimly lit basement. What were you expecting? I follow and Walter leads. We pass electrical equipment and a furnace and storage cabinets and lots of stuff. In what I figure is the center of the basement there is a large drain grate. Walter stops on it and indicates for me to join him. He puts his hand in his pocket and suddenly the grate begins to drop into the floor with us upon it. We end up in a sub-basement. I look up and a matching grate must have come down from the ceiling to seal the opening. We are in complete darkness. I can’t tell you what Walter does because, as I said, we are in complete darkness. Keep up. A blue/green glow begins to appear on one side, no, wait, all around us.

“Welcome to the Ghost Room,” Walter says with a hint of mystery in his tone.

“Am I going to see the ghost of Christmas past?” I quip.

“Perhaps. Most likely not. What you are going to see are shadows of a past you never imagined existed. More than see, you are going to experience the past.”

“How does it work?” I ask.

“An incredibly complex interactive computer program will allow you to walk among people from long ago, to converse with them, interact, and learn from them. You will see and hear what they do, smell the aromas that surrounded them, feel temperature changes, and witness significant events.”

Needless to say, my mouth is wide open but no sound is emerging. I don’t know, I might have drooled a little. Walter waits a few moments to let what he said sink in. Trust me, it sunk.

“This 100% immersion simulation required decades of intense research and development by some of the greatest artificial intelligence minds in our nation.” Walter holds up a small device that appears to be a miniature smart phone. On the screen I see three numbers; 1959, 1964, and 1969. He explains, “I took the liberty of choosing three years for you to visit. They will give you a sense of what life in America was like before the Reorganization and subsequent erasure of history.”

“Is it like a movie?” I ask.

“No. You will be in the scene surrounded by all the elements of

the milieu. You can talk to whatever characters you come across. You can explore. The only thing you can't do is physically touch anything as they are all virtual entities. If you wish to enter a structure you will find you can open doors and pass through. Remember they're ghosts. Each year you visit will provide ample time for experience, however, in order to get as much in as possible, the scene will change at various intervals. The first time will be a little unnerving but you'll quickly adjust."

"How do I get out?" I have to ask.

"Below the three dates there is a red button. Press that and you will be standing in the middle of the room. Now, go over to that blue spot that is glowing, stand there, press 1959, and say hello to history."

I'm excited and filled with anticipation. Yet, there is also this sense of apprehension. What if it's not what I imagined. Of course, it's not what I imagine. How could it be? I've never seen or read anything about 1959. I walk over to the blue glow and find myself surrounded by darkness. I can barely see where Walter is standing—or is he standing there? With no alternative I press 1959. Now, I've got to tell you, I expected scenes to slowly develop and form before my eyes. Instead instantly I'm standing on a street corner. It appears to be a main street in a small town. When my eyes adjust, I look at the street sign—Main Street. It's a sunny day and there are people and cars moving about. There are lots and lots of cars. Everybody seems to own a car. Holy crap, you should see the size of this one car with huge fins. No kidding, it could carry two 2075 cars, in the trunk. As it passes, I hear an unfamiliar song.

Oh, the shark, babe, has such teeth, dear
And he shows them pearly white
Just a jackknife has old Macheath, babe
And he keeps it, out of sight
You know when that shark bites with his teeth, babe
Scarlet billows start to spread
Fancy gloves, though, wears old Macheath, babe
So there's never, never a trace of red

Now on the sidewalk, ooh, sunny morning, uh-huh
Lies a body just oozin' life
Eek, and someone's sneakin' 'round the corner
Could that someone be Mack the Knife?

Odd lyrics, but somehow, I like the tune. The mammoth car continues down Main Street and I see that it is a Cadillac. Two children pass on bicycles, a boy and a girl. As they pass, they say, "Good morning, sir." First off, they saw me. Second, they spoke to me. Finally, they called me sir. What the heck?

I decide to have a look around. As I walk down Main Street, I can't help but be amazed by the wide variety of cars passing in both directions. I decide that my conclusion is right everyone owns a car. Even teenagers go by in oddly decorated cars. A delicious aroma attracts my attention. I'm standing outside a diner. I peer inside and see customers on stools sitting at a long counter. There are clinks and plinks of silverware and dishes, low conversations, and that unbelievable aroma. My mouth waters. I turn and across the street I see a movie theater. I've read about those. They are showing *Some Like It Hot* starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon, whoever the heck they are.

Let me tell you a little about what the people look like. Children are wearing shorts and striped tee shirts. Some girls wear dresses in light colors. The teenagers are a mix of girls wearing flared skirts and cardigan sweaters. But, get this, they have their sweaters on backwards with the buttons in the back. Hey, I don't know why. Although, I think it's cute. I like it, and I do know why. They also have on bobby socks and saddle shoes. Some girls have their hair shoulder length with the ends curled up at the end. Other teenage girls are wearing slacks that go to mid-calf and fancy blouses. A lot of the boys are wearing chinos and button shirts along with white socks and loafers. Then across the street there is a group of rather unfriendly looking boys wearing jeans and white tee-shirts with the sleeves rolled up holding some kind of box. I think it says Winston, but I'm not sure. Others in their group are wearing denim jackets with the collars turned up. All of them have their hair slicked down. Some have their hair come to a kind of point on their forehead.

Now the adults. The men all seem to be wearing slacks and knit shirts or button shirts. The ladies look like they are going to a party. They are wearing colorful dresses that are really narrow at the waist. I've never seen such narrow waists. There is a belt and then the skirt flares out accentuating the waist. I sound like a fashion designer, don't I? What strikes me is that many of the women are wearing high heels. I've actually never seen them for real before as they were made illegal before I was born in 2051. The Socialized Healthcare and Management

Review Committee deemed them dangerous and a health hazard. I have to say these 1959 women are very attractive and, for lack of a better word, very feminine. OK, I'm twenty-years-old in case you forgot so you know my over-eager hormones are rushing through me.

There is something else I notice that is striking. Almost everyone is smiling. They greet each other when they pass and seem so relaxed. These 1959ers are enjoying life.

A man is standing by a newsstand reading a newspaper I approach and he says, "I wonder what the 49-star flag will look like."

"The 49-star flag?" I ask.

He points at a flagpole in a park and there it is Old Glory the old American stars and stripes. "They have to add a star now that Alaska has become a state."

"That's right, on the fourth of July," I reply.

"Yes, and they'll have to add another star after Hawaii becomes a state. Fifty states."

Impulsively I ask, "What do you think of the government?"

"He looks directly at me and states, "I like Ike. He was a great general and good President. I'm not sure about Kennedy and Nixon. You know Kennedy is a Roman Catholic. It raises the question, who is he going to serve the nation or the Vatican?"

"What about socialism?"

"You mean communism? This is America. We are free and going to stay that way. No government official tells us what to do or how to live our lives. Those commies can stay in the USSR. America will never be communist." He picks up his change and says, "How bout that. I got one of those new pennies with the Lincoln Memorial on the back." My friend walks off.

I pass a store window and see a display of color television sets. My god, they're huge! Big pieces of furniture with square screens that have rounded corners. They brag about it being 21 inches. And one manufacturer, Zenith, offers a wireless remote control.

"Thinking of buying one?" a voice asks from behind me.

I turn and a gentleman in a brown suit stands waiting for an answer.

"No, I'm just looking."

"I know what you mean. As far as I'm concerned, it's too soon to go for an expensive color model when most programs are in black and white. That new series *The Untouchables* is really good. It's black and white. Even *Twilight Zone* is black and white."

A woman's voice is heard in the distance. He answers, "Coming Angie. Good talking with you."

An ice cream truck travels down Main Street. On its side it says Good Humor.

My head explodes. OK, it didn't but when the scene abruptly changed, I didn't know what had happened. I'm now standing in a living room—whose I don't know. I hear music in another room.

Do you remember when we met
That's the day I knew you were my pet
I want to tell you how much I love you

Come with me, my love
To the sea, the sea of love
I want to tell you just how much I love you

A mother and little girl enter the room. They don't seem surprised to see me. The little girl is carrying a doll. She holds it up and says, "You want to see my Barbie?"

Her mother adds, "It's a new doll that just came out this year."
"She's pretty," I say.

The little girl smiles and runs over to her mother. I look at her mother who is wearing a dress. Not as fancy as the others I've seen, but still very nice. In addition, she has on a white bib apron. Out of curiosity I ask, "What do you do?" When she gives me a confused look, I add, "For work."

"Work?" she smiles. "I'm a housewife. I work seven days a week. My job is keeping this household going, taking care of my family, and raising this little one." She pats her daughter on her head and explains, "I wouldn't want to leave that to anyone else. It's up to me to see that she gets the best food and care, is taught to be honest and thoughtful, learns those lessons in life not taught in school, has faith in God, and grows up to be a good happy adult. That's my very important job."

"What does your husband do?"

"He works in a bank. A loan officer."

"You can't just do that on the Globalnet?"

Mom gives me a quizzical look and shakes her head indicating that she doesn't understand. I forgot where I was. Or, is that, when I was. There is no Globalnet or personal computers or Social Compensation

Program or endless rules and regulations. I look around the room. There's a couch and chairs, coffee table with printed magazines—one is titled *TV Guide*—a television set in a large cabinet, end tables with lamps, and a piano. No way could we afford a piano. This home is far more opulent than our humble abode. I am compelled to ask, "Are you rich?"

The attractive woman laughs, "Oh, my lord, no. We are simply middle-class hard-working folks seeking the American Dream."

An odd sound fills the room. It is like a bell with the clangor rapidly striking it over and over. Mrs. Housewife walks over to a small table in the foyer and picks up a plastic curved device attached to another part with a curled wire. When she speaks into it I realize that it is some kind of communication device. After a short conversation she puts the two pieces back together and returns. "That was Jim, my husband, he is going to be late. I'll just have to delay supper."

Once more curiosity controls my mouth, "Doesn't the fact that your husband earns all the money make you subservient? I mean, doesn't he believe he can run everything because of that?"

"Not if he wants to eat," she says lightheartedly. She then gets a serious look on her face and explains, "I know there are people who think wives should get a job. With more money they can buy more things; a new car, bigger house, clothes, you name it. Somehow, they want to make being a housewife a negative thing. My husband gets up every morning, takes a bus to work, labors all day whether or not he feels well, puts up with cranky customers and overbearing bosses, and comes home tired. I appreciate what he does for our family. And, quite frankly, that way of life is not preferable to being a housewife. Besides, I don't think turning the raising of my daughter and future children over to strangers is a good thing. Oh, I know there are women who have to work for various reasons but most of them would prefer not to. As to money, I manage the household. That includes budgeting and paying bills." She exhibits a knowing smile and states, "He may bring it home, but I make it go a long way."

My head explodes and I'm in a grocery store. It's a big store with aisles and aisles of food. So much food it is hard to believe. One area has fruits and vegetables in large bins. Another aisle has a seemingly endless row of cereal boxes. There are refrigerated bins with meat and other items. I can't adequately explain my amazement. These 1959ers have opulence beyond the imagination. The prices are not in IMUs so I don't know if they are high or low. Frozen waffles, 2 packages for 29

cents; Loaf of bread 25 cents; Tuna 3 cans 89 cents; I never used dollars or cents so don't know what to think about the prices. However, there are dozens of mothers pushing shopping carts filled with groceries so I assume the cost is not that terrible. Here again, the ladies are wearing nice dresses, hats, and high heel shoes. The place where they pay is a long counter with a wooden frame. The customer places her groceries on the counter and the lady standing in front of a huge machine with numerous buttons grabs a handle and pulls the groceries toward her. She then punches buttons which are obviously the prices and a long paper strip comes out with the total cost. As I leave the store, I see a newspaper with the headline: NASA names first 7 astronauts for Project Mercury.

I decide to move on therefore press 1964 on my device. Poof, I'm standing in an amusement park under a huge metal globe of the Earth. For a second I thought that I had fallen off the planet. Once I get my bearings, I see a sign, "Welcome to the 1964 New York World's Fair." A loud jet passes overhead. It appears to be landing and is a whole lot louder than aircraft I am accustomed to hearing and seeing. People are shuffling along everywhere. Men are wearing casual pants and short-sleeve shirts with collars. I have to admit it does create a nice look. Women are wearing skirts and blouses, some with sweaters, others wear dresses. At least they are wearing flat shoes or sneakers.

Over by a fountain there are two uniformed guides, a male and a female. I ask the female—you expected differently—to tell me about the fair. She tells me the theme of the fair is, "Peace through understanding," and the big globe is called the Unisphere. It was actually built on the foundation of the Perisphere from the 1939 NYC fair. The site is Flushing Meadows Corona Park in the borough of Queens. Originally it had been a natural wetland with water running off into the bay. Once a Dutch settlement, it eventually became Manhattan's Corona Ash Dumps which were featured in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* as the Valley of Ashes. She advises me to make sure I visit one of the fair's most popular exhibits, the Vatican Pavilion, where Michelangelo's Pietà is displayed. It was transported from St Peter's Basilica with the permission of Pope John XXIII.

This fair actually took place over one-hundred years ago and it is bigger and better than anything I have ever experienced in my life. Ironically, the history book that I found was published in 1965 when this fair was still operating. I'll try to give you a sense of what I see. Before I do let me describe how I see the inside of pavilions or experience rides.

Because it is virtual reality I cannot sit or climb onto anything. When I reach a ride, I simply find myself on it without actually being on it. It's like I'm seeing it through someone else's eyes—if you understand what I mean. Good, now explain it to me.

The first thing after the Unisphere that I see is a huge automobile tire. It is the U.S. Royal Tires Ferris wheel. Little capsules circle up and around as the tire turns in place. I don't ride it. Across the path is Sinclair Dinoland. There are nine life-size dinosaurs on display. Of course, they are mechanical, something called animatics, and while they look real their movements are not convincing. Consider where I am and what I am presently experiencing. Over a pond I see a huge automobile engine. It is the Chrysler pavilion. I don't recall the name Chrysler but they show a number of cars. They are boxy and non-aerodynamic. The next building that I visit is the Ford Pavilion. I ride in an old—new to them—convertible. It goes into the building and provides a visual presentation of the history of the world from dinosaurs to the invention of the wheel. They also make a big deal out of introducing a car named Mustang—I'm not impressed. Near there is an outdoor exhibit called Space City. NASA and the Department of Defense are displaying different rockets, early space capsules, weather and communications satellites, and more. What interests me most is a full-size model of an X-15 aircraft mounted on two pedestals. It is an impressive sight. I couldn't help but think of my father and how he was cheated out of trying to be a pilot. In my mind he is sitting in the cockpit of that jet-black aircraft with a smile on his face. Does he smile? I don't remember seeing one before. My next stop is the General Motors building and its Futurama presentation. Not very impressive or accurate. Mining on the Moon, undersea gardening and hotels, super highways, desert farming, and cities of tomorrow all shown as miniature models. Computer generated graphics are more realistic. Again, remember where I am.

Almost all of the exhibits that I visit have an optimistic view of the future. This is 1964, one hundred ten years ago, and the world seems a more hospitable and friendlier place. You have to wonder what happened to drag it into the horrible state we now live in. All these families walking together filled with hope and anticipation of an ever more promising future. If they only knew what lies ahead. Those children ten, eleven, twelve-years old will be elderly when America breathes her final free breath. They won't remember the 1964 New York World's Fair and all the bright wonderful visions of the future

that were predicted. If I remember correctly the founders of STUS; Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood was fourteen and Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd was only one in 1964. Two individuals born during a remarkable time of confidence and trust in the future witness to the evil that resides in men. Here I stand in the World's Fair among the ghosts who had it all and I feel sympathy for them and, I have to admit, anger about what has been done to murder that promising future.

Bam, I'm in 1969. I'm not quite as disoriented as I was on the first occasion when I changed time zones. Hey that's pretty funny. I'm in a bar that is filled with people. They are talking and laughing and peering at an old color television set mounted on a wall. Walter was correct, I can smell stale beer. An older gentleman is standing nearby so I ask, "What's going on?"

He turns toward me and replies, "What? Have you been under a rock—it's the Moon landing."

"They're showing it on television?"

"We hope so. There are cameras on the Lunar Lander that are supposed to broadcast back what takes place."

"That's exciting," I state as I am about to see the first Moon landing. Our history class only told that it happened but didn't provide any details. Most everything that took place before the Reorganization was glossed over. The attitude is that nothing good happened before the Reorganization. The news program is in color as they discuss the event. Then it happens, they broadcast a black and white image from the descending Lunar Lander. The surface of the Moon slowly drifts by as it gets nearer and nearer. It goes black for an excruciating few seconds and then Neil Armstrong announces, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Everyone in the bar explodes into a cheer. People are yelling and patting each other on the back, laughing, crying and saying things like, "Thank God," "I don't believe it," and, "We made it." Later I watch with my new friends as Armstrong steps off the ladder and states for history, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

I turn around and music fills my ears.

Momma Momma, I fear you reared me wrong,
Momma Momma, I fear you reared me wrong
'cause I pick up my head, can't tell where I belong.
Momma Momma, something's hurting me bad,
Momma Momma, something's hurting me bad,

I have a yearning for something that I never had.
Oh, sometimes I feel my life has come and then it's gone,
Sometimes I feel my life has come and gone.

I live in this world but I'm only looking on.
I can't understand, it's too far over my head,
I can't understand, it's too far over my head.
I'm living the life but I'm really dying instead, yeah.
Momma Momma, I fear you reared me wrong,
Momma Momma, I fear you reared me wrong,
'cause I lift up my head and I can't tell where I belong.
Momma Momma Momma Momma, something's
terribly wrong.

It's night. Raining. People are all around moving like an undulating ocean. The song is being sung by a lone figure far away on a stage with a single spotlight. A girl with long dark hair and bangs sits in a chair strumming a guitar that seems to make her appear small and singing a song that speaks to me. I believe my momma would unequivocally conclude that she raised her traitor son wrong. And it is clear that I can't tell where I belong. My god, I do have a yearning for something that I never had and do feel as though I'm only looking on. Her voice wails along with my heart. Where am I? Suddenly, a flame appears, then another, and another. The people are lighting candles. In spite of the rain flickering light spreads among the masses. The singer finishes her song.

A voice next to me says, "I dig her the most, man."

I look in his direction and find sitting in the mud a young man about my age with long hair past his shoulders and a bushy mustache. I ask, "Who is she?"

"Melanie Safka, man. She always reaches me, man."

"She reached me," I admit.

"Hey, pull up a puddle, man, let's rap, I'm not fogged."

I sit. Of course, me being the shadow, or the other way around, I don't get wet. I ask, "Where am I?"

"Oh, man, you spaced out? This is Woodstock, man, where peace and love can't be defeated by the establishment."

"It sure is crowded."

"Last I heard nearly half a million are here," he looks around, "wonder where I parked my car."

“Everyone here to hear Melanie?”

“We’re here to enjoy music all freakin’ weekend. Screw the war. To hell with straight arrow big corporation overlords. Here is where it’s at.”

“What war?”

“Where have you been, man? It’s like you just dropped down from another planet. Vietnam, man. Men are fighting and dying and they don’t even know why. The draft board, man. They line you up, stick you on a bus, put a gun in your hands, and ship your ass to Vietnam. It’s sad man. All we want is to be allowed to live our lives in peace.”

I think about what he said and simply reply, “That is everyone’s dream peace and freedom.”

“Freedom is a myth, man. It’s being snuffed out just like candles in the rain.”

Like a spirit I drift until I’m standing on a blue spot in the middle of a room.

“Welcome home,” Walter Tize says off to the left.

When I reach him, I say, “You were right. It does leave a hangover—a delicious hangover.”



Zachary Taylor
President: 1849 - 1850

“Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!”

—L. Frank Baum
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

Chapter 12 | THE CURTAIN

“Profit or loss?” You will learn the response to this question, if you pay attention.

By now, you understand that the home of the free does not mean what it used to mean. The days of being free to choose your own path in life, pursue your dreams, and with a little luck become rich ended a long time ago. Before I was born—as a matter-of-fact. Now, free means what can I get for free? The problem with that concept is that a small group of elitists in the government decide what you get and, on a whim, can take it away.

For most of my life I believed that we had the best form of government because that was what I was taught year in and year out. Now, I’m not so sure.

On our ride to work Virginia announces, “You have an appointment.”

“I do? With who?”

“Whom.”

“Who is Whom?”

“Very funny. You’re meeting Dr. Julius Hofstra a communications expert.”

“Oh, why am I meeting a communications expert?”

“It’s part of getting you ready for our upcoming trip.”

“That’s right, Texas.”

My meeting is in the STUS headquarters building. Dr. Hofstra is waiting in one of the smaller conference rooms. I enter the room to find a tall, well-dressed, rather dignified, obviously confident, middle-aged man standing beside a sideboard on which is coffee and various pastries. It’s quite a set-up compared with what we can afford at home.

Dr. Hofstra nods to welcome me and asks a question, “When did you stop stealing from US Mart stores?”

OK, I have no idea where the hell that came from. Obviously, it’s not true. You believe me—right? After my initial shock I reply, “I didn’t.”

The LED screen on the wall comes to life with a news headline; George Clymer admits he hasn’t stopped stealing from US Mart stores. I look at Dr. Hofstra, who smiles, and points out, “It’s that easy.” He pours some coffee and asks over his shoulder, “Have you had much experience with the media?”

“I haven’t had any.”

He turns and looks at me, “A little insight. For the most part reporters are fair and only looking for facts and answers to write a story. By the way, did you know that female reporters are the most biased and tend to have more preconceived opinions?”

“I didn’t know that.”

“Do you know why?”

“No.”

“Because females have different life experiences, so when they enter the workforce, they tend to feel threatened and have a need to outperform everyone else. Unfortunately, this can lead to stretching a point or drawing unsupported conclusions. Keep that in mind.”

“I will.”

The screen changes abruptly showing a new headline; George Clymer believes female reporters are inferior.

“I didn’t say that!” I protest.

“Did you not state that you would keep in mind the fact that female reporters are biased and stretch the facts?”

“I just agreed with you.”

“Exactly, you accepted the premise—an unsupported premise.” He walks over and sits in a leather chair that faces the screen. “Bottom line is you have to be careful, listen, and understand media tactics. Just don’t smack any female reporters along the way.”

I smile and let out a nervous snicker. The damned screen flashes once more; George Clymer thinks abusing women is funny. “Stop that!” I protest.

Dr. Hofstra smiles. He motions for me to sit in a chair next to him. After I’m settled, he explains, “George, you are young, inexperienced, and a danger to yourself, society, and STUS.”

Well, now I feel really good.

“However, you have something that the powers-that-be value and want to exploit. So, my job is to open your eyes on the subject of communications and prepare you to use this powerful tool effectively while also reducing the risk of having it used against you.”

“I’m afraid to say anything because it might cue another message.”

“Rest easy, the demonstration is over,” he assures me. I’m not sure that I believe him. However, he continues, “I’m going to start with the logic of communications.”

Now, that is a subject that I am very interested in considering some of the conversations that I’ve had with my parents.

The lesson begins, “Everything is learned. Seems simple enough but is often forgotten. When a human being is born its brain is essentially empty. From that moment on the process begins.” Dr. Hofstra looks at me and asks, “Why is this important?” Before I utter a word, he answers, “When you are aware of a person’s background, culture, and education you have a better idea of how to communicate with them. For example, you are going to Texas. That is a capitalist nation. They support and value a free market system. You come from a socialist state that has taught you that capitalism is evil. Up until recently, you would have found fault with everything you see in Texas. Fortunately, you are learning facts that have been, until now, withheld from you.”

“Each individual learns differently,” Dr. Hofstra states. “All this means is one approach does not work on all people. If you are addressing a group you should use multiple technique to get a point across.” I guess my blank stare tells him I don’t know what the heck he means. He continues, “Some people understand words, others need a visual, while still others are better served with an analogy. If appropriate, use all three.”

The lesson continues, “Learning comes from repetition. In marketing this is called frequency. How many times does a person have to be exposed to a message before they remember the key elements?”

“Uh, ten.”

“As you said so well, it varies based on many influencing conditions. Maybe someday I’ll show you an effective frequency model.”

“I can’t wait,” I mumble sarcastically. The screen once more comes alive with the headline; George Clymer is a wiseass. I react with an awkward smile.

Dr. Hofstra doesn't miss a beat, "One thing people overlook is that forgetting begins immediately. The good news is relearning requires less frequency." He gets up and walks over to get more coffee. As he does he mentions, "I'm 49 years old. My Social Compensation Number is 7001224856." He returns and asks, "How old am I?"

"Forty-nine."

"Good. What is my Social Compensation Number?"

I haven't got the foggiest idea. What I do know is that it has ten digits because that's what Social Compensation Numbers contain. All I can do is shake my head.

"Simple facts can be learned relatively easily. Complex data requires more frequency or can be learned through association. Let me demonstrate. My Social Compensation Number would start with a G, like George, if you counted the letters in the alphabet. That would be followed by numbers found in this memory jogging sentence. Oh, oh at midnight two four legged dogs ate my five-pointed star which made me six. Now can you ascertain what the number is?"

I try to solve the riddle. "It starts with G. That would be seven. Then Oh, oh must mean two zeros. At midnight meaning twelve two four-legged dogs means 2 and 4 ate my five-pointed star that would be five. Which made me six or sick. When I examine the number it is short one digit. Upon review of the sentence I realize I missed the 8 referred to by ate. That done I state 7001224856."

"Correct," Dr. Hofstra bellows. "And, when I ask you later, if you remember the sentence, you will know the number." He goes on to present other communications facts. Things of interest are remembered more quickly. Attentiveness has a direct impact on remembering. People will pay attention—if given a reason. Confusion leads to misremembering. There's a whole lot more to communications than I thought. I find the part about each sense offering a memory opportunity fascinating. Especially when he tells me the sense of smell or olfactory system is the strongest memory jogger of all the senses. He demonstrates by asking me if I had a favorite smell of something cooking or baking. I do. It brought me back to when I was a youth in New York and the details that I remember are incredible. Something else he explains is that communications can impact emotions which is common sense. What I didn't know is that when emotions are aroused memories become stronger. He finishes by saying the primary function of human beings is communications while the most common ailment is miscommunications.

OK, I'm ready to face the world. Bring on Texas.

The screen comes to life showing one of the past pre-Reorganization presidents of the United States. President Ronald Reagan stands proudly in front of the old American flag.

Dr. Hofstra explains, "Ronald Reagan was called The Great Communicator when he was President of the United States from 1981 to 1989. The title was bestowed upon him because he was able to influence people's belief systems. He changed the perception of government with two succinct statements. 'The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government and I'm here to help.' 'Government is not a solution to our problem, government is the problem.'"

"Don't say that too loud, you'll be arrested."

"Since Reagan's presidency there was a relentless effort to reverse and demean all that he accomplished. Unfortunately, they were successful." Dr. Hofstra sits motionless for a moment as if reliving a memory. Then he explains, "True censorship in America began in the 1990s. The technique was nothing new. It had been used by Hitler before World War II, the Soviet Union, North Korea, Venezuela, any place where dictators and despots wanted to control the people. Once people are afraid to speak the truth it no longer is relevant."

Now, I have to admit, my brain is starting to hurt. I ask, "With all of the manipulation, indoctrination, propaganda, and every other kind of misinformation how on Earth do you know what the truth really is?"

Dr. Hofstra gives me an icy stare and says, "The truth is what I tell you it is."

I stare at him in disbelief.

He wrinkles his brow and challenges my gaze. Then, as if it comes from somewhere deep inside him, he laughs. "When you figure out what the truth is, share it with me."

"That's not an answer."

"It's all I have."

"I'm disappointed."

"OK, the truth is what you know, not what you are told." He stands and walks in front of the screen. "Are we here together in this conference room?"

"Yes."

"Then that is the truth." He then asks, "How old am I?"

"Forty-nine."

"How do you know?"

"You told me."

"In reality, I'm Fifty-one. Now, what is the truth about how old I am?"

"The truth is I don't know."

Dr. Hofstra literally jumps into the air as he responds, "Exactly! That is the truth. Your response could also be 'You say you are fifty-one' or 'I was told you are fifty-one' all true facts." Let me ask once more, "Are we here together in this conference room?" Behind him the screen comes to life. What I see is the conference room that we are in. Dr. Hofstra backs up and dissolves into the screen. He is now standing in the conference room on the screen. I feel like I just had a stroke. Dr. Hofstra speaks to me from the screen, "You've been alone in the conference room all along. Your brain accepted what it thought it saw. If you knew what to look for you would have determined that I was a holographic image. Here's a hint; because it is an image it doesn't create a shadow."

"Neither do vampires."

"I thought that was reflections in a mirror."

"Oh, yeah, you're right."

"Of course, I am." He steps back into the conference room that I'm in. I immediately notice the lack of a shadow. Dr. Hofstra says, "George, this demonstration is meant to raise your awareness of the many ways you can be fooled." He looks around and waves his arm in the air, "This is a special room capable of projecting lifelike holographic images. It is incredibly complex. STUS developed it. There is only one other one like it in the world—the Government Un-American Interrogation Lab Tech (GUILT) center. It doesn't take much of an imagination to figure out what goes on there. This technology is not only classified, but only STUS possesses the complete detailed plans. We know that the government has tried reverse engineering the equipment because we've had to make repairs." Once again, Dr. Hofstra walks over and fills his coffee cup. When he returns to where I am seated he upends the cup over me. Liquid pours out and I move quickly out of the way. He laughs. When I look at the chair there is no liquid spill.

"OK, when do I get out of this house of horrors?" I state with a twinge of displeasure. Well, maybe more than a twinge. Fine, I yelled at him.

"George, there are a few more points I need to make about communications and perception."

Dr. Hofstra demonstrates a number of physical cues and gestures that often indicate that a person is lying. When my education is finished, I'm not sure that I can believe me. I walk out of the building onto the street and wonder if a crew of large burly men are going to appear and move the flats aside leaving me in the middle of a wide-open field. Just to be sure I walk over to a building and touch it.

"Kinda has that effect, doesn't it?" I hear Virginia say behind me. I turn and she is sitting on a park bench. Nice legs. I wonder if they are real.

"I call it the Hofstra effect," Virginia continues. "Don't worry it wears off."

"You could have warned me."

"And miss the fun of seeing you lost in a fog of uncertainty."

"I'm glad that I'm entertaining you," I state sarcastically.

"You have an appointment."

"What now a hypnotist to make me believe I'm a chicken?"

Virginia laughs. I like her laugh. It's genuine and soft. Hard to believe it comes out of her. "Mr. Trufire wants to see you. Twelfth floor. You know the way."

Once in David Trufire's office I sit at the round table facing the waterfall. He is looking out the window with his back to me. His greeting had been warm and friendly, he invited me to sit, and then walked over to the window. After a few minutes he says, "In 1776 less than half of the colonists took an active role in the Revolution." He turns to face me, "It was up to those who understood and valued freedom to carry the burden for the rest. They had a vision and swore on their sacred honor their loyalty to each other and to the idea of a new nation founded on the concept of individual freedom."

"I've been learning about the founding of America," I offer.

"I know." David Trufire joins me at the table. "Many colonists joined a secret society called the Sons of Liberty. Rather than a formal organization it was a unifying name used to coordinate Colonial efforts against what they considered the Crown's illegal actions. The hated *Stamp Act* was scheduled to become effective the 1st of November 1765. In Boston on August 14, 1765 an effigy of Andrew Oliver, a commissioned distributor of Stamps in Massachusetts, was found hanging in a tree on Newbury Street. There was also a large boot with a devil climbing out of it which referred to the Earl of Bute, who had been Prime Minister of Great Britain under George III. When the sheriffs were told to remove the display they refused due to fear of the

large crowd that had formed. Late afternoon the mob burned Oliver's business property on Kilby Street and moved to his home. There they beheaded the effigy and stoned the house. In the end his house was ransacked while the British Militia and sheriffs did nothing."

I add, "Most of the sheriffs and militia became members of the Sons of Liberty."

"Exactly," Trufire states. "The important thing here is that the colonies were united not by their legislatures but by underground radical groups."

I nod.

"I know you've heard of EOTS. That patriot society did the best that they could to change the meaning of EOTS from Enemy of The State to something more meaningful—Equal Opportunity Traitor's Society. However, the name is less important than what they stand for." He waves his hand over the monitor in the table and they all come alive. He narrates a slide show.

- The EOTS actually was formed long before the death of America on 14 October 2024.
- It began as The American Statesmen Party (ASP) with the slogan: No Regulation Without Representation.
- The government had been hijacked by special interest groups who, through their various agencies, issued regulation after regulation strangling the freedom of American citizens.
- Small groups of elitist mini-despots used powers they didn't legally have to enforce rules designed to foster their warped view of right and wrong.
- These monsters did more harm and had a greater impact on individual freedom than anything the legislature did.
- They crushed the economy, production, services, lives, and the American spirit.
- In the teens when the President used the Internal Revenue Service and the Justice Department as political weapons it became clear that the nation was lost.
- That beautiful spark that made America the birthplace of innovation, creativity, leadership, courage, justice, and freedom was nearly extinguished.
- However, just like in the colonies, individual spirits became the driving force and with the help of God will ignite the fires to forge a new nation.

I feel like joining the Sons of Liberty.

Mr. Trufire reads my mind, “You’ve had a whirlwind education, been exposed to different points-of-view, and peeked behind the curtain of our deceitful government. Fair or unfair, you now have to make a personal decision. Do you wish to remain on the sidelines or are you ready to get actively involved in the New American Revolution?”

Not a question I came expecting to answer. Of course, I already know the answer. There is no way that I will ever be satisfied living a controlled life as a vassal to the state. The thought of some snooty spoiled slob who was born lucky or some nefarious conniver who backstabbed and lied their way into power deciding my destiny and robbing me of opportunity all the while living like royalty turns my stomach. I only wish that I could make some memorable statement that would live in history. Unfortunately, that’s not my forte. So, I do the next best thing and make it terse. “I’m in.”

“Good. Go to our website www.STUSinc.com. There is a black link under the purple photo on the landing page. You know the answers to the statement ‘profit or loss’ and the follow-up question. Correct answers will take you to the EOTS page. I’ll sponsor you so your IIDC will get you in.”

“I only hope that I can bring something of value to the table.”

“Son, every member of EOTS brings something of value—it’s called the American Spirit.” He rises and walks toward the door, “You have an appointment.”

Of course, I do.

“Dawn wants to chat,” he points at the monitors embedded in the table and leaves the room.

DAWN: Did you join the revolution?

GEORGE: I did.

DAWN: I’m glad. We need you.

GEORGE: Why do you need me?

DAWN: None of the Founding Fathers ever asked that question.

GEORGE: I’m not a Founding Father.

DAWN: You are the ancestor of one and a Son of Liberty.

GEORGE: Not yet. I haven’t visited the website or made any kind of pledge.

DAWN: A technicality.

GEORGE: What happens now?

DAWN: What do you think happens?

GEORGE: I have no idea. I’m new to this secret society stuff.

DAWN: But, George, we need your leadership.

GEORGE: My leadership? Ever since I met you I've been led around by the nose. I don't know if I'm coming or going. I'd run us into a wall.

DAWN: You know more than you realize.

GEORGE: I appreciate your confidence but I don't share it.

DAWN: Understandable.

GEORGE: I support the cause, but I have no idea how to help.

DAWN: When the time comes you will know what to do.

GEORGE: How do you know?

DAWN: It's your destiny.

GEORGE: What is my destiny?

DAWN: Oh, George, don't you know?

Not long ago, although it seems like years, my mother called me a traitor. I refused to accept that epithet. Now, here I am about to make it official. So much has happened so quickly that I feel as though I got caught up in a flash flood and have been carried downstream to where I find myself at this moment. Yet, it feels right. What could be wrong with desiring that all individuals be given a right to determine their own destinies? My destiny? I can only guess.

At dinner I'm still obsessed with Dawn's telling me they need my leadership. For this reason, I'm rather uncharacteristically silent.

My father notices, "What's wrong George, you haven't said a word?"

I wish I could tell him that I am now a card-carrying, Son of Liberty, member of EOTS, Enemy of The State, revolutionary hell-bent on bringing down the government. Dad, let me warn you, sitting at your table is a traitor. No, that won't fly and neither will he. That thought puts in perspective what is at stake. A simple little fact; my father not having an opportunity to pursue something he desires because some nameless autocrat decided so. Well, now I'm deciding that those little gutter snipes did not earn my respect and, as a result, do not deserve the power they wield.

"George!" my father interjects, "you're lost in another world."

If he only knew. I'm knee deep in another world. A world filled with dark passages, dense fog, frightening creatures, unknown threats, and a small barely visible glow in a distant place beckoning me. I look at my father and see a man who has been cowed and shaped by a heartless, godless state that sees him only as a number—not a human being with inalienable rights.

“George?”

“Dad, mom, I’m moving out.” I see shock in their eyes. Or, is it relief? I have to get away from here. If I am discovered and prosecuted, they have to be spared any suspicion. “I’m making enough money to have an apartment downtown nearer my job. You weren’t going to get any funding from the Social Compensation Board due to my non-participation so this will help you financially.”

“Have you located a place to live?” my mother asks.

“Not yet, but I have identified some nice places that I can afford.”

“You don’t even know how to cook,” she adds.

“I can make a sandwich and open a can and use a microwave.”

“Are you sure this is what you want to do?” my father asks in a tone that I don’t remember the last time I heard.

“It’s something I have to do,” I state honestly. The decision made, I decide that I better start looking into apartments.

In my room I sit in the dark looking out the window. The sky is cloudless and stars reflect the vastness of the universe. Dots of light seemingly nearby are, in reality, light-years away. It makes me wonder how far away is our goal and how will we get there.



Millard Fillmore

President: 1850 - 1853

“The man who damns money has obtained it dishonorably; The man who respects it has earned it.”

—Ayn Rand

Chapter 13 | THE BANK

Ever since I became a bona fide member of EOTS (Equal Opportunity Traitor Society) I feel like I should be looking over my shoulder to see if I’m being followed. It’s a bit unnerving. Some of the things that I learned on the EOTS website are, to say the least, hard to believe while also being frightening. Oh, I should explain that the EOTS website is on the Black Pearl Network and is not accessible by the public or the government for that matter. It’s your ultimate underground.

If I’m to believe what is presented, those in power belong to a super-elite with their own set of rules, mores, and ethics. They feed on power and are addicted to it. Their world is so removed from us mere mortals that they have no concept of the day to day life of the average American. It’s as though we all live in a giant mine toiling away while they live on the surface enjoying the fruits of our labors. They only give us a thought when they manipulate our sub-world to serve their needs. We are considered human beings while they consider themselves supreme beings. Story after story tells of how little regard they have for the common man.

For instance, in 2018 when government funding was becoming scarce, services were cut back in all states that traditionally voted to support the conservative point-of-view and original *Constitution*. When a hurricane tore one state’s coastal counties apart no federal aid or services were provided. The senators and congressmen from that state complained while the press ran stories about the state’s governor failing to follow proper procedures to get readily available help. Another state experienced terrible flooding. Again, because they voted the wrong way, no help was offered. Once again, the media presented erroneous story after story of state and local officials refusing federal help. They

went so far as to show rows of emergency vehicles waiting for permission from state officials to enter and offer aid. Later those photographs were shown to be from years earlier. Yet, when a state that supported “statism” or “One World Order” needed funding to expand an entertainment venue, federal funds flowed like water.

It used to be called pork barrel politics when a politician tried to get programs and funding for their state or county. The new standard became support everything the leaders desired or be cut off from the trough. Then the media would be fed information that presents the government as a caring uncle hindered by petty local politicians. It makes me think of what Dr. Hofstra taught me about communications. America had entered the era of Perception Politics.

Even with elections, perception was reality. The favored candidate was painted as good, caring, intelligent, and highly qualified, while their opponent was demonized to a point that you wouldn’t trust them to mow your lawn. The stories didn’t have to be correct. Sadly, here is another communications lesson put forth by none other than Adolph Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, “If you tell a big enough lie and tell it frequently enough, it will be believed.” In addition, there were examples of character assassination through association, even when none existed. One example that stood out was a headline that stated, “Racist tells why he supports . . .” The very fact that an evil person supported a candidate tied them together even though the candidate didn’t know the person. It made me think of the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes the Cynic who carried a lantern and stick, “In search for an honest man.” As far back as 400 BC the true nature of man was apparent. It’s a little disheartening to say the least.

As I drive up Route 521 toward Charlotte, I find I’m getting better at identifying and avoiding the many potholes in the road. Did I tell you I bought a car? Oh, well, maybe I should fill you in. I took Virginia’s advice—no Buick. Lacking any experience in this area I went to the one person who I believed would be most helpful.

“Get the hell out of my office,” is Walter Tize’s first response.

A sandwich from Candy’s Café later and he is far more agreeable.

“Get the hell out of my office.”

“You know I’ll only return, later.”

In order to get rid of me he decides to help. First of all, I need to point out that most people get loans through the Social Compensation Program Bank. The interest they pay is based on their level of compensation. I, on the other hand, being a non-participant

cannot get credit from that bank. When I bring this fact to Walter's attention he picks up the telephone and calls a lady named Brianna Barcelona. I want to call her BB but conclude that I better not. Upon completing the call Walter gives me an email address and tells me to contact her. Here's how it goes.

BRIANNA: Mr. Clymer we need to chat.

GEORGE: I guess so. I need a loan to buy a car and don't know where to begin.

BRIANNA: This is the correct place.

GEORGE: I'm glad. What do I need to do?

BRIANNA: The first thing you must do is listen very carefully. I represent a financial institution that does not exist. It is simply called The Keep which is the innermost and strongest part of a medieval castle. There are no records of this organization's existence. No address, or website, or telephone number, or any other form of contact. As far as you know it is a shadow in the fog. I am your intermediary.

GEORGE: I'm confused.

BRIANNA: Of course. The Keep facilitates financial transactions for a select group of clients. As an employee of STUS you have access to our services. All you have to know is that when you make the selection of an automobile the funds will be available.

GEORGE: How do I pay for the car and how do I pay the loan?

BRIANNA: How have you been conducting business up to now?

OK, now I have to make an admission that could be, alright is, embarrassing. Since I am under twenty-one and still live at home, I've been conducting business as I always have. I use my thumb IIDC and assume it is part of my parent's account. Things have been so busy and have happened so quickly I never gave it much thought.

GEORGE: I assumed it was still part of my parent's account.

BRIANNA: George, when you joined STUS an account was established at The Keep in your name. Your salary and expenditures have been executed through that account. You can access it through the STUS financial services portal. Only you can open that file.

GEORGE: So, somewhere I have a bank account in a non-existent bank.

BRIANNA: Exactly.

GEORGE: But if The Keep doesn't exist how do funds get transferred.

BRIANNA: Whomever you do business with doesn't care where the funds come from. All they know is when you approve payment it is

made. They assume it is through the Social Compensation Program or another financial institution.

GEORGE: So, what is different about The Keep?

BRIANNA: When a payment is made through the Social Compensation Program or another financial institution an electronic record is kept. The government has complete access to all records. They know all expenditures every individual in the country make. The Keep does not provide such data because it doesn't exist.

GEORGE: Doesn't the government object to that?

BRIANNA: They not only don't object but the political class utilizes The Keep's services. All of their expenditures and income is confidential. No individual, organization, or government office can uncover the data because they have no idea where it is. It is ultimate privacy. They can pay a bribe, hire a hooker, or buy something illegal and no one will ever be able to trace the expenditure. Do you really think they want to give that up?

GEORGE: You mean whatever my parents spend money on is traceable?

BRIANNA: Every IMU.

GEORGE: But now anything I spend money on is not?

BRIANNA: Exactly.

GEORGE: That's incredible.

BRIANNA: When do you plan to make this automobile purchase?

GEORGE: As soon as possible, once I find out what I can afford.

BRIANNA: It is up to you to make that determination.

GEORGE: Wait, if I don't know how much I have to pay each month how can I figure out what I can afford.

BRIANNA: Divide the total cost by the length of time you wish to repay the funds and you have your answer.

GEORGE: I don't know the interest rate.

BRIANNA: There are no interest rates at The Keep. It is considered an advance on your salary or income. You pay it back as you see fit. Some carry a balance—others pay it off. There are politicians who will never catch up.

GEORGE: It sounds like there can be a lot of abuse of the system.

BRIANNA: Individuals can be expelled from The Keep. This has a dramatic impact on their lives. For that reason alone they maintain a good relationship. Those who go too far find out the consequences the hard way.

GEORGE: What are the consequences?

BRIANNA: Let me know when you have selected a vehicle.

There you have it, another mystery. When I bring up the subject with Walter Tize he explains, “Get the hell out of my office.”

The car I buy is a used 2072 Mazda US6, the US means it was built in the United States—I think in Danbury, New England. It’s a nice car, seats four, and gets good gas mileage. Why the funny look? Oh, you thought gasoline would have been replaced by now. Didn’t happen. With new engines and fuel additives it stayed ahead of the other energy sources as the most economical form of energy. And, if you recall the mini-ice age from 2029 to 2044 put an end to the “global warming” alarmists, as well as put significant strain on energy sources. Oil and gasoline are here to stay.

It feels funny when the salesperson asks how I am financing my vehicle and I simply say I’ll pay the full amount, slap my thumb on the IIDC pad, and get the starter code placed into my phone. Oh, I know you are wondering why no government approval of the vehicle I selected. There isn’t any when a purchase is made through The Keep because there isn’t any record. Confusing—right?

STUS sleeps with the devil, facilitates his activities, and has his complete trust. What better place for a revolutionary to be?

Texas is around the corner. Not physically, figuratively. Virginia calls me into her office to finalize our plans.

“How’s the car?” she asks out of politeness.

“Oh, it’s great. I never realized how it gives one a sense of freedom to come and go as you please.”

“I have a sense of freedom not having to babysit you.”

“Glad that worked out for you,” I smile, although I must admit I do miss our commute together.

“The Republic of Texas,” she continues, “both a client of STUS and a model of capitalism that works.”

I want to ask a whole bunch of questions but assume Virginia will tell me all that I need to know. Of course, as usual, I am correct.

Virginia explains, “You and I are going there to meet with a number of STUS customers. I need you to learn all you can about Bio-Ether (B-E) computing. You won’t understand the mechanics, if mechanics is the proper term, but should at least have a working knowledge of the technology.”

“You do realize that I was a finance major—not computer science major?”

“George, the technology of Bio-Ether is beyond all of us lay

people, but the performance and capabilities we can appreciate. As far as I understand the speed of transmission in the brain is faster than anything we can manufacture, so the STUS scientists grew a computer. Using bio-synapse capability in a gel coupled with non-linear, multi-parallel, algorithm processing, speed is infinitely faster than silicon-based computers. Instead, of trudging through calculation after calculation Bio-Ether computing performs simultaneous tasks in an instant."

"Technology may not be my forte," I admit.

"Learn what you can so you don't embarrass yourself."

I run my finger up and down over my lips making a mumbling sound like kids used to do.

"Like that."

Back to my bank account. I access it through the STUS financial services portal. It instructs me to create my own private connection which I do. A part of me wonders if a record exists of the funds that I have available and transactions that have been executed. How could there not be a record? And, if I want to know what I spent money on how do I get that information? As usual, there is an answer. A tutorial describes the system using a water analogy. The Keep is a huge water tower holding millions of gallons of water (IMUs). When an expenditure is made the water freely flows directly to the proper recipient. The recipient has no indication where the funds came from. Additional funds are constantly added to the tower so it stays relatively full.

On an individual basis a client has an intricate set of controls. First there are the basic totals; how much they have, how much they owe, how much is coming in. You might call it their reservoir. Next, there are expenditure controls. For recurring bills, they can set up automatic payment. Each month the appropriate account number receives funds from an anonymous source. No one cares because the bill is paid. When a client wants to identify themselves as the payee they can use whatever designation they wish. There are no account numbers or other traceable information. In reverse, you create an identifying name or code through which to receive funds. If it's not taken, I'm going to use King George III.

Finally, there is the Master Key which is your individual control panel and records section. When you open the access portal the first thing you see is Suicide Queen. Try to use Master Key without the proper account name, IIDC, and password and Suicide Queen does her

work. Poof, everything is gone. There is backup data somewhere on a storage device on a shadow network but the process to get it reinstalled in your account is one that is hard to believe. You really don't want to have to go through it.

When I examine my account I find that I have more money than I thought. I decide that I will go food shopping with my parents and pay the tab. It's the least I can do. My father never said anything but I bet their compensation from the SCP has been reduced. Until I get an apartment I will pay for as much as I can to help out.

Tonight, we have steak. My parents play it down but I know they are enjoying it. And, quite honestly, I am enjoying watching them.

After dinner, Dee, my 15-year-old sister, and I sit in my room reading the history book. Everyone thinks that after the *Declaration of Independence* was signed a few battles were fought and the Revolutionary War was over. We won. In reality, it was an 8-year conflict. Of course, communications and transportation were extremely slow in those days by our standards so events took place at a much more drawn out pace. Bear with me, because I find it interesting. Here are the major events, by year.

1774

September 5: First Continental Congress convened.

1775

April 19: The first shots were fired at Lexington and Concord, MA.

June 14: Continental Army established.

June 17: Battle of Bunker Hill, MA.

June 19: George Washington appointed commander-in-chief of the Army.

September 9: Continental Congress declares the name of the nation to be the "United States" of America.

December 3: USS Alfred was the first ship to fly the Grand Union Flag (precursor to the Stars and Stripes).

1776

July 2: Continental Congress approved a Virginia motion calling for separation from Britain.

July 4: *Declaration of Independence* signed.

September 15: New York occupied by British.

October 28: Battle of White Plains when Washington was chased out of New York.

December 26: Battle of Trenton after Washington crossed the Delaware.

1777

January 3: Washington defeats British at Battle of Princeton, NJ.

April 27: General Benedict Arnold defeated the British at Ridgefield, CT.

August 16: Americans defeat British in Battle of Bennington, VT.

September 11: Americans lose to British in Battle of Brandywine, PA.

October 4: Washington defeated by the British in Battle of Germantown, PA.

October 7: Americans beat the British in the Battle of Bemis Heights, NY.

November 15: *Articles of Confederation* written and adopted by Continental Congress.

December 19: Washington's army established headquarters at Valley Forge.

1778

February 6: U.S. and France entered a military alliance.

June 28: Fierce Battle of Monmouth, NJ a draw.

December 29: Capture of Savannah, GA by British.

1779

February 23: George Rogers Clark and his men took Vincennes, IN from the British.

June 21: Spain declared war against the British.

September 21: Spain wins the Battle of Baton Rouge, keeping the British out of Mississippi.

1780

May 12: Charleston SC falls to the British, with losses of 5,400 men, 4 ships and a military arsenal, this is the worst American defeat of the Revolutionary War.

August 16: British defeat Americans in Battle of Camden, SC.

October 7: British defeated by American militia near Kings Mountain, SC.

1781

January 17: Battle at Cowpens near the Broad River in South Carolina.

March 15: Battle of Guilford Court House, SC, British General Cornwallis troops suffer heavy losses.

May 10: British lost the Battle of Pensacola FL.

August 14: George Washington begins to move his troops south to fight Cornwallis.

September 1: Americans & French siege Cornwallis at Yorktown; last battle of the Revolutionary War.

October 19: Cornwallis surrenders to Washington at Yorktown.

1782

November 30: Britain signs preliminary peace treaty recognizing US independence along with British withdrawal from America.

1783

February 4: Britain officially declares an end to hostilities in America.

September 3: *Treaty of Paris* signed, ending the US Revolutionary War of Independence.

November 25: Britain evacuates New York, their last military position in United States.

1784

January 14: *Treaty of Paris* ratified by US Congress formally ending the American Revolutionary War of Independence.

If you are a product of public education you weren't taught any of this. Indulge me and allow me to summarize. Even though there were some skirmishes in 1775 and the Continental Congress created an army and commissioned George Washington to command it, little action took place during that year. In fact, it wasn't until fall of 1776 after the *Declaration of Independence* was signed that hostilities began. Then through 1777 battles were fought throughout the northeast. France entered the conflict in 1778 and Spain in 1779. During those two years there were sporadic battles but things seemed to be at more of a standstill. At the end of 1779 and through 1780 and most of 1781 the focus shifted to the Carolinas and the south. Washington did not participate in these battles believing that the British would return to the northeast. That was until General Cornwallis headed toward Yorktown, Virginia to join other British forces. Washington and other forces converged on this location. After a month and a half Cornwallis

surrendered which essentially ended the war. Over a year later, 1782, Britain signed a preliminary peace treaty recognizing U.S. independence along with an agreement to withdraw troops from America. It took another year for the treaty to be signed and the British to leave New York.

They say history repeats itself. Whatever lies ahead, I hope it doesn't take eight years. Once alone in my room I contact Dawn.

DAWN: George, how nice to hear from you.

GEORGE: Dawn, so much has happened and is going to happen. And, you have been a part of it from the beginning. Yet, I really don't know you.

DAWN: You know all you need to, at this time.

GEORGE: I want, no need, to know more.

DAWN: The less you know the better.

GEORGE: Not true.

DAWN: There is nothing I can tell you that will help you.

GEORGE: Where do you live? How old are you? What do you look like? Are you married?

DAWN: Oh, George, none of that means anything.

GEORGE: It does to me.

DAWN: What we are attempting to do is greater than us.

GEORGE: Why are you afraid of me knowing anything about you?

DAWN: I'm not afraid. I'm protecting you.

GEORGE: From what?

DAWN: There are forces that will stop at nothing to maintain the status quo.

GEORGE: And, my knowing about you would be dangerous?

DAWN: All information can be valuable to the opposition and there are those who will go to great lengths to get it.

GEORGE: You know this all sounds ominous and even frightening?

DAWN: George, what you have seen and done so far is child's play. As things progress, it will take on a different air. The degree of danger will increase exponentially. Lives will be at risk and lives will be lost. The revolution will pit tremendous forces against each other. A prolonged conflict will most likely occur. We may not survive to see the outcome. However, freedom is worth dying for.

I stare at the screen. It is a cold slap of reality. I am going to war and very well may die. A shiver runs down my spine. I want to pull the

covers up over my head. Then I picture my father cheated out of doing what he wanted to do. My sister—poisoned by the history book—will never be happy simply being a good citizen. And, me, the rebel tilting at windmills. Only this time it's the wheels of a vast machine with the power to squash me like a bug and not even notice.

GEORGE: I guess you remain an enigma.

DAWN: It's for the best.

GEORGE: You've been right so far. No reason to stop trusting you now.

DAWN: Thank you.

GEORGE: I hope someday we will meet in a free America.

DAWN: A beautiful thought.

GEORGE: I find comfort in just knowing you are there.

DAWN: And, I find hope in knowing you are there. Good night, George.

I find myself sitting in the dark thinking. It seems to be happening a lot lately. This time I see the sun rising over the ocean at dawn. OK, stupid, but it's the only image of Dawn my tired, somewhat frightened, brain can conjure. She is out there manipulating and gathering forces to fight a well-entrenched, brutal, inhuman political machine. As I consider the upcoming conflict, I believe Diogenes would point out that we are fighting the natural inclination of the human spirit to conquer and control. Throughout history men have fought wars in an attempt to rule their tribe, or kingdom, or nation, or the world. The dominant seek to lord over the submissive. Conversely, the submissive seek a strong leader to protect and provide for them. Individual freedom is a beautiful thing, but not for every individual. Some wish to be led. I ask myself, "What style government will satisfy the needs of all citizens?"

The answer actually comes from an unexpected place.



Franklin Pierce
President: 1853 - 1857

***“The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield
and government to gain ground.”***

—Thomas Jefferson

Chapter 14 | THE GUN

“George, I’ve been thinking—there are different types of freedom,” Dee says as she sits on my bed. An interesting statement, to say the least. I want to hear more so I stop what I’m doing and look up. She doesn’t disappoint, “We all think of freedom as freedom of action. However, in a society, in order to protect the rights of others it has to be tempered action. That’s why we have laws. For instance, I can’t, all-of-a-sudden, say I want your room and take it. The law is meant to protect you from me.”

“I don’t need the law, I’m bigger than you.”

She huffs and adds, “The point is total freedom is anarchy.”

I point out, “Survival of the fittest or strongest.”

“There has to be a delicate balance.”

“So, Thomas Jefferson, how do you give freedom without allowing its abuse?”

Dee sits up straighter, “To begin, freedom is not given. No one can give you something they don’t possess.” She points at me and says, “I can’t give you the right to breathe air. The only thing I can do is protect your right to breathe air.” She rolls onto her back and stares at the ceiling. Suddenly, she pops up and states loudly, “That’s the secret! Government can’t give you anything. Instead, it should protect you from any infringement on your inalienable rights.”

“That hamster up there is really running on his treadmill today,” I say sarcastically.

“Her treadmill,” she corrects me as she stands and begins to pace around my room. “No one has the right to come into your home and take your property or attack you. That’s denying you the right to live in peace. We have police to protect that right.”

"But, what about when government tells us what we can do and what we can't do?" I ask.

"If it keeps us from infringing on the rights of others that's OK."

"What if they tell you you're not allowed to visit certain websites?"

"That's wrong, unless the site is doing something illegal."

"When the government decides what is and isn't legal?"

Dee gives me a frustrated look. After thinking for a short while she gives me her answer, "Right now, the government isn't protecting our freedom it's defining it. That's wrong."

"It keeps me from infringing on your rights," I insist.

"What rights?"

"Well . . ."

"We were meant to be free to go where we want, do what we want, think what we want, not be kept in cages or shaped into what the government chooses," Dee states. "That's not right!"

I change the subject, "Well, it really doesn't matter since the government controls most everything."

"It does matter," she insists. "It matters because we presently live under greater tyranny than the Pilgrims did under King George. The government not only controls commerce, they control our actions and lives." She emphasizes her point, "Last week was dad's birthday. He had to get his annual physical. His blood pressure was slightly high."

"Probably my fault," I admit.

"Absolutely," Dee smiles, "Well, his numbers were outside the acceptable range so he was put on more pills and placed on the Limited Access & Use of Government Healthcare (LAUGH) list. Until he gets his numbers within their required levels his healthcare needs are low priority. We're like animals in a zoo with no choice but to obey or die."

"I have a choice," I state defiantly.

"You do. And, how great does that feel?"

"You know, I've been so tangled up in all that has been happening and ultimately what is about to happen that I really haven't had time to consider the incredible gift that I have received," I admit. With that reality thrust in my face I feel a wave of guilt. Here my father has been cheated out of what he really wanted to do for a career, lived as a good citizen, certainly didn't do anything to create his health situation, and at his age doesn't have near the choices that I do. By the way, after Doctor Pace and his needles, I

haven't taken a DIRT pill for a long time and feel great. I wonder what my blood pressure is? I'd love to talk my mother, father, and Dee into visiting the good doctor.

When I arrive at work, Walter Tize calls me into his office. He greets me, "Nice to see that you decided to show up today."

"I'm early. What are you talking about?"

"Shut up!" He leans back and asks, "What's the story on the car?"

"What story?"

"I asked you first."

"It's nice. I like it. Runs well."

"No, asshole, I have no invoice."

"I, uh, well, uh . . ."

"Well spoken. You were authorized a company car. So, where is the invoice?"

"I paid for it," I confess.

"Feeling rich, these days?"

"Feeling stupid, this day."

"Not to worry. Give me the information and you'll be reimbursed," Walter says in an unfamiliar tone that almost could be considered friendly. He continues, "George, as you know you have been reassigned. I'm no longer your boss. From the beginning I knew you were on a specific undefined track. I've been told that you have done well. We share the blue eagle of the EOTS, however, you are going to go through doors that are even denied to me. In some ways I envy you, while in others I don't. I do applaud your courage and pray for your success. We each have our burden, responsibilities, and hopes. From now on you will be working out of STUS headquarters reporting to Virginia Morris. Let's have a bite to eat at lunch at Candy's Café. Then you can report to headquarters."

I smile. I'm not sure how to react. I really like Walter. Yet, if I say anything complimentary he'd probably curse at me. I get the feeling that I'm going to war and he is saying goodbye. Now, that's not a comforting feeling. I also see an image of an older man standing on the dock watching a warship steam away wishing he were among the crew. Without question, I would welcome him aboard. In truth, I wonder if I have the courage to see this thing through. I am a speck among billions. What makes me think that I can have world-changing impact? Yes, I like Walter Tize.

"Get the hell out of my office."

After lunch, I report to STUS headquarters. Virginia is in her office sitting on the raised Japanese style platform at a low square black enamel table. I enter, remove my shoes, and join her.

"How was lunch?" she asks.

"Very interesting. Walter Tize is quite a remarkable individual. When he's not calling me names he has a lot of insights, memories, and opinions."

"Walter was part of an earlier revolutionary effort that didn't quite work out as planned. Luckily, he was never associated with it. He lost a number of friends."

"I'm coming to realize there have been patriots fighting for freedom all along."

"The struggle for control and power is a constant. From the very day the original United States of America was founded and its constitution adopted forces to gain more and more authority went to work. There will always be those who believe they know more and are better suited to make decisions for others. Life is a constant battle," Virginia provides her perspective.

She continues with history that I have yet to read in my illegal history book. "A compromise had to be made with the original founding of the nation. In fact, there were 86 changes made to the original *Declaration of Independence* before it was approved by Congress. A statement that condemned slavery was omitted, in spite of Thomas Jefferson's vehement protests. Even though he was a slave owner he despised the practice."

I can't help but wonder why Virginia started giving me a history lesson. Not that I mind. I find it all fascinating.

"Slavery has existed throughout history in many forms. Rome is said to have been more dependent upon its slave labor than any society. There are estimates that about a third of the population of Rome were slaves. They came from conquered lands, punishment for crimes, kidnapping, and even to pay debts."

"Initial colonization of the New World by England occurred in the Caribbean and in Virginia. The first workers were recruited from England. To get to America they were lured by the promise of land at the end of their term of indentured service. As the colonies grew, more labor was needed. Dutch slave traders began providing enslaved Africans and by the 1650s the source of labor went from voluntary to involuntary. By 1660 the labor force was half free and half slave."

"Decades later, at the time of the Constitutional Convention in

1787, slavery in the United States was well entrenched. In the census of 1790, 3.8 million people were counted with 700,000 or 18% listed as slaves. Many founding fathers expressed opposition to slavery, but it was a different time when the practice was widespread throughout the world. Patrick Henry stated, 'I believe a time will come when an opportunity will be offered to abolish this lamentable evil.' And, Thomas Jefferson wrote, 'There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us.' Many reasonable leaders of the time wished for the abolition of slavery but found opposition too strong. John Jay, author of *The Federalist*, wrote in 1786, 'It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished. The honor of the States, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused.'"

What becomes clear to me is that the concept of individual freedom was still in its infant stage. Great Britain had a king and noble class and vassals and for all intents and purposes slaves. Every nation in the world still had classes from which one could not escape very easily. The *Declaration of Independence* changed all of that in America. Yet, such a dramatic change in the minds of men would not occur with a single piece of paper. Those in power do not give it up easily.

Virginia pressed on, "Even George Washington in a letter to Marquis de Lafayette expressed frustration, 'Your late purchase of an estate in the colony of Cayenne, with a view to emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country; but I despair of seeing it.'"

I remark, "I was taught all the founding fathers owned slaves, therefore what they created was racist and had to be destroyed for the good of the people."

"Many did own slaves. Yet, they recognized it was morally wrong in a new free society and wanted to eliminate it. Unfortunately, there were more voices and votes to keep slavery. When the *Constitution* was written, slavery was an essential part of agriculture in the south. It was feared that if any effort was made to emancipate the slaves the south would form their own nation. A compromise was reached. First, the Enumeration Clause defined slaves as 'other persons' and counted them as three-fifths of a whole person. This was for the apportionment of representatives in Congress. Then Article 1, Section 9 limited

Congress from passing any laws that prohibited the importation of slaves until 1808—twenty years later. After that waiting period, Congress outlawed the slave trade effective January 1, 1808. President Thomas Jefferson, called the slave trade, ‘violations of human rights which have been so long continued on the unoffending inhabitants of Africa, and which the morality, the reputation, and the best interests of our country have long been eager to proscribe.’”

“They were trying to change,” I observe. “Not that it did those poor souls who were brought in over twenty years earlier any good.”

“Small steps. While not ideal the leaders were moving in the right and moral direction. Another compromise was the Fugitive Slave Clause. It said the law in one state could not excuse a person from service or labor in another state. It expressly required that the state in which an escapee is found deliver the slave to the state he escaped from ‘on Claim of the Party.’ As hard as they tried, reasonable men could not eliminate slavery through legislation. War was inevitable.” Virginia looked off into a distance—a distant past.

“For years, pro-slavery Presidents were elected, but times were changing. In the 1856 Presidential election Republican John C. Frémont crusaded against slavery. The Republican slogan was ‘Free speech, free press, free soil, free men, Frémont and victory!’ Democrats warned that Fremont’s election could lead to civil war. Democrat James Buchanan was elected. This is when the anti-slavery folks received a devastating blow.”

Virginia brings up her tablet screen. I guess she wants to get her facts right. She relates the events that occurred, “Dred Scott was born a slave in Virginia in 1795. His owner, Peter Blow, sold Scott to U.S. Army surgeon Dr. John Emerson. Emerson took him to Fort Armstrong in Illinois which was a free state. In 1836, Emerson moved with Scott to Fort Snelling in the Wisconsin Territory. Slavery in the Wisconsin Territory was prohibited by the United States Congress under the Missouri Compromise. A year later, Emerson was transferred to Jefferson Barracks Military Post, south of St. Louis, Missouri. He left Dred Scott and his wife at Fort Snelling, where he leased their services out for profit. By the act of hiring Scott out, Emerson was bringing the institution of slavery into a free state, which was a direct violation of the Missouri Compromise, the Northwest Ordinance, and the Wisconsin Enabling Act.”

“Man’s inhumanity to man never ceases to amaze me,” I say and can’t help but think that throughout history the powerful always

take advantage of those who are weaker without any conscience at all.

“Dr. Emerson was reassigned to Fort Jesup in Louisiana, where he married Irene Sanford in February, 1838. Dred Scott and Harriet, his wife, were subsequently sent for. Aboard a steamboat on the Mississippi River their daughter Eliza was born while in free state territory. Technically, she was born as a free person under both federal and state laws. In Louisiana, the Scotts could have sued for their freedom and most likely would have won. Unfortunately, they did not. While Dr. Emerson was away in the Seminole War, his wife Irene returned to St. Louis with the Scotts. After Dr. Emerson’s death his wife inherited his estate. She continued to lease out the Scotts as hired slaves. In 1846, Dred Scott offered to purchase his family’s freedom, but Irene Emerson refused.”

“Bitch,” I say, “she just wanted to keep the income. Who cares about the poor Scott family?”

“Dred Scott sued Irene Emerson for his freedom in a Missouri court in 1846 with financial aid from the family of his previous owner, Peter Blow. Scott claimed his presence and residence in free territories required his emancipation. In June 1847, Scott lost his case due to a technicality. Grocer Samuel Russell had testified that he was leasing Scott from Irene Emerson, but on cross-examination he admitted that the leasing arrangements had actually been made by his wife Adeline. Russell’s testimony, therefore was ruled hearsay and the jury returned a verdict for Emerson.”

“I can’t believe it.”

“It gets worse,” Virginia states. “Dred Scott was granted a new trial that didn’t begin until January 1850. He and his family were placed in the custody of the St. Louis County Sheriff, who continued to lease them out. The jury found in favor of Scott.”

“Hurrah!”

Virginia gives me a slight sneer, “Unfortunately, Irene Emerson didn’t wish to lose the income. While she moved to Massachusetts, she transferred ownership of the Scott family to her brother, John F. A. Sanford. In November 1852, the Missouri Supreme Court reversed the trial court’s decision stating they should have sued for freedom while living in a free state.”

“Unbelievable.”

“The case was taken over at no cost by Roswell Field, whose office employed Dred Scott as a janitor. They sued Sanford in Federal Court. As the Missouri Supreme Court held that Scott was a slave, the

jury found in favor of Sanford. The case was then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 60 U.S. 393 (1857), known as the Dred Scott case, was a landmark decision by the United States Supreme Court on U.S. labor law and Constitutional law. It held that a negro, whose ancestors were imported into the U.S. and sold as slaves could not be an American citizen and therefore had no standing to sue in federal court and that the federal government had no power to regulate slavery in the federal territories acquired after the creation of the United States. In a 7–2 decision written by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, the court denied Scott's request."

"So much for justice," I conclude.

There was more, Virginia continued, "Democrat President James Buchanan pressured Associate Supreme Court Justice Robert Cooper Grier, a Northerner, to join the Southern majority to prevent the appearance that the decision was made along sectional lines. This was highly improper. Chief Justice Taney wrote that the Missouri Compromise of 1820 was beyond the power of Congress and unconstitutional. He concluded that territories or states where slavery had been abolished were not entitled to free slaves, because this would be a deprivation of a slaveholder's property rights."

"Property rights!" I bellow, "What about people rights?"

"The Dred Scott decision essentially allowed the unhindered expansion of slavery into the territories. It became clear that the southern slaveholders were going to cling to the inhuman practice using every possible tactic. War was inevitable if change was going to occur."

I conclude, "The Revolutionary War was fought to free the colonies from England. The Civil War was fought to free those who were overlooked. Now, we are fighting a tyrannical socialist government. Does that mean another War?"

Virginia ignores my question and continues, "The election of the anti-slavery-expansion Republican Abraham Lincoln as President on November 6, 1860 was the turning point. Before he even took office on March 4, southern states began seceding from the union. The Battle of First Bull Run or Battle of First Manassas on July 21, 1861, was the first major battle of the Civil War."

Virginia looks closely at her tablet and provides additional details, "The Civil War was the bloodiest conflict in American History—620,000 soldiers were killed, 476,000 wounded, and 400,000 captured or missing. Approximately, 360,000 federal troops died compared with

260,000 confederate.”

“The price of freedom,” I whisper thinking how all that suffering could have been avoided.

“After the Civil War, upset southern Democrats still clung to power by enacting Black Codes that restricted the rights of freedmen. Central to these laws were stiff penalties for blacks possessing firearms. In fact, the first gun control laws were racist in their intent.” Virginia stops, looks at me, and asks, “Now, why did I tell you all this?”

“I’m sure you’re going to let me know.”

Virginia rises from her sitting position, walks over to a cabinet, and retrieves a box. I watch with curiosity. When she opens it, what I see is a complete surprise. Inside is a gun. Its dark grey color is unique unlike any I’ve seen before. Virginia reaches in and retrieves the weapon. She presses something and a long thin metal bar drops out of the handle. I can see bullets in the top of the bar. Virginia pulls back on the top of the gun a few times and looks inside. “This is a CZ 75B 9mm semi-automatic pistol. It was manufactured in Czechoslovakia before the Reorganization. It was carried by Demarcus Shepherd.”

“One of the founders of STUS,” I acknowledge.

“He was quite a character,” Virginia smiles. “Obviously, I never met him but I have had the experience in the Ghost Room.”

“I look forward to a visit there,” I joke having already had the experience.

Virginia explains, “Demarcus Shepherd was a black man who served in the Army for twenty years. It is interesting that originally the government wanted all citizens to bear arms both as means of defense and as a deterrent to a tyrannical government. After the Civil War gun control was enacted to keep firearms away from free black men. Then gun control advocates tried to make it difficult for any citizen to own a gun.”

“That tyrannical government thing,” I suggest.

“Demarcus Shepherd and Jeffrey Eastwood were the two guiding lights whose vision established STUS and brought us to where we are today. Shepherd was a police officer after retiring from the Army. He lived to be 100 years old.” Virginia hands me the pistol as she explains, “It’s safe, I cleared the chamber and there isn’t a magazine in it.”

My first impression is that it is quite heavy. Also, I hold it like I’m holding a venomous snake. I don’t need to tell you that I have no experience with guns. “I thought guns are illegal,” I say somewhat

nervously.

“The manufacture of guns is illegal,” Virginia states. “Two years after the Reorganization, in 2026, a law was passed that made owning any type of firearm illegal. The first thing a tyrannical government does is disarm the population. Police were instructed to confiscate all guns. After several attempts were made to collect their guns armed citizens fought back. A good number of citizens and police died in ongoing confrontations. The government considered sending in troops but it was impossible for them to go everywhere. They tried to do it in stages in limited geographic areas but that proved disastrous for the troops. Remember during the Reorganization, Great Britain, China, and Russia purchased a large portion of America’s military assets. Faced with the potential of an armed citizenry uprising the law was repealed. A new law was passed that essentially made manufacture of firearms or ammunition illegal.”

“So, anyone can own a gun?” I ask in amazement.

“Generally, that’s the case. The state found it was better to strangle gun owners with regulations and high prices rather than try to confiscate existing weapons. Tariffs were applied to imported guns to stop the flow. Here is where a funny thing happened. International manufacturers sued the United States for unfair trade practices in the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands. They ultimately won.”

“So, with so many people owning guns how did the government take over everything?” I ask as I hand the gat back to Virginia.

“Economics, social engineering, psychology, lies, education, and more.” When she observes the lost look on my face she adds, “Think about it. You have two firearms in your closet. If the government adds a 10% tax on your smart phone who you going to shoot? You need your phone for just about everything. You’ll complain and bay at the moon but you’ll pay. Then they outlaw peanut butter because it represents too much risk to the 2% of the population that is allergic. How will your guns help you change that? Today, with the Social Compensation Program the government could entice people to relinquish their firearms or face receiving a lower level of payment. However, they won’t do it because they just don’t have the staff to implement it. Besides, the population just keeps accepting new rule after new rule. Even though armed, they feel helpless and alone.”

I come to find out that there is a shooting range in the basement of the STUS headquarters building. Virginia and I arrive for

my first lesson. Before we actually go to the range we sit in a small conference room where I get basic training in gun safety and operation. The thinking and design of these things are quite remarkable. No electronics at all! I'm disassembling and assembling a Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm semi-automatic pistol. This one is quite a bit lighter than the CZ pistol because it is made of a polymer frame with stainless steel components. The barrel is also shorter.

"That particular gun was made in the U.S.A.," Virginia informs me.

I load the magazine, it's not a metal bar, with fake bullets. Wait, I was told the lead part that flies at the target is called a bullet. The brass and lead combined thingie is called a cartridge. So, I load five fake cartridges, called snap caps, into the magazine. You've got to really push down on the spring to get those suckers in. I feel like I'm back in school. I pull back the slide which moves a cartridge, in this case snap cap, into the chamber where it sits waiting to be smacked on the ass by the firing pin. Virginia teaches me how to aim, operate the safety, and pull the trigger. Pull, click, pop—nothing to it. On to the range!

We don these headphones which are ear protectors. They really are quite amazing. All outside noise is muffled and yet I can hear Virginia as clear as day through the electronic system. I'm compelled to ask, "If we get into a gunfight how fast can I put on these ear protectors before firing?"

"Not fast enough," is her deadpan response.

Anyone who has fired a gun knows what I mean when I say you always remember your first time. There's a lot of things in life like that. Ah, but I digress. I stand on the firing line, pull back the slide, take aim at the human form target, and pull the trigger. Wham, that's bam through the ear protectors, my hand flies upward and I inadvertently pull the trigger again sending a bullet at the ceiling.

"I hope there's nobody upstairs in the men's room," Virginia comments.

I put down the pistol and ask with concern, "I didn't mean it. Do you think there might be?"

"Don't worry the ceiling is bulletproof," Virginia reassures me as she runs the target back to the firing line.

I look at the target and to my surprise there isn't any hole. Confused, I look at Virginia. She nods her head a few times and points out, "You didn't squeeze the trigger, you jerked it back pulling the

muzzle to the right.” After sending the target to twice the distance I was firing at, Virginia picks up the pistol, and rapid fires five shots. When the target returns to our position there are five holes right where the bullseye is printed on the human form. Even more impressive, they are grouped so tightly if a glass were place on the target it would cover all five holes. “You need to be able to do that if you want to survive,” Virginia states unemotionally.

By the time practice is over I’m hitting the human form. OK, some of the shots wouldn’t kill my opponent, only piss him off. Then I learn the important part of shooting—cleaning the firearm. This is important because a dirty gun will jam, misfire, and leave you as an unarmed human form target.

After dinner at home I contact my guardian angel.

DAWN: George, how are you?

GEORGE: Exhausted from the events of the day, as usual.

DAWN: Get a good night’s rest. It will help.

GEORGE: I shot a gun today.

DAWN: Did you hit anything?

GEORGE: Eventually, I hit the target.

DAWN: Remember to hold your breath. Your heartbeat will cause the sights to move slightly. When they are in the lowest position pull the trigger.

GEORGE: I’ll try that. Thanks.

DAWN: Happy to help.

GEORGE: I said goodbye to Walter Tize, today.

DAWN: He’s a fine man and real patriot.

GEORGE: I like him, even when he’s cursing at me.

DAWN: LOL

GEORGE: I’m being trained for what I don’t know. Yet, you keep telling me I must lead while I’m completely in the dark.

DAWN: Close your eyes and you will see the light.



James Buchanan

President: 1857 - 1861

“To achieve world government, it is necessary to remove from the minds of men their individualism, loyalty to family traditions, national patriotism, and religious dogmas.”

—Brock Adams

Director UN Health Organization

Chapter 15 | THE DEVIL

“As I stand here I am filled with pride. I am proud of the United States of America, of our caring government, of the past fifty years, and of you—the American people.”

I’m watching President Sandra Holmes making an important announcement. She is standing at a podium upon which is the seal of the President of the United States. What strikes me most is that standing behind her are a number of dignitaries among which is David Trufire, President of STUS.

“Together, we’ve brought our nation back from the brink of disaster to this historic day.”

My parents, Dee, and myself are watching with anticipation. For two days we have been promised fantastic news that will improve the lives of every citizen. Some believe that the economy has improved to where the Social Compensation Program will be allocating more funds to recipients. Others, are anticipating some wonderful scientific breakthrough. And, still others expect the government to take care of them.

Me? I have no idea. Only, I can’t remember a Presidential nationwide speech that didn’t call for more sacrifices for the good of the nation. I’m a skeptic.

“I have agreed to sign the World Order United Nations Declaration (WOUND) committing the United States to become a member of the United Nations Euro/American Sectional Enterprise Zone (UNEASEZ).” Recorded applause and cheers ring out. Sandra Holmes smiles broadly.

I’m in shock. The President of the United States just abolished the United States as a nation.

“That bitch is the devil!” Dee bellows with tears in her eyes.

My mother and father sit there like good citizens—sheep going where they are told, believing what they are told, maybe not even hearing what they are told.

“We are embarking on a new age. One of peace, harmony, equality, justice, prosperity, advancement, happiness, and hope.”

What, she couldn’t think of any other wonderful attributes? Still, it strikes me immediately that she left out one important word—freedom.

“After ten years of hard work, negotiations, and planning here are the results.” Behind President Holmes a large screen is filled with a map of the world. All continents are green. “Here is our world.” She presses a button and parts of the map turn blue. “And, this is the UN Euro/American Sectional Enterprise Zone.”

Now, I’m pretty weak in the area of geography, but it appears the zone includes most of Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Finland, Great Britain, Ireland, a little bit of South America, India, and of all things, Saudi Arabia.

“The government will be headquartered in Brussels. As there will no longer be any national borders, the UN Euro/American Sectional Enterprise Zone it will simply be referred to as the UN Blue Enterprise Zone.” She peers up at the map and says with gusto, “Isn’t it beautiful?”

I want to barf.

“The second Enterprise Zone is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.” Like blood, red flows across the map. It covers practically everything from the Pacific Ocean west to Europe, with the exception of Ukraine and some other small countries. The biggest surprise is that it also encompasses most of South America. Those commies have been busy little bees. Cuba and Panama round out the UN Red Enterprise Zone.

“Cooperation will be the rule in our gorgeous new world.”

The map morphs once more adding yellow to most of Asia, as well as Bolivia and Paraguay in South America. There it is the UN Yellow Enterprise Zone.

“The new world is about diversity and respect for other cultures. And, we welcome the Caliphate of Islam as a peaceful, spiritual leader in the world. Here is the UN Caliphate Enterprise Zone.” Most of North Africa and the Middle East along with the Philippines turns purple. What catches my eye is the fact that the state New Mecca that once was Michigan and Wisconsin is part of the Caliphate. How odd.

President Holmes drones on, “The areas in tan are, as yet,

unaffiliated but will join our great community over time.” Most of Africa, the west coast of South America, and Central America have yet to be gobbled up by the partners in crime.

I can do no more than shake my head in disbelief. What is happening?

“As with any great enterprise and advancement in society there will always be deniers and resisters.” Areas on the map turn black.

There it is—Texas. Alone surrounded by blue, it appears so vulnerable and, yet at the same time, so forceful. Those tenacious cowboys will not be moved. They will not surrender to the forces that wish to conquer the world. They will fight to the very end. It makes me want to get some cowboy boots, a hat, and the Smith & Wesson 9mm and head to Texas. Immediately, I wonder about the planned trip to Texas. Is it off? Have we lost the war that never started? Did David Trufire sell us out? Are the police on their way to arrest me?

I notice for the first-time other areas in black. Other nations have rejected the New World Order. There is South Korea, Japan, New Guinea, Indonesia, New Zealand, Israel, Turkey, Ukraine, Norway, South Africa, and a number of smaller countries that I can’t name.

“These rogue nations will be isolated and brought to their knees,” President Holmes hisses. “They are racist, sexist, conservative cesspools that wish to enslave mankind. In time they will become a part of our great enterprise when their fanatical leaders come to their senses.”

I look at Dee. She is sitting as still as a statue. There is no indication of what she is thinking. However, I know one thing, she isn’t thinking this is good.

President Holmes changes her tone, “In order to make this transition successful a number of steps have to take place. First, all state governments will be abolished and become administrative agencies of the federal government until such time as the seat of power is moved to Brussels. This will take some time to accomplish. Leadership of the Blue Enterprise Zone will be appointed by the United Nations Governance Committee. All private property will be surrendered to the new order. Economic activities will be frozen at their present state. Restrictions on the Globalnet will be immediately implemented. Firearms of every type are now illegal under international law and must be turned into authorities within thirty days. All foreign travel is banned. Any revolt or disapproval of this act of any kind will be severely punished. Because there will be significant cost to these changes the Social Compensation

Program remittance to all citizens will be reduced by fifteen percent.” Sandra Holmes puts on her sad caring face and says with all the emotion of the best actress, “We have to pull together to make this happen for the good of all world citizens.”

I can’t help but notice the diamond earrings that dangle from her ears below perfectly coiffured hair.

“On this glorious day we begin our journey to an orderly, peaceful, promising world that will benefit mankind. I am proud to be the last President of the United States. The transition will take eleven months and be completed on July 4, 2076.”

How appropriate, on the three hundredth birthday of the greatest nation ever known it will be assassinated.

“Thank you, my fellow Americans,” giggle, “my fellow Blue Enterprise Zonians.”

I leave the room without saying a word. There are no words. Nothing can be said or done. You know my next step.

GEORGE: Did you watch what just happened?

DAWN: Of course.

GEORGE: What do you think?

DAWN: Are you ready to saddle up?

GEORGE: I don’t know what to think, or do, or feel.

DAWN: What you witnessed was the opening salvo of a war.

GEORGE: From what I see—we already lost. The United States of America is no more.

DAWN: The United States of America was destroyed in 2024 with the Reorganization. Corrupt liberal politicians did their dirty work and left an empty shell. What they didn’t realize is they also left an idea that will not die that has grown and developed and waited for the right time.

GEORGE: And, is this the right time?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: Stop laying it on me. I don’t know what is going on.

DAWN: What do you want to happen?

GEORGE: I haven’t thought about it.

DAWN: How disappointing.

GEORGE: I don’t know what people want of me.

DAWN: What do you want?

GEORGE: I want to be free to live my life without government or tyrants, or self-righteous elitists telling me what to do or think.

DAWN: That’s better.

GEORGE: Better than what?

DAWN: Better than casting about not knowing what you want.

GEORGE: Great! So, I want to be free. How the hell is that going to happen in today's global takeover world?

DAWN: Three hundred years ago exceptional men had a vision for a nation governed by the people. It began as an undefined concept. Together they molded it into an irresistible idea—freedom. They had to have it. Yet, they faced the greatest empire and military power ever known. It was a no-win situation doomed to failure. Those exceptional men risked everything, fought, died, and founded a nation unlike any that had ever existed before. God's hand guided them. Their honor and strength drove them. In the end, they achieved the impossible.

GEORGE: And, now it is being thrown away leaving a modern feudal system where the elite rule and the serfs fight to survive.

DAWN: You carry the DNA of one of those exceptional men.

GEORGE: What?

DAWN: History repeats itself.

GEORGE: Not with me.

DAWN: Yes, with you.

GEORGE: I think you are hooking your wagon to a lost horse.

DAWN: Look in the mirror.

GEORGE: At this point, I'm afraid to.

DAWN: LOL. Go to Texas, George. The conflict has just begun.

I walk into Virginia's office the next day filled with apprehension. The President of STUS, David Trufire, stood with the President of the United States and surrendered its sovereignty. Treason of the first degree. What am I supposed to think? Virginia is standing by the window looking out. Without turning around, she says, "Pack your bags. We're going to Texas."

"How?"

"By private jet."

"I mean, how? All international travel has been banned."

Virginia turns around to face me, "George, the law does not apply to rebels."

"What if we get caught?"

"You worry too much."

"I worry just enough."

Virginia laughs.

I ask, "Why was Mr. Trufire there?"

"Because STUS is an integral part of the transition. Without our

technology they couldn't make this move."

"Then why don't we stop them?"

"We want it to happen."

"I don't understand."

"Without this dramatic move, and the chaos it will undoubtedly create, the population would remain complacent. Remember, after our chess game, when I asked you, 'What happens if you throw a revolution and no one cares?'"

"I remember."

"If the concepts of freedom and individual liberty don't catch on, the people of the United States might as well paint themselves blue and join the Enterprise Zone." For the first time I see concern in her eyes, "I fear the addicting poison of socialist manipulation may run too deep. When they are given chicken and don't have to work for it, they accept it. If the powers that be decide they can only have eggs, they accept it. Even as the allotments get smaller and smaller, they continue to go along. Like animals in a zoo they wait for their meal and eat what is put in front of them. It doesn't occur to them that they could do far better on their own." She then asks, "Did you ever see a dog get beaten that rolls on its back and surrenders without a fight?"

"Sadly, I have."

"Keep that in mind. The American people have been trained, educated, threatened, regulated, and psychologically enslaved by their statist masters. Reversing that may be the greatest challenge of the revolution."

I have to admit that I agree with Red, uh, Virginia. Had to throw that in. If no one cares no good will come from any effort. My mind wanders. DNA? Does Dawn really think there is some kind of magic to my DNA? I know that I understand the miracle of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. But, how do I bring this understanding to the people that have been meticulously shaped through decades of propaganda, education, and regulation? What tool can I use?

"The day after tomorrow we leave for Texas," Virginia says as she drags me back to reality.

I nod.

Back at home at dinner nothing is said about the surrender of the nation to foreign overlords. I guess, in my parent's minds it will be simply more of the same. Do what you're told, collect your reduced check, lose weight, shiver in the cold, and keep breathing. Life is good.

Good grief!

In my room I open my tablet and surf the Globalnet to see what is being said about the speech and events. For the most part it is all positive from all of the mainstream media. Of course, whose paying their salaries? Most of the social media are buzzing. Famous actor Jimeth Hosterman is planning to marry Cher. The Bubbletops released a new record. Someone is trying to keep up with the Kardashians. New fashion trends enhance the elbow, or something—what the hell? Photos of President Sandra Holmes shoes.

Then on the VideoView site I spot a new program. It's title alone is amazing—*The Capitalist*. Immediately, I look down and see that it has over 6,000 views. This puppy is running. Without question the government will run the little critter down with a tank as soon as they get wind of it. I decide that I better watch it before it is too late.

The title is simple showing a statue of a colonial looking man with a walking stick and a hand on a pedestal. There's something familiar about him. He does appear noble. Then it hits me—it's George Washington.

THE CAPITALIST

The opening screen features dark blue storm clouds with white lettering that states, "The government under which you live has a direct impact on your freedom, quality of life, security, safety, and happiness." It fades to a dirty, rundown street with a few dilapidated wooden houses on each side. A few people are seen sitting on a porch or walking half-dead along the street. Without question it is a depressed area. The music is heavy and sinister. Now I know why it has been left up. This is what comes of capitalism—misery. It's a goddamned propaganda piece.

A female voiceover is heard, "A town in nowhere U.S.A., small, poor, tired, forgotten. Four hundred twenty-seven people—human beings—living like fish in an aquarium, floating along until they float to the top. No dreams, no aspirations, no opportunities, no recourse—no hope."

It dissolves to the inside of a house. Old furniture, peeling walls, twenty-year-old mattresses, bugs, mold, mildew, and a forty-inch flat screen monitor on the wall hooked up to free GOV-POV satellite programming.

Once more the female voiceover, "The human spirit can light the heavens when set free. However, it is fragile. The nation's elite rulers knew that and systematically removed all confidence and

ambition and will from the very people they took an oath to protect. Through education, propaganda, coercion, laws, and pharmaceuticals the process allowed power-hungry politicians to steal a nation from its citizens.”

A car, shiny and new and more expensive than any vehicle seen in this village for a very long time, drives slowly down the street. All who are present look upon it with curiosity. Close-ups of various tired, drawn faces gaze at the exquisite vehicle. The sound of its motor is foreign to the quiet hamlet. It stops. Out of the curiosity climbs a tall man wearing all black. Black shirt, jeans, and boots. His hair is blond and wavy and longer than usual. It blows in the slight breeze. Dark sunglasses cover his blue eyes. Lean and muscular he is the picture of health. He stands beside the automobile and scans the landscape. There is an air of confidence about him. By the expressions on their faces it is clear that the townspeople don’t know what to make of him. After a few moments he walks over to a woman who is standing at the edge of a garden that doesn’t seem to be doing very well.

“Good afternoon.”

“Afternoon.”

“Your garden is struggling.”

“Aren’t we all,” she stabs the ground with a shovel.

“I’d like to put an end to that.”

“Oh, how do you propose to do that?”

“Are there any in this village who are hard workers, who wish to do better, or are dissatisfied with the way things are?”

“Everyone is dissatisfied with the way things are. But, it’s the way things are and we can’t change it.”

“Now, you can.”

“You talk strange. Who are you?”

“My name is Falcon.”

“Like the bird?”

“Like the bird.”

“What do you want Mr. Falcon?”

“Just Falcon,” the man looks around at the sad state of the village. He says with authority, “I want to turn this locality into a vast garden of possibilities and prosperity.” His smile draws a slight smile from the woman.

“I don’t understand.”

“Of course, you don’t. I’d like to meet with your leaders to explain the reason for my presence here and how your town can realize

new life.”

I have to admit it has gotten interesting. It really isn’t bad for a computer-generated film. The scene changes to a meeting in a room that looks like it was once a church. Attending are four men and three women. They represent the town council.

Falcon presents his case, “I am here to offer you a business proposition. If you are agreeable, I’d like to set up a manufacturing facility here to make guitars. There’s a great deal of good seasoned wood out in these forests.”

He is interrupted by one of the older men, “Guitars can only be made of plastic—it’s the law.”

“Ah, but nothing sounds as natural, or alive, or as emotional as an acoustic guitar made of wood.” Falcon leaves the room, goes to his car, and returns with a wood guitar. He begins to play *Horse With no Name* by America. Full mellow tones fill the room.”

The older man continues, “That’s very nice, but they are still illegal. The EPA says so.”

While still strumming a tune, Falcon answers, “There is a difference between legal and moral.”

“Yes, legal gets you fined, in jail, or assigned a lower SCP payment bracket.”

“If you join me and do this the Social Compensation Program payment won’t mean a damn thing.”

The meeting continues and ultimately six of the seven council members decide to give it a chance. The only holdout is the older man. He does however state that he will not interfere. As the movie progresses Falcon explains that he has a market for the guitars, that he will provide the hand tools and training for those who are interested. Now, here is where the movie gets engaging. Falcon and one of the townspeople are in the woods. They come upon a fallen tree.

“The EPA won’t let us move them,” the townsman states, “They say that it might be a habitat to some forest creature.” He looks shyly at Falcon and admits, “We do pick up smaller branches for our illegal Franklin Stoves. It’s the only way to keep warm. The community generator doesn’t work half the time and when it does it only provides half the power needed. That is if and when the government fuel is delivered.”

“Do you see any EPA agents around?”

“No.”

“Then let’s grab this wood and start changing the lifestyle

around here.”

The scene returns to the church. One of the female council members asks, “How do we explain the increased IMU’s?

“You don’t.”

“We don’t?”

“Your town is going to begin to operate on your own non-traceable currency.” Falcon explains, “Wallets will be created for all participants—along with passwords that take you off the government grid. All the government will see is you visiting various authorized entertainment sites that will not raise any eyebrows. Behind these sites you will actually be on a private commerce site. You can purchase what you want from another town that has set up a general store. Deliveries will be made directly to you. Your town currency will be accepted as legal tender.”

The rest of the video shows people dragging logs, honing wood, being instructed, and making guitars. They are industrious and reflect a renewed spirit. The last scene shows Falcon walking to his car. The woman he originally met warmly asks, “Why?”

“I’m a capitalist.”

The video promises Chapter 2 soon.

Before I finish watching I look down and the view count is 22,000. This puppy is turning into a full-grown wolf. How long will it remain up? Who created it? Will they go to jail? Is it a compelling enough story to wake people up?

Dee enters my room. I tell her to watch the video which she does with interest. At the end, she turns to me and says, “That’s really good, George. Did you make it?”

“No, but I wish that I had.”

“People need to know that there is a better way to live,” she points out.

“It is very well done. I can’t wait to see Chapter 2, if the government doesn’t throw the creator in jail.”

“Me too.”

After Dee leaves, I contact Dawn.

GEORGE: Have you seen the video titled *The Capitalist*?

DAWN: I just watched it.

GEORGE: What do you think?

DAWN: I think it is a good idea. Did you make it?

GEORGE: No.

DAWN: Learn from it.

GEORGE: I will. It could be an answer to Virginia's question, "What happens if you throw a revolution and no one cares?"



Abraham Lincoln

President: 1861 - 1865

***“Greatness is not where we stand,
but in what direction we are moving”***

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Chapter 16 | THE ENTREPRENEUR

I have never flown. That should be enough said to give you an idea of what I’m feeling. It’s exciting, exhilarating, new, fresh, and terrifying. Air just isn’t thick enough to hold up this big heavy jet. I’m trying not to show fear, but I do believe the deer in the headlights look on my face is a giveaway. I have to admit the STUS Gulfstream G900ER corporate jet is luxurious beyond imagination. It seats eight with two facing couches. There’s leather and expensive wood everywhere. A large flat screen monitor is on one end and a small galley on the other. Large round portholes allow you to see just how high you are flying and how far you have to fall before going splat.

There are four other passengers onboard in addition to Virginia and me. I don’t recognize any of them. Therefore, being the wise individual that I am, I keep the conversation with Virginia general and innocuous. “Where are we going in Texas?”

“Austin, the capital.”

“I wonder what the weather is like in Austin.”

Virginia taps a screen on her tablet and the flat screen monitor on the jet comes to life showing the Austin, Texas weather. It’s going to be warm and sunny.

When I left home my mother shook her head and simply said, “You’re making a big mistake. You shouldn’t go to the devil’s lair.”

My father was more reassuring, “International travel has been banned. If you get into trouble I can’t do anything to help you.”

Like that is a surprise.

At least Dee was supportive, “If you get killed can I have the you-know-what?” Then with a wink she added, “Make waves—big brother.”

I don’t know if I’m going to make waves or make a fool of myself.

One of the other passengers comes over and introduces himself, "I'm Joseph, and you're afraid of flying."

"I guess it's pretty obvious."

"In time you'll get to enjoy it."

"If you say so. I'm George Clymer."

"I know." Joseph is a middle-aged man, I'd say forty-five or so. At just under six feet tall and slender he cuts a fine figure in a casual shirt and pants. And, cowboy boots. "Let's sit over here," he motions to one of the couches. I look at Red, uh Virginia, who nods.

Joseph immediately launches into a story, "Mankind has been in a constant struggle. The quest for power and control is insatiable. Those who are driven to be dominant fail to recognize their behavior as anything but normal. They believe that most people are sheep and those with the strength and ability to lead must do so to achieve some semblance of order." He looks out one of the portholes. After a pause he continues, "And, there are those who welcome a strong leader. Someone else making the tough decisions removes responsibility, stress, and fear from them." He taps his hand on the armrest, "You might think this is an ideal arrangement." Joseph then looks directly at me with steel-grey eyes as he points out, "It isn't."

I'm a little confused. Why is he telling me this?

"You might wonder why I tell you this."

"Um."

"There is a tremendous difference between government and leadership. Government needs to be a structured well-defined set of protocols, rules, functions, and objectives. Leadership is exhibited by those who participate in an activity, sport, business, or government. In terms of government, participants need to all operate within the bounds of established policies. That is more difficult than it would seem. Even the best, most advanced, logical, and just government ever created almost immediately comes under assault from those who believe they know better or who wish to wield more power."

"Sounds like a hopeless situation," I conclude.

"Not hopeless, but a dose of reality. Every government needs constant attention and protection to keep it from falling prey to tyrannical forces." He presents a serious countenance, "Beware the unseen, unexpected, and hyperbolic."

"You lost me," I admit.

"For centuries there were kings, emperors, sultans, czars, chiefs, and other monarchs who ruled people in different geographic areas.

They mainly did so through military might. Often, they created the image of being a god or receiving their power from God. The people were kept in line by being held down.”

“There is an ebb and flow of the forces in the world. Throughout the nineteenth century there was exploration, conquest, and colonization that added to a nation’s fortune and position. Many nations fought distant wars to conquer less developed regions around the globe and thus create empires. Even the United States was not immune as we expanded west. It was the way of the world during that era.” He looks at me for a reaction. I’m sure I disappoint him. “During the twentieth century nations began conquering other developed nations in great world wars.” He taps the armrest of the couch once more, “There have always been ideological differences between those who believe big government is needed to maintain control and peace and those who want less government. By the end of the twentieth century there was a tug-of-war between socialism and capitalism, big government vs. individual freedom.”

Joseph looks at his tablet, punches a few buttons, and then returns to the subject, “In the beginning of the twenty-first century the battlefield changed. It went from physical to psychological. By virtue of controlling the educational system, entertainment, and media the masses were brainwashed into believing big government socialism was the only way for things to be fair. Sadly, young people who never experienced how good things could be when given true freedom accepted the premise without question. As far as they knew all the regulations and free handouts made them comfortable and secure.” Joseph presents a wry smile, “It’s hard to argue with those who claim to be helping the little-guy and the victims while punishing the successful evil business owners.”

I have to admit that I was once one of those who thought the government was my friend and protector. That is until I found the history book and started reading about the history of the United States of America that the ruling class conveniently erased. The jet hits an air pocket and drops. My stomach hits the ceiling. Joseph takes it in stride as he goes on, “In the twenty-teens things really began to heat up. Big government statists had indoctrinated a large enough portion of the electorate into believing socialism was the answer, even though that ideology destroyed nation after nation while failing to improve citizen’s lives.”

“That’s hard to believe,” I observe.

“Why? You are a product of statist education and training. Until recently, you accepted the fact that the government established the rules to make things fair and take care of everyone. Your goal was to reach a certain Social Compensation Program level to live a reasonably bearable life. But who decides what level you are allowed to reach or deserve? In the late twenty-teens there was a short period when those who support individual freedom seemed to be gaining popularity. That’s when the long knives of intolerance came forth with a vengeance. The first thing they did was eliminate freedom of speech. They shouted down anyone who disagreed with them, censored what could be distributed through media channels, and accused those who voiced an opposing opinion of being fascists and promoting hate speech. It was an old approach used by many dictators. Accuse your opponents of doing exactly what you are doing to take the focus off of your own actions.”

I know that I’ve had a lightning quick education in the past few weeks, but I can’t help but wonder why people didn’t see through the subterfuge. Without thinking, I ask, “Didn’t people catch on?”

“Never underestimate the gullibility of the masses,” Joseph replies. To illustrate he explains, “For decades when a conservative president was elected he was depicted as stupid, heartless, bigoted, inept, dishonest, and illegitimate. Then when a liberal, or socialist, candidate was elected it was the beginning of a bright, new, caring era. They were smart beyond belief, visionaries, going to solve all the world’s problems, and admired. The conservative could do nothing right while the liberal could do nothing wrong in the eyes of the media. Add to that celebrities and sports heroes living the good life joining in opposing individual freedom. Not because they are against it, but because they are too busy to investigate. They listen to the liberal lies and blindly accept them because they emotionally sound good.”

He sits back as if reminiscing, “I never have been able to figure out how the same party of people who fought to keep slavery, then passed ‘Jim Crow’ laws to keep freedmen down, established the militant Ku Klux Klan, introduced gun control laws to keep weapons out of ex-slave’s hands, restricted the right to vote through poll taxes, and supported segregation were eventually depicted as the ones who cared most about minorities and were fighting for them. Amazing”

I find what Joseph is saying interesting, however, still don’t know why he is telling me this.”

“When we get to Texas it’s going to feel like you’ve entered

another world—you have.”

We enter another world.

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport is modern, clean, and active with jets moving in various directions. The Barbara Jordan Terminal is bustling and crowded. Everywhere I look there is activity. Some people are in a hurry scurrying along, others in groups conversing and laughing, and still others seated reading or watching a video while waiting for their flight. Even though there are a huge number of people they all seem to be in high spirits or focused on getting somewhere quickly. It’s electric. I’m accustomed to seeing people on the street shuffling along as if resigned to the fact that they are stuck in the lifestyle to which they’ve been assigned. I literally shudder in realizing that if not for an incredible stroke of luck that would have been me.

Now, I don’t want to bore you but you have to understand that I’ve never seen so many restaurants, coffee shops, bars, cafes, ice cream shops, and other eateries in one place before. There are other stores and services, as well. Then I see it. It has to be a mirage—jet lag or something. It’s real! I look around fully expecting to see national police swooping down to arrest anyone foolish enough to enter that establishment. Yet, there are none. I stop and stare. Before me is a book store. I’m telling you God’s honest truth a real honest-to-goodness printed books store. How could that happen?

“Welcome to Texas,” Virginia says as she watches me drool.

“That’s a book store,” I stammer as I point.

“It sure is.”

“But printed books are illegal.”

“Not in Texas.”

“Can we go in?”

“Not now, maybe at a later date, we have an appointment.”

Outside the main terminal a large black limousine waits at the curb. Virginia waves for me to enter. When I do I’m surprised to be in the company of Joseph and the three other persons who were on the plane.

“You survived,” Joseph says with a smile.

I smile and nod. Somehow, I get the feeling that I’m the only one that doesn’t know what is going on much like the poor slob who is not in on a private joke. That’s me, the poor slob who seems perpetually in the dark.

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport is southeast of Austin. The limousine leaves the airport and heads downtown. Whereas the

roads leading into Charlotte are cracked, filled with potholes, poorly marked, and lightly traveled as most people don't have a car. The roads in Austin are beautiful, like new, with fresh lines, clear signs, and lots of cars zooming this way and that. I recall my visit to 1959. We enter an elevated highway—TX35. Modern shiny cars are flying in both directions. And trucks, massive trucks, are among them carrying “who knows what.” After less than half an hour we leave the highway and are downtown. I'm struck by a billboard that proclaims, “Keep Austin Weird!” The driver of the limousine explains that way back in the year 2000 a radio announcer named Red Wassenich first made the pledge on the air and the Austin Independent Business Alliance adopted it to promote small businesses. Somehow the craziness and positive nature of it makes Austin feel so much more welcoming and endearing. We arrive at our destination.

I exit the limousine and before me stands a modern five story building. It boasts bright shiny metal pillars and large tinted glass windows. Everything is clean and fresh. I look up and see the STUS logo on the top floor of the structure. Of course, it stands to reason that STUS would have offices in Texas. Six travelers enter the building through automatic doors.

Inside we pass through a security checkpoint and enter an elevator at the far end of the lobby. Joseph touches the thumb ID pad and the doors open. Inside the elevator, after the doors have closed, he punches in a code and the elevator begins to move—downward. My mind goes back to the Ghost Room.

From what I can tell we go down about twenty miles—or so it seems. The doors open and before us is a long corridor with indirect lighting whose source cannot be seen. Our group, led by Joseph, walks down to the end of the corridor. Now, this is hard to explain. There isn't any door but somehow we are in a large room that doesn't have any walls or ceiling or floor. It's quite disorienting. I'm not sure if I'm floating, falling, or having a stroke. All I can do is stand still. When I look around, I see the others are also standing still, but they appear to be very calm and unbothered. Finally, the room, or lack of room, begins to take shape as real features appear. We are in a large central area with corridors leading off in six directions. I look at Virginia with a “What the hell” look on my face.

“It's a security program,” she explains.

“A little heads-up would have been appreciated,” I complain.

“And miss that look on your face. Haven't you learned by now?”

We take a corridor on the right until we enter a conference room filled with computer monitors. There are scenes from various places that I don't recognize. Joseph invites us to sit. There are very comfortable chairs in a semi-circle facing the monitors. All with the exception of Joseph sit. He explains why we are here.

"The final stages of the War for Independence have begun," Joseph states. "It began a little earlier than we anticipated, but we have to work with the timetable that we've been handed." He points at one monitor that appears to be replaying President Sandra Holmes' surrender of the sovereignty of the United States of America. On another monitor is the map of the United Nations Economic Zones. I want to barf. Joseph continues, "In some areas we are ready. But, in some very important arenas we are sorely behind. We are here to devise a plan-of-action on how to address one of those arenas—public opinion." He looks directly at me. Why, I don't know. But, without question he speaks directly to me, "I hope you are up to the challenge."

Before I can say, "Why me?" one of the other members of the group observes, "There's been a new chapter of that online program *The Capitalist* uploaded."

We all fall silent as Chapter Two appears on the largest monitor.

THE CAPITALIST

The opening screen once again features dark blue storm clouds with white lettering that states, "The government under which you live has a direct impact on your freedom, quality of life, security, safety, and happiness." It fades to the same small-town street as was shown in Chapter One. Only this time things look a great deal better. It's not a dramatic change, but houses and yards look better maintained, people are moving this way and that way, and there are a few vehicles on the street. I'd have to say where the street looked abandoned in the first chapter, it now looks alive.

The scene changes to a forest path. Falcon is standing beside a tree looking up the path. A man approaches him from behind. When he gets near he says, "Mr. Falcon."

"Just, Falcon."

"I have something I'd like to discuss with you."

Falcon turns and looks directly into the man's eyes.

The man continues, "My name is Mark, Mark Templeton." He looks around as if trying to make sure that he is not being overheard, "I need your advice."

Falcon continues to look at the man as he listens.

"I have an idea for a business."

"You are an entrepreneur," Falcon states.

"A what?"

"Entrepreneur. It is a word that has been removed from American dictionaries. It is defined as 'a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.' It comes from French which literally means 'one who undertakes.'" Falcon smiles and adds, "A famous entrepreneur was once asked what it took to be successful. He replied, 'courage and luck.'" In a serious voice he asks, "Do you have courage?"

"I believe I do," was the reply.

"Tell me about your business."

"For years, I've had a small above ground no-till garden. My father taught me that the best vegetables come from not plowing. You lay a base of paper or cardboard on the ground, cover it with compost, add a mixture we call tea, and plant seeds into the soft layer. It's actually good for the soil below as water can pass through to it, it doesn't evaporate as quickly, attracts worms, promotes important fungal hyphae and microorganisms, and reduces erosion. Every year I've improved the yield and my vegetables are delicious."

"I see."

"Until now, I've grown food for my family and given away any extra to my neighbors." He pauses and looks around, once more. "It's illegal to give uninspected produce to anyone." Another glance around, "I want to expand my gardens and sell what I grow. Only that would really be against the law."

"Individual freedom is against the law," Falcon points out. "However, you must understand, there is a difference between the laws created by corrupt men and the inalienable rights granted to you by God." He quotes the *Declaration of Independence*, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Mark Templeton stares at Falcon trying to fully comprehend the words—words he had never heard before.

“Those words are in the original *Declaration of Independence* written in 1776,” Falcon explains. “After the Reorganization, all reference to the original founding of the United States of America was deleted from history and educational curricula. Those who stole your rights felt it was too dangerous for citizens to be exposed to the radical thinking that promoted individual freedom and a government of the people.”

“It all sounds good,” Mark states, “but doesn’t do me any good if the government officials show up.”

“The question is; do you wish to remain under the tyranny of the present government, or do you have the courage to be part of the revolution?” Falcon looks up the path as he continues, “Your neighbors are breaking the law, they’re fighting back, and they are living better lives.”

Mark Templeton follows Falcon’s gaze and looks up the path as he considers what had been said. After a brief moment of silence, he stands tall and says with conviction, “I have a right to pursue my dreams, better my life, and be free.”

“Well spoken. What do you require to expand your farm?”

The video continues. Mr. Templeton explains how he could make use of the wood scraps and sawdust left over from the production of guitars. In addition, he would like more property to farm. Finally, he confesses that he doesn’t have the financial resources to do what he wants while he believes it will prove profitable.

The video goes on to show all of the improvements made in the village and ends with Falcon telling Mark Templeton, “I have arranged for a number of investors to back your project. In return they will receive twenty percent of the gross. You, at any time, can buy out their share for the initial investment plus ten percent.”

Remember, way back when I started telling you my tale, I told you I was a finance major. If I were advising Mr. Templeton, I would tell him to take the deal. The video ends and I look at the number of views and can’t believe my eyes—289,775.

Once our meeting begins again we return to the subject of public opinion. I point out that the video we just watched is exactly what is needed to get people thinking. Unfortunately, it would take too long for the message to get delivered. We all share our ideas but fail to identify any immediate solutions. It is decided that we should go to

our hotel rooms and take a break before reconvening.

Once I settle in a very comfortable room I am compelled to contact Dawn.

GEORGE: I'm in Texas, can you believe it?

DAWN: You didn't enjoy flying to get there, though.

GEORGE: Who turned me in? Wait, were you on the plane?

DAWN: No. I just know.

GEORGE: You seem to know everything that's going on in my little mixed-up, in-the-dark world.

DAWN: You could say that.

GEORGE: I just did.

DAWN: LOL

GEORGE: Do you know why I'm in Texas?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: Then you're ahead of me. Why am I here?

DAWN: It will become clear in time.

GEORGE: Sure it will, just like everything else that I'm confused about.

DAWN: Keep an open mind, open ears, and open eyes.

GEORGE: Did you watch Chapter 2 of *The Capitalist*?

DAWN: I did.

GEORGE: It's a really interesting story.

DAWN: If you were still the mind-numb, good citizen, participant in the Social Compensation Program would it give you pause to think?

GEORGE: I think it would. The positive change experienced by the village would make me wonder if I could also enjoy such an opportunity. I'd want to move there and make guitars, be a farmer, or open a barber shop.

DAWN: Do you cut hair?

GEORGE: No. I was just expressing an example.

DAWN: I see.

GEORGE: What color is your hair?

DAWN: No need for us to go there. What do you think of Texas?

GEORGE: It is really impressive. There is so much energy and people are happy and driven. It's almost overwhelming.

DAWN: Quite a difference from Charlotte?

GEORGE: I saw an honest-to-goodness, real, book store.

DAWN: At the airport.

GEORGE: Of course, you know. Is there a hidden camera embedded somewhere in my body?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: I think I'm becoming paranoid.

DAWN: That's only a feeling.

GEORGE: Virginia tells me we are going to be making a lot of decisions while we are here.

DAWN: She's right.

GEORGE: What kind of decisions?

DAWN: Those that deal with life and death.



Andrew Johnson

President: 1865 - 1869

“I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies.”

—Thomas Jefferson

Chapter 17 | THE DOLLAR

We are back in the conference room in the STUS building in Austin, Texas. This time the “no-room illusion” doesn’t bother me as much. However, I still have to admit it makes me feel a little light-headed.

Five of us have been joined by seven others as we all sit in the semi-circular chairs facing multiple screens while Joseph welcomes us back, “‘There was abundance in the Colonies, and peace was reigning on every border. It was difficult, and even impossible, to find a happier and more prosperous nation on all the surface of the globe. Comfort was prevailing in every home. The people, in general, kept the highest moral standards and education was widely spread.’ Those are the words of Benjamin Franklin, one of the Founding Fathers. Prior to the actual founding of the nation, the colonies were prospering. It was during this period leading up to the Revolutionary War that Benjamin Franklin was sent to England to represent the colonies and plead their case. When he got there, he was shocked by the degree of poverty and depth of unemployment he found in the richest country in the world at that time in history. Franklin wrote, ‘The streets are covered with beggars and tramps.’ When he inquired how it could be, he was told they had a surplus of workers. In turn, he was asked why the colonies didn’t have any poor. Franklin explained that the colonies issue their own paper money, called ‘Colonial Scrip,’ in proper proportion to control purchasing power and with no interest to pay.”

Joseph paces for a few seconds in silence. He stops and turns toward his audience and continues, “English bankers, after becoming aware of the situation in the colonies, shortly thereafter demanded that the King and Parliament pass a law that prohibited the use of Colonial scrip money. They insisted that only gold and silver be used which would

be provided by none other than English bankers. Two laws were passed. One in 1751 and a second in 1763 which essentially cut the colonial money supply in half. Debt-based money caused the colonies to endure unemployment and beggars in the streets, just like in England. Benjamin Franklin summed it up perfectly when he wrote, 'The Colonies would gladly have borne the little tax on tea and other matters had it not been the poverty caused by the bad influence of the English bankers on the Parliament, which has caused in the Colonies hatred of England and the Revolutionary War.'

One of the other men in the room whose name I don't know comments, "So, are you saying that it was bankers and not taxation without representation that caused the American Revolutionary War?"

Joseph replies, "Not exactly. While they were indeed a catalyst the dynamics are not quite that straightforward or simple. Let me take a step back because I think it is important that we understand the role of money in a society. The first commercial practices were accomplished using the barter system. I trade something of value to you for something of value I desire. Obviously, this crude form of commerce had many limitations. First, you had to find exchange partners. If you are looking for food you have to find a farmer or hunter with excess they wish to trade. Then they have to want what you offer. Many times, the timing wasn't right or one of the participants wanted a greater quantity than the other was willing to offer. It wasn't an efficient way to transact business."

This is like listening to Economics 101, but I have to admit that I never heard about the banks in England having such a deleterious effect on the colonies. We were taught that it was the evil businessmen who wanted all the profits for themselves that was the root cause of the revolution. I hear Joseph continue.

"Money is the generally accepted medium of exchange that represents value. It is an asset, a tool, that allows you to transport value over distance and through time in exchange for goods and services. The introduction of a medium of exchange eliminated all the limitations of barter. No longer was there a need for the double coincidence of a buyer and seller both wanting what the other possessed in surplus. It expanded the geographic range of commerce. Perishable and bulky items could only be bartered within certain geographic areas. Money also had the capacity to convert the fruits of one's labor into something that could be stored indefinitely, overcoming the limitations of time. People quickly found that they could accumulate buying power simply with greater effort and productivity."

Once again, Joseph speaks directly to me, “George, you are enjoying a far better life with your newly acquired income than you would on a designated level of the Social Compensation Program that offers little chance for improvement, right?”

“Absolutely,” I reply.

“One of the earliest forms of money was a receipt issued for grain deposits at government warehouses in ancient Babylon. The bearer had the value of the grain without having to store it. Eventually, grain receipts became transferable to third parties making them, in effect, money. The adoption of money in place of barter had a tremendously liberating impact on early society. Throughout history many different items were used as money by different cultures. As the practice evolved gold and silver became the most common form of money. The choice of these precious metals was due to a number of contributing factors. Scarcity made them valuable because they were not easily available.” He smiles and adds, “If pebbles were money you would simply have to scoop up a few to buy a meal. Of course, given their abundance, it might require a very large amount. You can also store gold and silver without fear of them rotting or decaying thus losing value. These metals are also highly liquid in the economic sense. They are accepted by essentially everyone and can be offered in different quantities without losing any value. Finally, they’re easy to transport.”

I can’t help but think gold and silver might be of great value, however, the Illegal Private Ownership of Precious Metals Act (IPOOPMA), better known as I Poop Ma, passed in 2034, only allows for a limited amount of ownership in the form of jewelry. Raw precious metal ownership is prohibited.

“Shortly after the middle-ages there was a shift of wealth from land ownership to wealth from monetary sources. Money gave individuals the freedom to develop their skills and use their talents to produce products or offer services. The impact was dramatic. Over time, as societal needs changed money evolved. It went from having intrinsic value to representative value, then became fiat money which cannot be redeemed for a commodity, and finally electronic accounting that we have today. In the end though, a money economy can only function with a government that can issue money, financial institutions that will honor it, store, and transfer funds, and commercial organizations that will accept it in exchange for goods and services.” Joseph stops.

All in the room wait in silence. We all know there is more, as well as a reason for what he has been telling us. We wait.

In a serious tone Joseph states, “The power of money is based on the strength of the issuing government and the authority given it by all participants in the equation. Ultimately the strength of a currency depends on the extent to which it maintains the trust and confidence of society. If that is lost the entire monetary system could collapse.” Once more, a pause then the bombshell. “That is what we are going to do—destroy the world economy.”

What!? OK, here I sit having just entered the working world with an actual income, opportunities, and dreams. And, if I’m not having a nightmare from which I will soon awaken, Joseph wants to blow the whole thing up. What the hell?

I hear Joseph explain, “Wars have been fought to conquer other peoples and force used to control them. Weapons became more and more powerful and frightening to a point at which there existed the threat of mutual complete destruction. Then, the battlefield changed. Would-be tyrants discovered that just as money made it possible for a society to prosper, in turn, it made it vulnerable to evil forces bent on world domination. What could not be taken by force with armies could be achieved through devious acts disguised as well-meaning and honorable.” He shrugs and asks, “Who could be against helping the poor or children?” Once more serious and professorial Joseph continues, “As I said earlier the British colonies used three basic types of money; specie or coins, paper money, and commodity money in the form of tobacco, beaver skins, or other items of value. Paper money was denominated in pounds, shillings, and pence. However, the value of the pound varied from colony to colony and all were worth less than the British pound sterling. Coins used by colonists were generally of Spanish and Portuguese origin. Spanish dollars were so common that eventually American money was denominated in dollars rather than pounds. In 1690, the Province of Massachusetts Bay issued the first government authorized paper money in the Western World. Yet, it was Pennsylvania that did it right by issuing paper currency, secured by land, that maintained its value against gold.”

My head is still spinning. Why tell me all this history? These maniacs are planning to destroy the world’s economy. What good is knowing all this history when it sounds like I’m soon going to be history—economically speaking.

Joseph keeps up his lesson, “After the Revolutionary War began, the Continental Congress began issuing paper money known as Continental currency, or Continentals. They were denominated in various odd amounts of dollars. In the end, Congress issued \$241,552,780 in

Continental currency. Unfortunately, there were two major problems with Continentals. The first was that Congress and each state issued far too many of them. The second was that the British successfully waged economic warfare by counterfeiting Continentals on a large scale. By May 1781, Continentals were essentially worthless and ceased to circulate as money. Then, shortly after the collapse of Continental currency, Congress appointed Robert Morris to be Superintendent of Finance of the United States.” Joseph turns toward Virginia Morris, Red, and says, “I believe you are familiar with that name.”

Virginia smiles. Ah, that extremely rare enchanting ray of sunshine. It’s almost blinding.

I ask, “Your relative?”

She nods.

“Robert Morris, Jr. was born in Liverpool, England January 20, 1734. He was a signatory of the *Declaration of Independence*, the *Articles of Confederation*, and the *United States Constitution*.

“Way to go Robert,” I whisper to Virginia.

Joseph carries on, “He was raised by his maternal grandmother in England until he was thirteen when he crossed the Atlantic and joined his father in Oxford, Maryland. His father had a very successful tobacco business. Two years later Robert became an apprentice at the shipping and banking firm of Philadelphia merchant Charles Willing. A year later Robert’s father died leaving his considerable wealth to his son. As a result, by 1757, Robert Morris became a partner in the shipping firm Willing Morris & Company in Philadelphia.”

“No wonder you’re rich,” I observe.

“When the Revolutionary War broke out the Second Continental Congress began to meet in Philadelphia and appointed George Washington as commander of the Continental Army. Robert Morris was 41-years-old at the time. When the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly established a twenty-five-member Committee of Safety to coordinate defenses, prominent merchant Robert Morris was included. In fact, he served as chairman whenever Benjamin Franklin was absent. Morris quickly set up a very successful smuggling operation to skirt British laws and deliver gunpowder to Pennsylvania. Eventually, he also helped supply the Continental Army. Later that same year he was elected a delegate to Congress.” Joseph once more addresses Virginia, “It should be noted that Robert Morris disagreed with British policies but remained hopeful for reconciliation with Britain.”

“Traitor,” I innocently comment. Virginia hits me on the leg. I

know there is going to be a bruise.

"In early July, 1776, the Pennsylvania delegation to the Continental Congress was opposed to declaring independence. Robert Morris refused to vote for independence."

"Coward," I observe. Now, I know there is going to bruise.

"However, he and another delegate who was against the resolution agreed to excuse themselves from the vote allowing Pennsylvania to vote yea. In August, Robert Morris signed the *Declaration of Independence* after having earlier abstained from voting. He explained, 'I am not one of those politicians that run testy when my own plans are not adopted. I think it is the duty of a good citizen to follow when he cannot lead.' He added, 'While I do not wish to see my countrymen die on the field of battle nor do I wish to see them live in tyranny.' During the war he continued to coordinate efforts to import arms and ammunition. Unfortunately, many American ships were intercepted by the British. In response, Morris commissioned European privateers to attack British shipping. It turned out to be so profitable he began outfitting his own privateers.

"Aargh, you're a pirate," I can't help myself.

"During the Revolutionary War, Congress operated under the *Articles of Confederation* which came into force on March 1, 1781, whereby it lacked the power to raise revenue and the states refused to furnish funding. Congress did issue paper money but, as I said, it became valueless. In May 1781, by unanimous vote, Congress selected Robert Morris as the Superintendent of Finance. Shortly after taking office, he convinced Congress to establish the Bank of North America, the first bank to operate in the United States. While it was established as a private institution with investors, it was subject to inspection by the Superintendent of Finance. When the Bank of North America commenced operations using Morris' own funds and specie loaned by France, its currency soon achieved wide circulation. In addition, Morris also wanted to establish a national mint to provide distinctly American coinage using decimal currency, but Congress did not approve the project."

"The 1783 *Treaty of Paris* ended hostilities with Great Britain but it languished in Congress for several months because too few delegates were present at any one time to constitute a quorum so that it could be ratified. Three years later, in 1786, Thomas Jefferson, concerned over Congress failing to fund an American naval force to confront the Barbary pirates, wrote in a diplomatic correspondence to James Monroe that, 'It will be said there is no money in the treasury. There never will be money

in the treasury till the Confederacy shows its teeth.’ In response, Congress authorized a convention in Philadelphia to amend the Articles. The Pennsylvania state legislature sent a delegation consisting of Robert Morris, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris, George Clymer, Thomas Mifflin, Jared Ingersoll, and Ben Franklin to the Philadelphia Convention in May 1787. While representatives to the Constitutional Convention were only authorized to amend the *Articles of Confederation*, the representatives held secret, closed-door sessions and wrote an entirely new constitution. What they accomplished was a new form of government never seen before. Previous national authorities either had been centralized or else had been a confederation of sovereign states. The new American system was neither one nor the other; it was a mixture of both.”

Silence hangs in the room. Joseph appears lost in thought. I’m not sure if he is trying to organize his thoughts or find the proper words for something disturbing—like destroying the world’s economy isn’t disturbing enough?

I hear Joseph once more, “Some anti-federalists, including Patrick Henry, feared the government outlined by the *Constitution*. They foresaw commercial growth and international prestige driven by ambitious men seeking to build a ‘splendid empire’ and in the time-honored way of empires, would oppress the people with taxes, conscription, and military campaigns. Further, any government over so vast a domain as the United States could not be controlled by the people. Eventually, with ever increasing powers, the very government charged with protecting the rights of the people would be the very instrument that would be a threat to individual liberty. The first Wednesday of March 1789 was the day the new government took over and the government under the *Articles of Confederation* came to an end. And 235 years later, on 17 May 2024 the United States of America of our founding fathers came to an end.”

I can’t help but wonder what went through the minds of those who were alive to witness the original founding of a great nation and then those who saw the reorganization of its remnants. Was the second group optimistic, frightened, numb, angry, confused, or simply resigned to the fact that they had to follow instructions and not make waves?

“On April 2, 1792, the United States Congress created the United States dollar as the country’s standard unit of money. This was followed by the *Coinage Act* of 1792 which created the first Mint located in Philadelphia. It authorized the Mint to make coins of gold (Eagles, Half Eagles and Quarter Eagles), silver (Dollars, Half Dollars, Quarter Dollars,

Dimes, and Half Dimes), and copper (Cents and Half Cents).” As an aside he offers, “The Philadelphia Mint was the first federal building erected under the *Constitution*. The first coins struck were ‘half dimes’ believed to be made from silverware donated by George and Martha Washington. However, copper cents were the first coins put in circulation.”

Joseph looked at Virginia and said, “I regret that Robert Morris, after doing so much to support the Army and helping found the United States of America, went deep into debt speculating on land. In those days there weren’t any bankruptcy laws so he spent three years in prison. After being released, he lived a quiet, private life in a small home in Philadelphia until his death in 1806.”

My brain whispers in my ear let’s hope it’s not the future we face. In truth, the way things are at present aren’t all that bad. I have a well-paying job, a car, about to get an apartment, and the future is, or was, bright. I look at Virginia who is unmoving looking at Joseph. It makes me wonder what is going through her mind. Over two-hundred years ago her great, great, whatever, grandfather died a pauper. What does she think about the future? Then from some deep dark recess of my mind I think about my sister, Dee. It’s her future that is at risk. When America ceases to exist and the United Nations decides how we will live it won’t be pretty. Dee deserves better. A momentary feeling of guilt or shame passes through my mind. It hits me. That’s how easy it is to fall into the trap of only considering your own personal situation and comfort while ignoring the plight of others.

More history is provided by Joseph, “Count Hieronymus Schlick of Bohemia began minting coins in the 16th century. They were known as Joachimstalers because the valley where the silver was mined was named Joachimstal. The coins name was later shortened to the German Taler, or valley. Over time, the name was adopted in various languages; Danish and Swedish as daler, Norwegian as dalar, Dutch as dalers, and English as dollar. The industrious Dutch began minting coins depicting a lion called leeuwendaler which translates to lion dollar. Dutch merchants used it to pay foreign debts and as a result it became the coin of choice for foreign trade. The lion dollar was popular in Dutch North America and throughout the thirteen colonies. Spanish pesos had the same weight and shape as the lion dollar and were known as Spanish dollars. By the mid-18th century the Spanish dollar called ‘piece of eight’ was the most common coin in the New World. Originally, paper money was issued that was redeemable with coins or precious metals. However, on various occasions, during wars, the paper money was not convertible but

remained legal tender.”

Now, I was an economics major but wasn’t taught any of this. At the very least it is interesting. Even more importantly, it seems that understanding the evolution of business and means of exchange would have given me more practical knowledge that might prove useful. I really hate having been kept in the dark like a mushroom. What else wasn’t I taught.

“Something else few people today are aware of is the existence of the Federal Reserve System,” Joseph answers my unasked question. “On December 23, 1913 Congress enacted the *Federal Reserve Act* creating the central banking system of the United States of America. There originally were three key objectives, maximizing employment, stabilizing prices, and moderating long-term interest rates. Its duties expanded over the years to also include supervising and regulating banks, maintaining the stability of the financial system, and providing financial services to depository institutions, the U.S. government, and foreign official institutions. Leading up to the collapse of the dollar, the idiots in government along with the Federal Reserve printed money with abandon and instituted program after program that inexorably destroyed the economy of the United States. They systematically did everything in their power to destroy the strongest fiat currency that ever existed—the United States dollar. There are those who believe it was by design to force the establishment of a global government.”

Joseph stops and stands silently before us. I get the feeling that he’s looking each of us in the eye seeking a reaction. Finally, he states, “‘Let me control a people’s currency and I care not who makes their laws...’ Meyer Nathaniel Rothchild said that in a speech to a gathering of world bankers on February 12, 1912.” Once more Joseph remains silent to let what he just said sink in.

I can’t help but think of International Monetary Units (IMUs). The World Bank decides what each unit is worth. There might even be a Rothchild on the board—who knows? I’m trying to take all of this in, but find myself getting confused.

Joseph’s voice takes on a different tone. Where he has had a near monotone professorial lecture sound, a degree of excitement and enthusiasm has snuck into his monologue, “Money is the electricity that powers the machinery of society. It allows individuals to interact in a manner that makes enterprise possible elevating people and as a result society. It began as a symbol of material wealth and evolved into a universal tool. For some it is a means of survival. Others use it to achieve

goals. Still others are driven to accumulate as much as possible as a source of power. But let me be clear, banks and governments define the relative value of currency issued by either institution. By doing so they are able to control the people. It is a direct threat to individual liberty. Consider this; if a government declares that the currency it issued is worth half of what it was the day before it immediately reduces the wealth of the people, the ability of the people to function, and the ultimate power of the people. On the other hand, the value of money, not currency issued by an institution, is based on the value of the individual and the infinite potential for human accomplishment.”

OK, now we are running in circles. I’m thinking, where do you get money if it’s not currency? Maybe, I’ll get an answer later.

“For decades STUS has managed the exchange of International Monetary Units through ever more complex digital cyber programs, hardware, and devices. Our track record is impeccable. In a way we became the cyber federal reserve for the world government. The United Nations made the decisions and we implemented them without question. After the first few decades they developed blind trust in our services. What helped was the numerous disagreements among member nations as to the value of IMUs in terms of conversion to their individual currencies. They were so focused on their petty squabbles while knowing that STUS would handle whatever was decided that they forgot about the mechanism of the physical electronic exchange. The final step was the introduction of the Individual Identification and Data Chip (IIDC) in 2036. In a remarkably short period of time they spread across the globe.”

I think back to when Red had me wear those stupid gloves to block the IIDC when I had my surprise interview at STUS. I’d punch her leg but mine still hurts.

“When those in power became concerned about the fact that we had proprietary technology in those IIDC devices, we provided them with a safeguard. They were provided with a kill switch that could disconnect all or a designated geographic area of IIDCs from the global communications satellite network. We have no way to control this action or to reinstate communications without their authority. World leaders slept more soundly as a result.” Joseph smiles. Hey he has teeth. He adds, “What they don’t know is we moved everything to our secret Black Pearl Satellite Network years ago. What they see is a mirror on the communications satellite network. Through our systems we control essentially all electronic commerce. That gives us the power to shut

down the economic engine on a global basis.”

I’m sitting in a room occupied by people who have the power to destroy the world economy with the flip of a switch. A sobering slap of reality tells me these are serious people with serious power. I look around at the faces of the other participants in this conspiracy. Of the twelve who are seated it is evenly split, 6 males and 6 females. Joseph makes it thirteen. I wonder if that was by design based on thirteen colonies and all. For the most part they all sit not offering any outward expression of how they are feeling. There is no cheering, rallying, or chanting. They are not a mob. I am among true patriots who are planning a revolution. I am privy to world-changing information. I am witnessing history in the making. I am one of them. Why a chill runs through me, I’m not sure. At this very moment in this high-tech room I now know what the statesmen in Philadelphia who signed the *Declaration of Independence* might have felt. It is a gut-wrenching mélange of fear, pride, hope, and anticipation.



Ulysses S Grant
President: 1869 - 1877

***“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand
everything better.”***

—Albert Einstein

Chapter 18 | THE BATS

Well, here I am in the middle of Austin, Texas on my own. I’m in a foreign country looking at activity and opulence like I never knew existed. There are cars everywhere, motorcycles, bicycles, and people walking. Every street is filled with stores and shoppers and life! Quite a difference from the barren lifeless streets of Charlotte. Even New York City, where I once lived, doesn’t compare. It was filled with beggars and homeless and beaten-down people trudging along just trying to survive.

Our meeting finished and we have the late afternoon and evening to ourselves. I decide to walk around and just enjoy the city. As I experience the humanity around me, I have a flashback to the ghost room and 1959. America was once like this.

A girl bumps into me. “Oh, I’m sorry. I was looking in the window. I guess I should have been looking where I was going,” she apologizes. She is a black girl with short hair wearing a burnt orange sweatshirt with the silhouette of a bull with long horns.

“That’s alright,” I respond, “There’s so much to see it’s understandable. Where I come from, we don’t have anything like this.”

“Where are you from?” she asks with a smile.

“Charlotte, Carolina.”

“You’re from America? How did you escape?”

“I didn’t escape, I’m here on business,” I explain. Hearing myself say that feels rather strange. At least I didn’t say I’m here plotting a revolution and planning to destroy the world’s economy.

“We are taught about America in history class.”

“Are you in school?”

“I’m a senior at the University of Texas.” She holds up her right hand with her index finger and pinky up, “Hook’em horns.” I can’t help

but notice that she is full of energy and enthusiasm. It's so refreshing.

"My name is George Clymer."

"Michelle Gillis."

"I just can't get over how much activity there is," I comment.

"You should see Sixth Street," she replies. "It used to be called Pecan Street way back when east-west streets were named after trees and north-south streets named after Texas rivers. Sixth Street is where all the bars and entertainment venues are located. Are you hungry?"

"Now that you mention it—yes."

"There's a taco truck a block over."

"A taco truck?"

"You don't have tacos in America?"

"Not from a truck."

"There aren't any food trucks in America?"

"None that I have seen."

"How sad. Come on, you're in for a new experience."

We walk up to the corner, turn right, and there before me is a vision—a row of food trucks parked along the curb. Each has a line of customers waiting for their moment at the window of life-giving nourishment. Different trucks offer patrons a variety of choices; pizza, barbecue, hamburgers, veggie wraps, tacos, and more. Michelle leads the way to a lime-green trailer named Taco Baby. I look at the sign and there are five choices; chicken fajita, vegetable, pork carnitas, mahi mahi, and white trash tacos.

"What the heck is a white trash taco," I ask innocently.

"Wow, you are out-of-touch. It's a combination of chicken, bacon, ranch dressing, and hot jalapeno sauce. Or, if you aren't up to that, there is a tamer pineapple sauce. Try it."

I decide it's time for an adventure and go for the hot sauce. Now, you have to understand, I'm in a foreign country. For that reason, I'm not familiar with how they operate. I ask where the thumb pad is so that I can input my IIDC and pay. The young man behind the counter smiles and tells me to use my phone. My blank stare causes him to look at Michelle and shrug.

"I'll pay," she offers and waves her phone over a disc on the counter.

We walk over to a table in a small park. Once seated I tell Michelle that I will pay her for the food once I figure out how. She laughs. It's an innocent and carefree laugh. We discuss how purchases are made in the great nation of Texas. I transfer money into her account using my secure

STUS tablet.

“Tell me about America,” Michelle says showing sincere interest.

I explain how everything is regulated and controlled by the government. Most citizens have a level of compensation assigned to them and live on what they are given.

“That doesn’t seem fair,” she observes. “Why would anyone try to get ahead if they don’t have much hope? Do you live on what the government gives you?”

“No. I am an exception. I’m employed by a technology firm and have an income that far exceeds what the government would have paid me.”

“So, people can do better?”

“On very rare occasions.”

“How did you get the job?”

“I really don’t know. I was walking in the woods when a girl on a motorcycle picked me up and, next thing I know, here I am.”

Michelle laughs, “OK, if you don’t want to tell me that’s alright. It’s none of my business.”

“Believe it or not, that is the truth. It wasn’t as arbitrary as you might think. I was selected.”

“Why?”

“Luck, an interest in history, my name . . .”

“Your name? Are you famous?”

“Not exactly. You’ve heard of the *Declaration of Independence*?”

“Of course, we study North American history. It’s important that we learn from the past.”

“Well, sometime look at the signatures. There is a George Clymer on the Declaration.”

“One of your ancestors signed the *Declaration of Independence*?” Michelle smiles once more and exclaims, “How cool!”

“You might say my great, great, whatever, grandfather got me this job,” I explain.

“Why? How?”

“That is one of the great mysteries in my life.”

Michelle returns to the original subject, “Is America as poor as we see on the news and read about in books?”

“Unfortunately, it is, except in the capital, Wilson, DC, and in areas where political leaders live and work. There is a caste system maintained by the Social Compensation Program. Most citizens can’t afford an automobile or to travel so they stay put where they are and

never see how the upper-class lives. In a way they've been lulled into a dormant state either doing their menial job or living on their government stipend." I look around, "There's no life or energy or hope like I see here."

"How sad. Why don't people revolt?"

"They don't have any idea how. They lack leadership or inspiration." As the words leave my mouth, I experience another flashback. The *Declaration of Independence* defined a moment in history that changed the direction of human events. The colonists would have endured everything Britain demanded of them had it not been for fifty-six brave, inspired, selfless, brilliant, magnificent men. They risked everything for an ideal. Most likely, they had no idea as to how to conduct a revolution or if it could even be won. They simply knew it was necessary and justified. God bless them, they started a movement with less than half of the people behind it that led to the greatest nation in history. I draw an undeniable conclusion. Maybe, it takes no more than making an effort to start.

"What are you thinking?" Michelle asks.

"What? Oh, I was thinking how sad it is that Americans don't have the opportunities that Texans have."

"They should." Michelle Gillis suddenly becomes very serious, "Our leaders are worried and so am I. When the United Nations government controls almost all of the world, nations like Texas will be isolated, economically attacked, and eventually forced to join. When the United States announced its capitulation, it became abundantly clear that the future is going to be unpredictable." She looks at her watch, changes just as quickly back to an enthusiastic young lady, and says, "You have to see the bats."

"Bats?"

"In the spring and summer, over a million bats fly out from under the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge each night between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. They're Mexican free-tailed bats that are red, dark brown, or gray with long tails. They are migratory, so they spend their summers in Austin and the winters in Mexico. It can take an hour for them all to come out. They fly like 60-miles-per-hour and circle and turn. It's quite a sight."

"Bats, it is. I'm in," I say without thinking.

We arrive in the small park below the bridge on the shore of Lady Bird Lake—whatever a Lady Bird is. There are people everywhere waiting for the moment when the bats emerge from under the bridge. It's a cool evening and the park is crowded with people sitting on blankets and

lawn chairs or just standing. Some are eating ice-cream, some drinking water from bottles, others eating various other tasty treats. Everyone seems to be in high spirits. The atmosphere is so refreshing that I just enjoy watching unfettered happiness that's all around me. The part of my brain that conjures unrealistic thoughts wishes that I could bottle the positive energy of the crowd and take it back to America with me. Instead, I film some of the action on my phone. We find a place near a tree and sit on the grass.

Michelle points at an area where one of the concrete arches of the bridge connects with one of the vertical columns, "That's where a lot of the bats come out."

"Do they ring a bell?" I joke.

"No," she laughs, "There's a guy on a boat that looks like a big mosquito who sails under the bridge." More laughing. She's having a great time. Her laugh is contagious. It's a dumb joke but I can't help but laugh. I like Michelle Gillis.

A woman in her mid-thirties—I have to confess that I'm not very good at judging ages—walks up and smiles. She observes, "You two are having fun and the show hasn't even started." She is wearing grey slacks and a cream-colored pullover shirt. Her blond hair is pulled back into a ponytail. There is a gold bracelet on her right wrist and an expensive looking watch on her left. Everything about her gives the impression of wealth. "Do you mind if I sit here? I won't get in your way."

"Sure, join us," Michelle says in a welcoming voice. "This is George, uh what was your last name?"

"Clymer."

"Right. His ancestor signed the *Declaration of Independence*."

"That's interesting. Your family is a part of history, how nice. Where do you live in Texas?"

"I don't live in Texas. I'm just visiting. I actually live in Charlotte, Carolina."

"You're American," the lady confirms. "Are you with the government?"

"No."

"I haven't met many Americans, but the few I have were with the government." She pauses, then inquires, "I thought there was a ban on international travel."

I find myself getting suspicious. It may be that I'm paranoid, but wouldn't you be if you were in my position? She seems really inquisitive. And, her affluent appearance could indicate that she is herself with the

government. I don't know how things work in Texas, yet if this was America, I would be very cautious about what I shared. That is the strategy I decide to take.

"Foreign travel is allowed for certain industries in order to maintain operations."

"And, what industry are you in?"

"I'm really not at liberty to say."

"Oh, I'm being too nosey. I apologize."

"No need to apologize," I remark. "Do you live in Austin?"

Before she can answer, the bats make their appearance. All eyes turn toward the bridge. A dark wave of movement flows endlessly out of the black refuge beneath the roadway. It's hard to believe that so many creatures could congregate in such small confines. The parade continues on and on. I'm literally staring at over a million bats. I say out loud to myself, "Now, that's something you don't see every day in Charlotte."

After my batventure, I find myself back in my hotel room. All the bats and all the people keep going through my mind. Those bats are a fascinating part of nature. Like clockwork they appear, fly free, and live as nature intended. No government can stop them—without killing them. They could pass a law that the bats have to emerge an hour earlier and it won't happen. They could put up signs telling the bats to fly in a different direction and it won't happen. You simply can't regulate nature. Was that a bell? Human beings are a part of nature that crave freedom. The founding fathers understood that fact when they spoke of "inalienable rights." They knew any government body that infringes on the natural rights of its citizens is illegitimate. If people only understood that, as well, they would not allow it. Then there are the crowds of people who watch the bats every day. They are connecting with nature and appreciating its beauty. Bats? No, freedom. Freedom—it's natural.

I decide to contact Dawn. However, before I can type a word, I see that the third chapter of *The Capitalist* has been uploaded. In this episode the lead-in music is more upbeat. The familiar street now shows newly repaired and freshly painted houses, picket fences, and more automobiles on the street. It is a dramatic change from the depressed rundown village shown in the first episode. The scene dissolves to an inside room where three men and two women are jamming with acoustic guitars. It is a kind of country, rock, jazz combination. They strum away and then laugh. I can't help but smile. Without question, whoever is producing this program knows how to reach inside and touch viewer's emotions. These are happy people with purpose and a much-improved lifestyle.

The camera pans to a lamp on the wall burning bright. I realize it is a metaphor for their bright future. The scene then dissolves to a large machine all shiny and clean spinning away. It is a generator providing power to the little valley and lighting that symbolic light. Here we find Falcon chatting with one of the operators.

The operator explains, "We use sawdust and other waste materials to fire the furnace. The smoke goes up that chimney but instead of being released out into the atmosphere it is recycled through a filtering device invented by one of our citizens to where only 2 percent is released. When you go outside look at the exhaust you can barely see white smoke." The man pats a polished metal pipe and smiles.

"I need to talk with this inventor," Falcon states. "He can sell this product to other villages."

"I don't know that he will."

"Why not?"

"Fear."

"I see. You are afraid of the government discovering what you have done and putting you in jail," Falcon concludes.

"What makes you think I invented this equipment?"

"My friend, only the inventor would have spoken with such pride about this innovative machinery." Falcon walks around the various metal chambers and pipes examining the small power plant. "Where did you find all of the raw materials?"

"I didn't."

"You don't have to fear me knowing about your secret."

"No, I mean, I didn't find the materials. Our village is always in need of electricity. Fuel for the old unreliable power plant is slow in coming and often never arrives at all. I was the one the government assigned the task of maintaining it as best I could. It gained me one additional level in the Social Compensation Program. When the town elders approached me to inquire how they can improve electrical services, I told them the old furnace had very limited output and without fuel deliveries zero output. They asked for my help and offered to pool their resources to purchase what was needed. I drew up a plan, they agreed, and you see the results."

"How is the operation of the equipment paid for?"

"We don't have meters, so it was agreed that a sales tax of one-percent was the best we could do to pay back those who invested and to continue operation."

Suddenly, the music changes to a more dramatic threatening

tone. The wheels of a black vehicle are shown as it arrives in the village. Faces flash on the screen as a variety of citizens stare uneasily at the new arrival. Painted on the door of the SUV is the blue and red flag of the Reorganized United States of America. Under it is lettered COUNTY INSPECTOR. The door opens slowly and a leg emerges from the vehicle. It is presented in a dramatic style with flashes of villager's faces interspersed with the intruder exiting the SUV. There before them stands a short portly middle-aged man wearing dark grey pants and a blue shirt that matches the blue of the flag and a County Inspector silver badge. He slowly appraises the location. Upon seeing all of the improvements, he nods and makes a nasally noise that sounds like, "Uh-huh, uh-huh."

None of the villagers move. Fear spreads its dark shadow to every corner of the town. The day of reckoning has come.

Finally, he speaks, "Who is in charge here?"

Before anyone can answer, Falcon steps forward and announces, "I guess I can speak for these people."

"And who are you?"

"You can call me Falcon."

"Falcon? The CI examines his tablet, I have no Falcon on my list."

"I'm relatively new."

"You must register when you change locations—you know that. Let me have you IIDC thumb print here." He points to an area on his screen.

"That would be impossible," Falcon holds up his thumb, "No IIDC."

"What do you mean no IIDC? That's illegal. You my friend are going to jail."

"That also would be impossible." Falcon unexpectedly takes the tablet from the County Inspector. "You see I am an OC."

"OC? What is that? Give me back my tablet. You're just getting yourself into more trouble."

"Original Constitutionalist." Falcon puts his arm around the County Inspector and says, "Let me show you what we have done."

More shots of townspeople's faces that now reflect confusion or curiosity. The two men walk off. Dissolve to where the County Inspector gets back into his vehicle, smiles, and waves as he leaves. Falcon turns to a small crowd of villagers and states, "That went well. You now can go about your business without fear."

"What did you say to him?" someone in the crowd asks.

"Just know that he will not interfere with your town or businesses,"

is Falcon's simple reply.

Another dissolve to a shot from behind showing Falcon standing on a hillside looking down at a thriving village in a beautiful valley. It gives the impression of a shepherd looking over his flock. Then a voice is heard, "Mr. Falcon."

"Just Falcon."

"I'd like to talk with you about my invention," the man from the power plant states.

Falcon turns, "It is a fine bit of engineering."

"Do you really think it can be sold?"

"I already have a salesman who will provide orders for a commission. He expects a minimum of five orders within a few weeks."

"I don't understand."

"What I need from you is cost of materials and your labor to assemble the equipment. Don't forget to include the cost of travel. I have a trucking company in another town who will provide the cost of shipping."

"Who is the salesman?"

"You already met him. He just left here."

"The County Inspector?" the engineer asks in a surprised tone. "Why would he do that? Isn't he risking his job? Can't he go to jail? Won't he go to the authorities?"

"All valid questions," Falcon admits. "Let me ask you, if you were given the opportunity to enjoy riches beyond what would ever be possible in the position you were in wouldn't you be tempted?"

"I am now, but the County Inspector? Can he be trusted?"

"I believe so."

The man leaves in a hurry after saying thank you. Falcon is once more alone. He holds up his phone and looks at a photo of the County Inspector with a woman and two children. Dissolve to black.

Now I know I have to contact Dawn.

DAWN: George, I was expecting you.

GEORGE: That's me, old predictable George.

DAWN: Let's make it somewhat predictable George.

GEORGE: The next episode of *The Capitalist* has been uploaded.

DAWN: I watched it.

GEORGE: What did you think?

DAWN: I thought I would hear from you.

GEORGE: That's not an answer.

DAWN: Of course, it is.

GEORGE: Whoever is producing the program is doing a wonderful job of showing how individual freedom and ingenuity is better than what we have with socialism.

DAWN: I agree.

GEORGE: What do you think of the ending? The photo. Did Falcon threaten the County Inspector's family if he didn't cooperate?

DAWN: Or, did he convince the man he could give his family a better life?

GEORGE: What is your opinion?

DAWN: Each viewer will have to draw their own conclusion.

GEORGE: I'm glad you cleared that up.

DAWN: LOL.

GEORGE: Do you know what was discussed today in the meeting?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: I think you were there and I didn't know it.

DAWN: I hope you didn't address everyone as Dawn to see if there was a reaction. LOL.

GEORGE: Didn't think of that.

DAWN: I'm glad.

GEORGE: I'm really concerned about what is being planned. It's frightening.

DAWN: These are frightening times.

GEORGE: How are people going to react. There will be chaos.

DAWN: We hope you and Virginia will keep that from happening.

GEORGE: How?

DAWN: You tell me.

GEORGE: I still don't have an answer for you.

DAWN: It will come in time.

GEORGE: You have more faith in me than I do.

DAWN: Maybe so.

GEORGE: I just don't know how to convince over 300 million people to rise up and revolt. But then I think about what is being planned and realize they don't have a choice. When the plug is pulled—they're on their own.

DAWN: Are they helpless on their own or set free?

GEORGE: A good question.

DAWN: Did you enjoy the bats?

GEORGE: How did you know I saw the bats?

DAWN: Oh, George.

GEORGE: Never mind. The bats made me consider nature and

how there are things that are undisputable. Call it laws of nature. These cannot be changed by any law decreed by man.

DAWN: You can't make a bat a fish by legislation.

GEORGE: Exactly. When it comes to people, I also concluded one certain thing.

DAWN: What is that?

GEORGE: Freedom—it's natural.



Rutherford B Hayes

President: 1877 - 1881

“By far, the greatest danger of Artificial Intelligence is that people conclude too early that they understand it.”

—Eliezer Yudkowsky

Chapter 19 | THE PROPHET

“Your guess is as good as mine,” Virginia states as we ride in a limousine to an undefined destination.

“My guess is we’re in for more mystery and confusion,” I reply. After a moment I add, “Do you ever wonder why they don’t just come out and tell us what they want or expect?”

Virginia stares at me. It’s a piercing gaze that cuts right through me. I feel as though she is disappointed that I don’t know what is going on. Or, at the very least, have an opinion or point-of-view. Well, I do have a point-of-view—thank you very much. There is soon going to be a new Revolutionary War characterized by chaos, suffering, intrigue, hysteria, and most likely violence. Without question, none of the well-entrenched leaders are going to give up power easily or peacefully. They have to have worked a deal with the United Nations to maintain their exalted position after the United States of America is handed over to unknown, unseen global oligarchs intent on world domination and conquest. How much power is enough? What force drives this insatiable hunger? How do they not see the suffering and destruction that they cause? Is evil so blinding that they cannot comprehend the result of their actions? What kind of creature is so self-centered, self-assured, or self-righteous as to see nothing but their own ideas, their own desires, or their own image? Finally, I look into Virginia’s eyes and state, “I truly hope and pray you survive the coming conflict.”

“What an odd thing to say. That sounds ominous,” she replies.

“Wheels are in motion that are going to plunge the world into anarchy and they—whoever they are—expect you and me to make order out of the ruins.”

“Whomever,” Virginia corrects me.

“Great, the world is headed toward the cliff and you correct my grammar.”

“George, I’ve been involved with STUS a little longer than you. I have the advantage of having seen remarkable things both technological and ideological. STUS was founded by twelve patriots who foresaw the threat of the future. They laid the foundation for the new Revolution and founding of a greater United States of America. Things got very ugly just before the Reorganization. The socialists shut down free speech, destroyed the lives of those who opposed them, fought anyone who tried to turn the ship of state in the right direction, and left countless bodies by the wayside. While all that was going on, the leaders at STUS stayed focused on resurrecting the most well-thought-out, logical, fair-minded, enduring, and noble form of government.” She fiddles with her tablet then reads, “‘Today the path of total dictatorship in the United States can be laid by strictly legal means, unseen and unheard by the Congress, the President, or the people. Outwardly, we have a Constitutional government. We have operating within our government and political system, another body representing another form of government—a bureaucratic elite.’ That statement was made by a United States Senator, William Jenner, back in 1954. He previously claimed in 1952 that the United Nations had infiltrated our educational system. Turns out he was right. Dumb down the masses and you can convince them of anything, play on their emotions, and achieve blind loyalty.” Virginia looks up from her tablet and adds, “I once said that we were pawns. We are about to become knights, if you are up to the task.”

“So, you know where we are going and what is about to occur,” I conclude.

“No, but I have faith in the Picosecond Patriots.”

“Huh?”

“A picosecond is a trillionth of a second. Given technology, I believe it sounds better and more accurate than minutemen.” With a slight smile she adds, “And it’s less sexist.” Once more she refers to her tablet and explains, “A picosecond represents the theoretical lifetime of a transition state in a chemical reaction. The transition state of a chemical reaction is defined as the state corresponding to the highest potential energy along its reaction coordinate. Assuming a perfectly irreversible reaction, colliding reactant molecules always go on to form new products.” She looks up and asks, “Why is this important?”

“That was my question.”

“It takes 4 picoseconds for a CPU using silicon-germanium alloy

semiconductors in integrated circuits to cycle through a process in a computer.”

I nod . . . off to sleep, just kidding. Hang in there she will get to the point—I hope.

Virginia continues reading, “Inside a CPU there is a small quartz crystal clock that vibrates at a particular frequency. The frequency sets the speed of computer processing. It is measured in megahertz (MHz) and gigahertz (GHz). A megahertz is one-million cycles per second, while a gigahertz is one-billion cycles per second. What that means is a computer with, say, 800 MHz is running 800,000,000 cycles per second. A processor with 2.4GHz is running 2,400,000,000 cycles per second. Now, consider in one picosecond that CPU would cycle .00024 times—far less than one cycle. One of the founders of STUS, Asayo Nakahara, along with a team of scientists created a computer that runs one cycle per picosecond. That’s ten-thousand times faster than silicon-based CPUs. Remember I told you about Bio-Ether (B-E) computing?”

“Yes. Something about growing a computer.”

“Using bio-synapse capability in a gel coupled with non-linear, multi-parallel, algorithm processing, speed is infinitely faster than silicon-based computers. Instead, of trudging through calculation after calculation Bio-Ether computing performs simultaneous tasks in an instant.”

“That’s it, I remember.”

Virginia continues as there is no stopping her, “Light travels .3 millimeters in one picosecond. That means the STUS computer can process information at near luminal speeds.” She leans back and says, “Processing at the speed of light. What does this mean?”

“I asked you first.”

“It is artificial intelligence perfected. A computer that thinks, learns, grows, calculates, anticipates, innovates, and creates. It can evaluate resources, develop strategies, and project outcomes in an optimal environment.”

“What do you mean optimal environment?”

“Sans emotional distortion.”

A voice is heard over the speaker system in the limousine, “We are going into security mode Ms. Morris.”

“Thank you, Paul.”

The screen between driver and passengers rises, doors lock, interior lights illuminate, and all the windows darken to black.

I observe, “I take it we’re not supposed to know where we are

going.”

“That’s the idea.”

“Do you know?”

“Not a clue.”

“Doesn’t that worry you?”

“Not at all.”

I return to the subject at hand, “Don’t you think that a super computer is a dangerous weapon in the hands of the government?”

“It would be, but they don’t have it. They don’t even know it exists. In fact, they don’t realize all of the activities managed by STUS to facilitate the Social Compensation Program (SCP), Individual Identification And Data Chip (IIDC) administration, The Keep, and other government functions are all run using Bio-Ether (B-E) computing. We maintain large physical mega-computer facilities as a cover for the real technology.”

“And they don’t inspect or check?”

“That possibility ended before we were born. Over time, it became a non-issue. STUS is the loyal, unwavering, never failing, tool of the government. Decades of service removed all doubt.”

“There has to be a facility somewhere that could be discovered.”

“From my limited knowledge of all the ultra-sophisticated technology, Bio-Ether computing does not require the massive machinery utilized with silicon-germanium based processors. In fact, there is far less heat generated in the process. That is why it is a lot easier to hide a B-E facility.”

The limousine twists and turns, goes up and down, and changes speed. There is no way I could deduce where we have gone. Then we slow to a stop. We hear the driver leave the automobile and a few seconds later the door on the right side opens. As we climb out of the vehicle the driver says, “This is as far as I’m authorized to go. Please, wait over there.” We are in some type of structure, much like a large garage. The walls appear to be covered with a dark grey material and the floor with a dark rubberlike flooring. Small LED spotlights high up in an almost invisible ceiling rain light down to create puddles on the floor. The limousine backs out of the building and doors silently slide closed. What strikes me is how quiet the room is, as well as it being colorless, odorless, and without any feeling of heat or air-conditioning. Suddenly, a deep blue light appears from an, up-to-that-moment unseen door as it opens. A shadowy figure inside greets us, “Welcome to PROPHET.”

“Have you been here, before?” I whisper to Virginia.

“Nope.”

We enter. In a dark blue wash, the shadowy figure remains unidentifiable. I feel like I'm in the movie *A Christmas Carol* and just met the ghost of Christmas Future. The shadow invites us, "Please, follow me." It moves in some direction but I can't tell you which because it is all so disorienting. As it travels the dark blue light follows leaving darkness behind us. Step after step we cautiously walk. Remarkably, there is still no sound.

Don't ask me why because I can't tell you, but I have to pop this silent bubble I'm in, so I start to sing, "We're off to see the wizard, the wonderful wizard of Oz."

I get a laugh from Virginia. It fills my mind with a warming caress. She then asks, "Are you the scarecrow, tin man, or cowardly lion?" Before I can respond she adds, "And, don't call me Dorothy."

"Well, you're not the wicked witch."

"I can be."

"Not in my eyes," Oops, that shouldn't have been said.

"George."

"Yes."

"Shut up."

Our guide does not react to our antics. It continues leading the way until it dissolves leaving us alone in a dark blue, uh, undefinable location. If there is one thing that I have learned about STUS it is that they love to play sensory games to keep you off balance. A light appears at floor level and moves upward in what appears to be a scan of us two visitors. When it completes its trip upward a door directly in front of us opens and we are bludgeoned by the light of a room. A young man walks into the light and repeats what the shadow said, "Welcome to PROPHET."

We enter.

After my eyes adjust to the light, I see a comfortable looking room with a couch in front of a large monitor, two easy chairs, and a low coffee table. On the coffee table are two coffee cups, a carafe of coffee, tea pot, and bottled water. I turn my attention to the young greeter. He appears to be in his twenties, wearing black pants and a dark blue knit shirt on which is embroidered the letters P.R.O.P.H.E.T. He has short brown hair, brown eyes, a pleasant smile, and no shadow—he's a hologram. Ah, the Hofstra effect, or awareness. I comment, "You're a hologram."

"There are no live organisms in the facility with the exception of present company," he replies unemotionally with a smile. "This room and my appearance are for your convenience."

"What does PROPHET stand for?" I ask.

"Picosecond Responsive Operating Process High Efficiency Technology," he responds.

"I'll take your word for it."

"Please, have a seat and relax. This interview is for your benefit. As a courtesy and to make you feel less awkward PROPHET will converse with you in the form of a familiar entity, Asayo Nakahara, one of the original creators."

Into the room walks Asayo Nakahara. She looks young and beautiful in a flowing dress. Immediately, I notice she doesn't cast a shadow. Yet, I can't help but feel like she is real flesh and blood. She smiles and does a slight bow then takes her seat. We sit in silence.

Without knowing what to say, I observe, "I like your dress."

Asayo smiles and offers, "I can have one manufactured for you."

Virginia snickers and explains, "That was a compliment, not a request."

Asayo responds, "That was a joke—not a serious offer."

We both laugh. I have never had a computer crack a joke. This is an extraordinary experience.

Asayo provides an explanation, "I am here to allow you to obtain data, examine the situation, consider options, and make strategic decisions. The objective has been made clear and my function is to facilitate all efforts to reach that goal."

"So, you know who we are?" Virginia asks.

"I selected you."

OK, now I'm freaking out to use ancient vernacular. Everything that has happened to me was the result of a computer selection process? How did that happen? What was the criteria? I thought that I was identified because I visited a dangerous website. Or, that I got interested in American history after finding a printed history book. What in the hell is going on? Have I been manipulated and led by the nose by a computer? I ask, "How did you select us?"

"After lengthy analysis it was decided that descendants of the founding fathers might possess some degree of genetic makeup that gave their ancestors the strength, courage, and wisdom they exhibited three-hundred years ago. Every known relative of the 56 signers of the *Declaration of Independence* was analyzed for certain characteristics. Three individuals were selected."

"Three?" Virginia responds, then asks, "Who is the third?"

"That information must remain confidential, at this time."

"So, now that we have been selected, what do the powers-that-

be expect from us?" I ask.

"That is unknown."

"They must have something in mind."

"Just as with the first Revolution they have a concept and a goal, however, the act of getting there is undefined and fluid."

"They plan to destroy the world's economy," I state emphatically.

"Precisely."

"Then what?"

"That is unknown."

"Don't you have any idea, strategy, or suggestion? Why are we here?" I say in frustration.

"You are here to utilize my vast storage of information, ability to analyze, and logical reasoning."

"So, you don't have a plan or prediction of the outcome," Virginia concludes.

"The actions and reactions of human beings are quite unpredictable. There do exist historic examples or indications of probability given specific conditions or stimuli. We may discuss planned actions and probable reactions or outcomes. We may project possibilities. Until the action takes place presumptive response is never completely accurate."

In an odd sort of way, I feel like I'm listening to a politician that refuses to take a definitive stand and offers endless caveats why something may not happen. Virginia appears to be contemplating what was just said. I'm still not convinced that I should even be here, so I ask, "You selected Virginia and me and an unknown third party to be involved in a worldwide revolution. What on earth do you expect us to do?"

"Lead."

"Lead what? An army, a secret society, a band, a scout troop? What are we supposed to lead, dammit?"

"The way."

"What way?"

"The way from the concept to the desired outcome."

Virginia takes over, "What exactly is the desired outcome?"

"Good. It is always best to define a goal upon which to focus. The desired result is elimination of the present tyrannical form of government, preservation of the United States sovereignty, re-establishment of the original Constitutional government, provide for individual freedom and liberty, and defend against future incursions on that liberty."

"Great," I interject, "Virginia and I and Person X are going to do all

that on our own without getting killed.”

“Logically, based on historical factors, one of you will be lost in the conflict.”

Silence. I look at Asayo and see an emotionless stare. It’s neither cold nor judgmental, just sterile. My attention turns to Virginia. For the first time I feel protective of my protector. She is older than me, better trained, confident, tough, impressive, oh yeah, impressive—stop that—and beautiful. I’ve developed feelings for Virginia and this is not the time to realize that. She didn’t react to Asayo’s prediction. I simply say, “I hope it’s undefined person number 3.”

Virginia turns toward me and offers, “Let’s try to keep any of that from happening.” She returns to Asayo, “With those objectives in mind, what tools do we have at our disposal?”

“The full power of STUS, support from EOTS, uncompromised international governments, various underground citizen’s groups, self-serving external organizations, and Divine guidance.”

In case you forgot, EOTS is the secret organization Equal Opportunity Traitor Society. Remember the question, “Profit or loss?” I am surprised that a computer would recognize the need for Divine guidance. It seems that such an abstract concept would be beyond its logical reasoning. Suddenly, reality strikes. I haven’t had any say in what has been happening. Why would I all of a sudden be a leader? Who would even listen to me? In fact, what could I offer that is of any value? Why does Red have to sit like that—it’s killing me. I blurt out, “Why would anyone listen to us?”

“Because I chose you.”

“The freaking fate of the world will be put in the hands of three nuts because we were chosen by a computer?”

Virginia says, “Speak for yourself.”

Asayo answers, “Yes.”

“Why the hell would they do that?”

“Because it is logical.”

“How?”

“Historically, it has been shown that committees are inefficient and ineffective, often failing to agree on or execute any positive action. Throughout history more has been achieved by an individual with vision, both good and evil, than by a body of decision-makers.”

“Doesn’t that lead to the risk of dictatorship and abuse of power?”

“The potential does exist. In this case, with the three select individuals, based on personality profiles, the possibility is infinitesimal.”

"I think my vision needs glasses," I conclude.

Virginia reiterates my point, "How do we know that those in power will allow three unproven individuals to lead a worldwide revolution?"

"PROPHET is vastly more powerful than you realize. If world conquest was the objective of present leaders it would be within their power. They understand the seduction of power. This is why they turned to PROPHET for answers. After 3,674 hours of speculative analysis a strategic direction was identified and agreed upon. The founding fathers were craftsmen, farmers, businessmen, ministers, doctors, and more. They were not politicians. Our leaders understand and have accepted PROPHET's recommendation."

"So, they will follow our direction," Virginia confirms.

"That's crazy," I add.

"It is the direction to be taken," Asayo states with authority.

"I don't even know where to begin," I confess. "National and international politics are foreign to me. No pun intended."

Asayo responds, "You are not alone. You have the most powerful Biological Non-human Intelligence (BNI) resource in the world at your disposal. Together, we will devise a plan for the reinstatement of the United States of America. Through me, those in power will implement the strategies and tactics we recommend."

"Let's begin by looking at what we are up against," Virginia, chess master, Morris states.

BNI Asayo outlines the situation, "For more than 50 years, members of the socialist leadership have taken control of more and more elements of citizen's lives. After the first 30 years they essentially controlled everything. Once they held reign over education, health, entertainment, news media, finances, employment, food supply, and more the people simply fell into line and waited to be directed and cared for. They had no way to fight back. In addition, indoctrination kept a large number under control. Finally, the elimination of American history removed any alternative views to what was considered normal."

"There were attempts to change the situation, correct?" Virginia inquires.

"Early in the ideological battle, before the Reorganization, conservative Americans attempted to be heard. They were silenced through ridicule, shaming, and intimidation. With the help of the media any individual who expressed a conservative point-of-view was labeled as a liar, racist, sexist, crook, and self-serving greedy criminal who did not have any concern about others. A majority of the people accepted the

characterization. When a group of citizens attempted to fight back at the polls a politicized FBI, Justice Department, and judicial system destroyed them personally, financially, and professionally. It became clear that the system would not tolerate descent. It was further demonstrated in 2036.”

“What happened in 2036?” Virginia asks.

“This information is neither taught in school nor available in any database. The Individual Identification And Data Chip (IIDC) was introduced in 2036. All adults were ordered to report to government facilities within six-months to have a chip inserted in their thumb. Any who failed to do so were subject to arrest. A large number of citizens refused. The government decided to demonstrate its power by selecting certain areas to be made an example. There was a town in Pennsylvania where more than half of the residents refused to comply. In the middle of the night on a Thursday a force of over twenty-thousand soldiers attacked and arrested all non-complying adults. Their children became wards of the state, all their property was confiscated, and they were never heard of again. A total of 4,879 citizens disappeared. All the major television networks were on scene, broadcast the events, and totally supported the government actions against the traitors. Not long after that a majority of citizens fell in line. Those small numbers who took to hiding or joined militia were slowly eliminated.”

I find that I have to chime in by stating, “Wait, it was STUS that developed the IIDC.”

“True.”

“Then STUS was a part of the usurpation of citizen’s rights.”

“Also, true.”

“Why did they do it?”

“The technology was long being developed for individual identification chips. In order to be in control of the process, STUS demonstrated a far-superior and technologically advanced system that was essentially tamper proof, reliable, and a useful tool for the government in terms of data retrieval and analysis. At that point the already trusted technology resource became an integral part of the government mechanism. The relationship has continued on since then.”

“But those people and others who were sacrificed.”

“Collateral damage.”

“You just write them off?”

“Many thousands have died as a direct result of the actions of the elite ruling class. Executions, starvation, lack of care, no-housing,

criminal activity, all have taken their toll. They are simply numbers in a ledger. STUS has to be on the inside to have any hope of success.”

“And, now the fate of the world rests on the shoulders of three persons,” Virginia observes.

“Thomas Jefferson wrote the *Declaration of Independence* that listed the complaints against a tyrannical king and defined the hope for a new nation. One individual pointed a rebellion in the right direction.”

“I’m no Thomas Jefferson,” I admit.

“No, you are George Clymer. Find that spark your ancestor passed on in your DNA.”

I notice that PROPHET, alias Asayo Nakahara, moves and gestures and presents facial expressions that are so lifelike that it is difficult to remember she is a hologram, as well as a machine. I smile in response to her admonition.

Virginia gets to the point, “If we accept the challenge and our essential role, how are we to know what the situation is, the tools at our disposal, strategic options, method of operation, intelligence resources, and more?”

“You will be given a direct untraceable link to me. I, in turn, will communicate with the necessary entities to facilitate actions. As events develop, you will receive updates from me. As you see I am the fourth member of the Heirs of Liberty,” she smiles with what I perceive is a glimmer of pride.

I remark, “I guess, with no other choice, we are about to embark on a treacherous journey for a noble cause that only God knows will be the outcome.”

Virginia nods and asks, “Are there any insights you might share at this time?”

Asayo replies, “The socialists came to power through deception. Why should they not lose power through deception?”



James A Garfield
President: 1881

“In the spider-web of facts, many a truth is strangled.”

—Paul Eldridge

Chapter 20 | THE MEDIA

“I’ve been thinking,” I begin. Virginia and I are sitting at a tiny table on the patio of a small café in downtown Austin, Texas. She looks up from her meal in anticipation. “The government came into power through lies and deception. They now maintain their power through lies and deception. You see it every day on the news sites which claim to be independent and unbiased, while in fact they are simply tools of the government.”

“Agreed,” Virginia replies.

“Essentially, everyone watches one or more of the daily newscasts out of necessity or curiosity.”

“Remember, it is a legal requirement to watch the weekly government update on Fridays.”

“Like I do that,” I state sarcastically.

“Good thing you’re in a foreign country or you’d be arrested,” Virginia jokes.

“Missed my weekly propaganda fix.” I think for a moment and then share my thoughts, “I wonder if the media ever told the truth based on real facts at some time in the past.”

“Let’s see.” Virginia executes a quick search on her tablet.

I watch two girls get into a convertible and think . . . like I’m going to tell you. OK, here’s what I think. Everyone in Texas seems to be living the good life that all Americans would love, but can’t have. How is it possible? We are told Texas is a hell-hole with income inequality that is so pronounced that the rich live like royalty while average citizens just barely get by. Texas is a perfect demonstration of the evils of capitalism. I’ve got to tell you—that’s not what I’m seeing.

Virginia finds some information and details what she sees. “It

says here that the first American news sheet was published in Boston in 1690 by Benjamin Harris. *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick* initially reported that English military forces had allied themselves with miserable savages. As a result, local authorities were not pleased with his paper and he was put out of business four days later.”

“1690, that’s like a hundred years before the founding of the United States,” I observe.

“Fourteen years later, in 1704, postmaster John Campbell launched *The Boston News-Letter* to serve information-hungry colonists. He had the advantage of having access to letters, government documents, foreign newspapers, and more. This newspaper was well-received as he mainly delivered facts and information. Other postmasters soon followed with their own publications. Gazettes were also started by printers, who had paper, ink, and presses. Benjamin Franklin was a well-known journalist who was both a postmaster and a printer.”

“He signed the *Declaration of Independence*,” I state the obvious as I watch two girls enter a shoe store.

“I didn’t know this,” Virginia admits, “Benjamin Franklin had an older brother, James, who was a newspaper publisher. In 1717, he launched the *New-England Courant* in Boston. It seems James Franklin wrote articles that offended the Assembly and he was imprisoned for a month. During that period Benjamin managed the newspaper. When James was freed the government forbade him to print the *Courant*. It seems, the brothers got around that order by publishing under Benjamin’s name. In 1734, John Peter Zenger, publisher of the *New York Weekly Journal*, was arrested and charged with seditious libel for criticisms of British Governor William Cosby. He was defended by Alexander Hamilton. In the end, even though the facts were against Zenger, a jury was more sympathetic to free speech than to authority therefore acquitted him. Around this time, Benjamin Franklin moved to Philadelphia where he founded *Poor Richard’s Almanac* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.”

I watch two girls riding bicycles down the street toward the University of Texas campus.

Virginia kicks me under the table—another bruise. “In the original thirteen colonies, before the signing of the *Declaration of Independence*, the media was subject to a wide range of regulations by British authorities attempting to prohibit the publication and circulation of information of which they did not approve. A well-informed citizenry was considered to be a threat. It was during the French and Indian War,

in 1754, that Benjamin Franklin published America's first newspaper cartoon. It was a graphic showing a snake cut into sections with each part representing a colony and the caption: Join or Die. There was a belief at that time that newspapers should publish both sides of an issue, however, that changed after 1765 as a result of the *Stamp Act* and increased tensions with England. A bolder form of journalism emerged that was far more political and polemic. The main goal was support of the American cause. Samuel Adams declared in 1768 that 'there is nothing so fretting and vexatious, nothing so justly terrible to tyrants . . . as a free press.' George Washington declared a lack of interest in newspapers, writing in 1786 that 'my avocations are so numerous that I very rarely find time to look into Gazettes after they come to me.' And, in 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote, 'were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.' One historian observed, 'It is hard to imagine the United States arriving when it did without a free press. It was a wild, unruly press, but democracy was a great experiment and an aggressive press was part of it.' Daily publication of newspapers began in the 1780s."

I really don't know what to think. Maybe, the media has always been biased, sometimes for good reason and sometimes supporting the wrong side. I guess I'm an idealist to expect those who shape public opinion to attempt to be objective. From my perspective the media should serve the people not a political party or position. Provide untarnished facts, useful data, quotes, occurrences, and news. Give readers the tools to draw their own conclusions. Unfortunately, the power to move public policy must be too seductive to resist.

Virginia continues, "There were about 100 newspapers by 1790 when the First Amendment of the *Bill of Rights* was added to the *Constitution of the United States of America*."

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"Once in office as President of the United States, George Washington sometimes was incensed at what he saw in print. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, in a 1793 cabinet meeting, recorded how the

president went on in such 'a high tone' about the paper of 'that rascal' Freneau that the cabinet officers were momentarily stunned into silence."

"It was a time of unbridled press freedom. In truth, many newspapers were founded and subsidized in order to support a particular political party. For instance, the *Gazette of the United States* supported the Hamiltonian Federalists while the *National Gazette* backed the Jeffersonian Republicans. Each publication wrote essays in support of their party and included editorial comments in the news that were positive about their party or attacked the opposition."

As I watch two girls waiting to cross the street, it occurs to me that it is the nature of man to choose sides. Just as Diogenes searched for an honest man, I George Clymer find I am in search of an objective man. Yet, here I sit devoted to my newly appreciated capitalism plotting the overthrow of the government. If I controlled the media would I, could I, be fair and unbiased? The two girls cross the street.

Virginia continues her lesson, "Shortly after the birth of the nation, in 1798, Federalist Party President John Adams signed the *Alien and Sedition Act* in an attempt to silence journalists critical of his administration. The *Sedition Act* made criticism of Congress or the President a crime. Republican Vice-President Thomas Jefferson vehemently opposed the bill and subsequently was elected President in 1800. These restrictions on the press were very unpopular, as a result the Federalist Party never won another national election. On March 4, 1801, in his inaugural address President Thomas Jefferson reiterated his commitment to freedom of speech and of the press, 'If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.' He pardoned most of those convicted of crimes because of the *Sedition Act*."

"Where are the Thomas Jeffersons of today," I ask.

"I believe they are sitting at this table," Virginia remarks.

"Well, today they don't have to worry about the media," I conclude, "it's run by the government."

"It's been that way our entire lives."

"The government stays in power by treating the people like mushrooms."

"What?"

"Keep them in the dark and feed them manure." Ah, another welcome smile from Red. Don't tell her I called her that. I have too many

bruises, already.

Virginia continues, "There was a time when the Globalnet allowed people to find the truth if they searched hard enough. It was just before the Reorganization in the twenty-teens. Everything had become identity politics. The media accused innocent people of everything they could think of to destroy them. They went so far as to fabricate crimes and misdeeds. It was a time when there wasn't a free press as much as there was an out-of-control press with no ethics. Even more disturbing is the fact that they joined forces aimed at tearing down the very fabric of the nation. They forgot that with power comes responsibility."

"They did a good job of demolition at that." I can't help but think that just as an unbridled, free-thinking, bold press helped support the Revolution that led to the birth of the United States of America, that same unfettered institution was instrumental in the events that led to the demise of the greatest nation in history. Fools that they were they had no idea that they were the tools of their own destruction. I look at Virginia and suggest, "Somehow, we need to incorporate the power of the media into our strategy."

"The government made it easier by concentrating everything onto three news channels," Virginia points out.

"If we can interrupt their feed and open the public's eyes to the truth, as well as deliver alternative news about a revolution that only exists on the news channels it might convince most Americans that a revolution is actually taking place. They are so accustomed to being sheep they most likely will wait to be told the outcome. Then . . ." I look around, "when the, uh, big event takes place there will be less panic. A majority will wait to be told what to do next."

"A simulated revolution, hmmm," Virginia ponders the possibility. "One challenge is that people are accustomed to the regular newscasters. They would have a problem accepting new personalities."

"Asayo Nakahara," I say.

"What about her?"

"She was a hologram."

"Yes."

"PROPHET could project holograms of the regular anchors in a hologram studio and have them say whatever we wish."

Red smiles and confirms, "We tell the nation and the world about an ongoing revolution, a positive outcome, and how the new United States of America has been founded all through fabricated news and images. The ultimate wag-the-dog. Marshall McLuhan once said, 'the

medium is the message' but now the media is the weapon." She leans back, "I like it."

I change the subject, "I wish I knew who was producing that program—*The Capitalist*. It is very well done and makes a lot of good points."

"For my money," Virginia states, "I think it's person number 3 that is doing it."

"We need person number 3 to produce our faux news broadcasts."

"If we share our thinking with PROPHET, maybe she, uh he, uh it will pass our idea on to the producer of *The Capitalist*."

A police car stops, a Texas Ranger gets out, and walks over to our table. I immediately tense up. My not-so-long-ago arrest flashes through my memory. He is a tall man wearing a cowboy hat. What we could possibly be doing wrong escapes me. Did one of those girls I observed complain? I can't help but wonder what it will be like locked up in a foreign country. My mother's face taunts me in my mind, "I warned you." My father simply sits in a chair shaking his head. Dee doesn't show up. I wonder what she is up to.

"Virginia, I thought that was you," the Texas Ranger says in a friendly tone. "What on earth are you doing in Austin?"

Virginia smiles and replies, "Business. I work for STUS, a high-tech company."

"Security, I'm sure."

"Of course."

The Texas Ranger turns toward me and introduces himself, "Lender Johnson, Virginia and I worked together briefly on an assignment. If she's your bodyguard, you are in safe hands."

"I'm sure of that," I conclude.

"When we worked together, I thought, this young woman can't possibly be capable of handling the difficult situations we were about to face." The mid-thirties police officer grins and states, "Boy, did she prove me wrong. More than one member of our team, myself included, owe their lives to her acute situational analysis, quick action, keen sense, and courage. If she tells you to jump—don't hesitate—it could save your life. But, don't thank her . . ."

"Len," Virginia scolds.

The Texas Ranger stands tall and says, "She never would allow me to thank her. As capable as she is, there is a part of her that feels undeserving of gratitude. She's an enigma. A beautiful, talented, impressive, lethal paladin with one small flaw." Texas Ranger Lender

Johnson looks at Virginia and says with enough emotion in his voice to reveal his feelings for her, "She just doesn't know what an amazing person she is and that she is destined to do great things."

After the Ranger leaves, Virginia and I sit in silence each with our own thoughts about what just happened. I see the same thing as the Texas Ranger, a remarkable young woman who is both impressive and an enigma. Is she destined to do great things? She better be or all is lost. Here we sit, two individuals with the future of humanity in our hands. No pressure there. Did the founding fathers feel the weight of a nation on their shoulders? Did they harbor doubts? Are those two girls coming this way? Finally, I ask Virginia, "Well, President Morris, have you written your inaugural speech yet?"

"Shut up."

Back in my room I decide I need to have a chat with Dawn.

DAWN: George, I've been waiting to hear from you.

GEORGE: A lot has been going on. I need your perspective.

DAWN: If I can help.

GEORGE: Have you heard of PROPHET?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: I'm sure you have.

DAWN: Then you needn't ask.

GEORGE: Who is the third person selected by PROPHET?

DAWN: When the time is right, you will know.

GEORGE: Is it you?

DAWN: Oh, heavens no.

GEORGE: I won't ask why I can't know now because you'll only answer with a question.

DAWN: Is that what you think?

GEORGE: See!

DAWN: LOL

GEORGE: I think Virginia should be leading this revolt.

DAWN: You each bring certain skills, therefore are both needed.

GEORGE: What about unnamed person 3?

DAWN: In time, all three will be needed.

GEORGE: Did Virginia tell you about my suggestion to have a fake war that only exists in the media? The people will believe what they are told and accept the outcome.

DAWN: No. I like the idea.

GEORGE: Do you think it will work?

DAWN: I guess we will find out.

GEORGE: I must confess that I am afraid.

DAWN: Only natural. Don't worry. You have more courage than you realize.

GEORGE: There is more to it than that.

DAWN: Tell me.

GEORGE: The media became so effective in shaping public opinion and so self-important that they destroyed a nation and themselves in the process. PROPHET, The Keep, Black Pearl Satellite Network, all the super-advanced technology puts so much power in our hands it is frightening. We are playing with awesome power that could be misused to fulfill personal ambitions.

DAWN: Do you think that will happen?

GEORGE: Not at this moment, but who knows how it will affect us in the long run.

DAWN: Do you trust Virginia?

GEORGE: With my life. She would never give in to temptation.

DAWN: Do you trust yourself?

GEORGE: I really don't know.

DAWN: The very fact that you are concerned about losing sight of the objective and thinking only of yourself indicates that you will not weaken.

GEORGE: I hope so.

DAWN: George, I trust you with my life.

GEORGE: And yet you won't tell me what is the color of your hair.

DAWN: Blond. Now, focus on the task at hand. The clock is ticking.

OK, now every blond I meet for the rest of my life I'm going to address as Dawn to see if I get a reaction. After my conversation with Dawn I check to see if the next chapter of *The Capitalist* is available. I am not disappointed.

The scene opens with a delicious shot of food. Sumptuous, large portions of various dishes appear with just a wisp of steam rising from the plates. As the camera slowly expands to a wider shot, voices become apparent. There are conversations punctuated with laughter. The click of silverware joins the symphony. We are in a busy restaurant. Groups of patrons can be seen at every table and young people wearing green shirts and black pants scurry about serving food. The camera rises to show a banner in reverse in the window declaring "Grand Opening."

A dissolve brings us outside the restaurant where Falcon is standing with two people. He states, "I'm not sure what to think about

the name but the aroma is enticing.” The camera tilts upward to reveal a newly painted sign—Falcon’s Nest, fine dining.

The man speaks, “We couldn’t think of a better name than one to honor the individual who gave life back to our valley.”

“You saved us from despair,” the woman next to the man states.

“All I did was remove some of the obstacles that were in the way. You and your neighbors did the work and took control of your lives,” Falcon says. He inhales deeply and states, “Freedom—it smells good. Almost as good as the fine food in your restaurant.”

“You can eat here for free, as long as you wish.”

“I don’t wish,” Falcon’s sharp response surprises the couple. He adds, “A lesson in business. Don’t give your profits away. I’m perfectly capable of paying for my meal, therefore I should. It would be an unforgivable insult to imply that you do not deserve to be rewarded for your efforts.” His voice becomes softer, “Now, if you choose to provide food for those less fortunate, that is a noble act of charity. Noble, yes, but don’t put your business at risk in doing so because that is not in anyone’s best interest.”

“Sometimes I get confused,” the man admits. “We charge what we believe is a fair price for food, pay our cooks and waitstaff a reasonable amount, but feel guilty when we make a good profit from our restaurant.”

“You are a product of government educational indoctrination,” Falcon points out. “There is nothing wrong with an honest profit.” He walks over to the Falcon’s Nest restaurant and taps the wall. “If you needed your building painted and I offered to do it for ten times what you could afford I wouldn’t get the job, would I?”

“Most likely not.”

“If another painter offers to charge far less you might consider hiring him.”

“Yes.”

“Now, you don’t care how much profit he will make as long as you get the job done for what you feel is a fair price.”

“True.”

“In a free-market economic system perceived value becomes the critical factor. With your restaurant if you charge too high a price, customers will not eat here. Now, say you charge a reasonable price, but a new restaurant opens across the street and charges far less. You may be forced to lower your price unless diners believe your food is of better taste or quality justifying a higher price. In the end, only you can decide

at what point it no longer is profitable.”

“But when it is very profitable, why do I feel so guilty?”

“Indoctrination. For your entire life you’ve been told profit is a dirty word. Now, you are learning it is a powerful word. Profits expand possibilities. They facilitate those things you wish to achieve. You can improve your lifestyle or purchase something you value or open a second restaurant creating even more profits.”

The man stares at Falcon absorbing all he is being told. He then says softly as he thinks out loud, “A second restaurant?”

“In addition to making you more prosperous it would provide jobs for more people making them more prosperous.”

“I see.”

“Capitalism grows wealth.”

The scene abruptly changes. We find ourselves in another sad depressed village. Empty store fronts reflect a time long-passed. A music track sounds eerie tones as the camera proceeds down garbage covered sidewalks that have deteriorated to broken barely identifiable pieces. A cat wanders across the path examining debris. Then in the distance a large black SUV can be seen. It is an anomaly parked in the midst of surrounding destitution. The camera arrives and turns to face what is the town square. There a crowd of broken and defeated individuals stand around as they listen to a man wearing dark grey pants and a blue shirt with a silver badge. He is the government County Inspector.

“This area has been designated as one of a group of economically irretrievable sectors. With the upcoming United Nations takeover, it has become necessary to cease any Social Compensation Program remittances, effective immediately.”

“How will we live?” is heard from the crowd followed by, “How will we eat?”

“When possible, surplus food will be shipped here for distribution.”

“When. How often? How much?”

“I really don’t know.” The CI is clearly uncomfortable with the situation.

“The government is supposed to take care of us,” someone in the crowd protests.

“You will receive shipments,” he tries, once more.

Cut to a shot of the sumptuous food in the Falcon’s Nest restaurant. Conversations and clinking silverware continue to be heard as the screen dissolves to a lone figure rummaging in a garbage can for food.

Once again, the producer of this program makes a clear and undeniable point. Profit and wealth are not evil. Also, when you depend on the government for all your needs at any time they can be taken away. Thomas Jefferson put it this way, "A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

My mind goes back to the question, "Profit or loss?"

The appropriate response, "There are profits and there are prophets."

This followed by the statement, "Freedom is not an economic concept."

And the ultimate response, "Freedom is an act of God."

Now you know.



Chester Alan Arthur

President: 1881 - 1885

***“You give but little when you give of your
possessions. It is when you give of yourself
that you truly give.”***

—Kahlil Gibran

Chapter 21 | THE GIFT

I arrive home to a warm reception.

“I see you survived,” my father comments as he passes by.

“Back from hell?” my mother observes.

Of course, not wanting to instigate a heated discussion—argument to most of you—I reply, “Actually, Texas is a little bit of heaven. Everyone is happy and industrious and enjoying a lifestyle Americans can only imagine.”

“You’ve been brainwashed,” my mother surmises as she throws down a dish towel and leaves the kitchen.

Alone with Dee, we stare at each other for a moment, and you guessed it, we hug each other.

“I missed you, big brother,” Dee says. “Tell me about Texas. Is it a wonderful place?”

“You would not believe the difference. People are working and living the way they wish, not how the government determines they must live. Stores are full of products, restaurants are everywhere, there is an energy you just wouldn’t believe,” I find that I have to pace, “there is life in Texas—beautiful, meaningful, positive, wonderful life filled with promises—not lies.”

“Why didn’t you stay?”

“Because I have a mission that I cannot avoid. I’m committed to a cause that cannot be ignored or placed in the charge of another. Three individuals hold the future of our nation in their hands and, like it or not, we have to stay the course and see it to the end.”

“Who are the three?” Dee asks.

“It’s better that you only know that one of them is me. I don’t want you at risk.”

Dee shrugs, "What did you do in Texas?"

"Again, the less you know the better."

"Don't you trust me?"

"I do trust you. It's just safer if you are not involved." I change the subject, "I brought you something from Texas."

"What is it?" she asks in anticipation.

"Before I give it to you, I have to warn you it is illegal to have."

"How exciting! What is it—tell me."

"Let's go to my room." With the door closed, I reach into my bag and retrieve a printed book, *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand.

"Oh George, it's beautiful." She touches it lightly as if she is afraid she might damage it.

"Remember it's illegal, therefore, you must hide it."

"I can't wait to read it. What's it about?"

"I only know what I was told. It is a story written long before the Reorganization that warned of creeping socialism that was threatening America."

"They didn't heed the warning, did they?"

"No, they didn't."

"We should read it together," Dee suggests.

"I wish we could but I'm going to be very busy from now on."

I leave Dee and go into the living room where my parents are sitting waiting for the government news to come on. First, I walk over to my father and hand him a leather bomber jacket that I purchased in Texas. He looks at it in disbelief. "It gets cold around here in the winter," I say with a smile.

"How? Where?" he stutters.

"Texas."

"I don't know what to say."

"It's a gift. You don't have to say anything. Wear it in good health."

When I turn toward my mother she snaps, "I don't want anything from Texas."

"When I wandered the streets of Austin, Texas, I came upon a small shop. Inside, I found something that reminded me of you." I reveal an antique gold swan pin. The delicate abstract caught my eye as the long neck of the swan curved around to almost form a circle. Whether it was much like the way my mother's hair curves around her face or her slender build that made the connection, I'm not sure. It just reminded me of her and I want her to have it. I offer her the keepsake, but she

won't accept it. Although my feelings are hurt, I decide it is best not to show it. So, I place the pin on the table and say as nonchalantly as I can manage, "Accept it, don't accept it, it's up to you."

Back in my room I try to piece together the few elements of a preliminary strategy for a revolution. Now, that sounds either funny or delusional—or both. There are great military minds accustomed to creating battlefield tactics that wouldn't attempt what we are considering doing. What considering? What we are planning to do. Although, I've got to wonder, who else is involved. I know STUS can shut down the economy and PROPHET can provide faux news, but what about the physical takeover? Are we to believe that the well-entrenched elitist leaders will simply pack up their bags and leave Wilson, D.C.? And, what about the military and police? And, even if we were successful, who will rule in the interim until elections can be held? And, how will honest elections be implemented? And, what about the rest of the world? And, will the United Nations take an active role? And, now my head hurts.

I receive a message on my tablet.

VIRGINIA: George, meet me outside in ten minutes.

GEORGE: What's up?

VIRGINIA: A lot.

Ten minutes later I'm sitting on the back of Virginia's Harley-Davidson motorcycle flying through countryside in the dark. When she arrived, she had handed me a helmet and those silly gloves. I insisted on the thumb glove. Once more through the helmet microphones we can converse. I ask, "Where are we going?"

"There have been some developments and we are headed to a special meeting in an undisclosed location."

"But you know where you are going, therefore it is disclosed."

"I know where we are to rendezvous with others—that's all."

"Who are the others?"

"Unknown."

We are now traveling back roads that I have never seen before. I have to say, despite the ominous nature of our journey, I'm rather enjoying the ride. If Virginia knew what I was thinking I'd be thrown into a ditch. At one point we leave the road and go cross country. The rocks and ruts are causing me to bounce with enough force to cause concern about ever having children. Ahead I see a blinking red light. As we draw near, I realize it is on a helicopter. Dark figures surround it. We stop and walk toward the aircraft. A voice from one of the unidentifiable dark figures states, "Ms. Morris, Mr. Clymer, the others are on board."

Inside the corporate helicopter we find David Trufire, Walter Tize, a black man I don't know, and a blond woman I don't know. I address the woman, "Dawn?"

"Excuse me? No. I'm sorry. I'm Annette Larson."

We lift off.

David Trufire leads the conversation, "Ms. Larson is a Presidential liaison with STUS and Derick Haynes is a technology expert at the Pentagon. There has been an attempted coup. A number of cabinet members along with military leaders moved to take over the government. They failed. As a result, the government is on high alert. All facilities, systems, and operations are under the highest level of scrutiny—including STUS. For obvious reasons, it is imperative that our services not be compromised in any way. We are en route to one of our secret facilities."

It is now that I realize all passengers are wearing thumb gloves to prevent their location from being tracked.

"We have already checked the status of all our facilities and confirmed their integrity. Ms. Larson and Mr. Haynes are accompanying us to Tango Alpha, a redundant co-operating functional system plant. They will do an inspection, run test programs, check security, and interview technicians." He addressed Walter Tize, Virginia, and me, "Following this inspection, you three will return to Wilson, D.C. with them to confirm their findings and receive first-hand any requests for operational changes, procedural adjustments, or security enhancements given the present political situation." David Trufire leans back and states with conviction, "We need to assure that the United Nations economic zone transition be executed without any unexpected delays or problems."

I have to admit David Trufire is either a traitor to our cause or a great actor. Of course, if he was a traitor, Virginia, Walter, and I would be sitting in a jail cell not a helicopter.

We arrive at Tango Alpha. Here is the interesting thing. The helicopter lands and a roof closes above us. We have no way of noting the surrounding area, the appearance of the building, position of the stars, or anything else that might offer a clue as to the location.

After we exit the aircraft, we find ourselves in a large well-lit hanger. Mr. Trufire begins the tour, "This entire compound is powered by a geothermal electric power plant. Actually, it is a binary cycle power plant that generates electricity at far lower temperatures. Inside the Earth at the core-mantle boundary temperatures can reach 7,200°F. Our binary cycle power plant can produce electricity from fluid temperatures as low as 200°F. While most people think the heat at the Earth's core is

simply a result of its formation, in fact, only about 20% of it is residual heat from planetary accretion. The other 80% is generated from radioactive decay that is constantly occurring. It is estimated that the Earth's internal heat could produce approximately 100 billion times the worldwide annual energy consumption." He smiles and states, "We aren't going to run out and this facility, like our others, is energy independent of outside sources."

We enter through a door that resembles a huge bank vault. It must be two-feet thick. "An atomic blast cannot penetrate this building and it is immune to electromagnetic pulse weapons."

Once inside, the door is closed and we find ourselves in a blank room with white walls, floor, and ceiling. Without saying a word David Trufire walks through a wall. It is obviously not a wall, but a hologram. We follow. We are now in what appears to be a long tube. Even the floor is rounded, yet we stand above it on a non-visible flat surface. Ah, those techies really love their illusions. At the end of the tube we step into complete blackness with no features what-so-ever. Because I've experienced this before I handle it well. When I gaze over to Annette Larson and Derick Haynes, I get a kick out of their obvious disorientation. Then it hits me. If everything is black how am I able to see them? Thank God the room forms around us and we are in a common area.

David Trufire explains, "As we passed through the security tube we were scanned and our identities confirmed using over 1,200 indicators. If any question had arisen the door to leave this area would not lead to Tango Alpha."

A door appears and we enter a control room with numerous touchscreen monitors at various workstations. David invites the two government guests to utilize any station to execute their review and analysis. I glance at Walter. He knows the truth. This is a facsimile operation designed to shield the existence of PROPHET. It takes two and a half hours for all tests to be run. They ask a few questions but appear to be satisfied with what they have seen.

After being ushered into a different room we step directly into hermetically sealed clean suits. Each suit is in the clean room with the back open to the room we are in. Once inside the suit, the opening closes to lock all of our germs and dirt inside with us keeping the outside sterile. A soft helmetlike thing covers our heads and provides air. We now can enter the inner workings of Tango Alpha. Walter Tize provides a technical rundown of the equipment, safety devices, redundancies, and upgrades. Here I thought he was a researcher who likes sandwiches

from Candy's Café. Instead, he's a freakin' computer wizard. In the end, the inspection goes well.

Once back in the helicopter we solidify our travel plans to Wilson, D.C. We agree to meet at the airport the following afternoon. A private military jet will take us to our destination.

When I return home, everybody is asleep. Silently, I creep through the house to my room. It being the middle of the night, I know better than to contact Dawn.

DAWN: George, do you not own a watch.

GEORGE: I just got back from Tango Alpha and have to go to Wilson, D.C. tomorrow.

DAWN: And, you can't sleep.

GEORGE: Could you?

DAWN: I was.

GEORGE: Oh, yeah. Sorry. But I have to talk with someone.

DAWN: I feel so lucky.

GEORGE: Sarcasm? At this hour?

DAWN: It's all I've got.

GEORGE: I'm not sure what I should do in Wilson or how I should act. I'll feel like they are all looking at me thinking, "I know what you are up to."

DAWN: Paranoia.

GEORGE: To the tenth degree.

DAWN: It's normal. Much like if you split your pants and are trying to go home unnoticed—you feel like everyone knows and are staring at you.

GEORGE: The problem is when you feel that way you act guilty bringing attention to yourself. I don't want to blow the whistle on myself.

DAWN: You need to focus on something else to keep your mind busy.

GEORGE: Good idea—what?

DAWN: Do you have a micro-camera?

GEORGE: No.

DAWN: Too bad. It would be useful if you were to record the opulent lifestyle in Wilson. Government news channels avoid showing the general public how they live in order to maintain calm.

GEORGE: I hope that I can maintain calm.

DAWN: When you're there use the experience. Learn from it. Get angry. Just don't show it. Good night, George.

The next morning Virginia, Walter, and I discuss our upcoming

trip. I relate my conversation with Dawn and the idea of videotaping the capital lifestyle. Walter requisitions three micro-cameras. They are about the size of a sesame seed—they're really small. Unfortunately, even as small as they are it hurts when it is inserted under my left thumbnail. I can't help but think about the comment Mr. Trufire made so long ago about me not confessing even if they pulled out my fingernails. Wrong! As it was explained to me, by putting pressure on the top of the thumbnail the camera is activated. That hurts, as well. However, whatever I aim my thumb at will be recorded. Here is the cool thing. While there are many types of spyware detectors, this camera is completely undetectable. As Walter explains, due to its proximity to our IIDC chips in our thumbs no signal will be detected. Furthermore, the video is transmitted up to the Black Pearl Satellite Network concurrent with normal personal ID information regularly sent to the government global satellite network. This allows what the camera picks up to be recorded at a remote site. With a smile Walter warns, "Keep your damn fingers off of your left thumbnail when in the bathroom or while engaging in any activity you don't want recorded for posterity." That is good advice. I wonder, is Walter conspirator number three?

Virginia and I go to her office to discuss the trip.

"Our main purpose in going to Wilson is to gain credibility with the appropriate persons and access to most government facilities," Virginia concludes. "It might come in handy in the future when things really get rolling."

"I fear they will simply see me as a kid," I admit. Remember, I'm only twenty-years-old.

"They will see you based on the way you project yourself."

"That's reassuring."

Virginia walks over, sits next to me, and puts her hand on my arm. Now, I could make a smart remark about how this makes me feel, but I won't. A combination of the gravity of the upcoming situation and the serious look on her face makes that impossible. Virginia says, "You and I were chosen because of our lineage. There is no way of knowing whether or not that is a valid attribute in choosing leaders of a revolution. Only time will tell. In the end, we are destined to be a part of history. We are committed to follow a dark and dangerous path. But, one fact remains—we are in this together."

"Somehow, it just doesn't make sense," I insist. "There are so many older, more experienced, better qualified people who can lead with confidence."

“Perhaps by the very nature of having experience or preconceived beliefs, they might have an obscured view and prove less effective.” Virginia holds up her tablet, touches the screen, and states, “I’ve researched war and warriors through the ages. Napoléon Bonaparte became a French general at age 24. He won virtually every battle at age 26. John Paul Jones, father of the American navy, got his first ship to command at the age of 21. Joan of Arc, at the age of 17, led the attack on Orleans leading to Charles VII driving the English out of France. She later was burned at the stake at 19. Cleopatra was the last active ruler of the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, gaining the throne at the age of 18. She ruled for thirty years.”

“OK, I get the point.”

Virginia puts down her tablet and changes the subject, “I was born in California, in the city of San Francisco. It was the worst of slums in the United States. Of course, we didn’t know that as it was the only life we knew. There were skeletons of buildings that must have once been monuments to great architects. Remains of roads and bridges were visible but not in use. In the San Francisco Bay there are two rusting towers that I was told was once a magnificent bridge called the Golden Gate. Believe me there was no gold in that rotting city. There was little food, decrepit housing, disease, drug use, and rampant crime. You had to fight to survive and not become a victim.”

I’m amazed that Red, uh Virginia, is opening up like this. She has been a complete enigma—until now.

“When I was twelve-years-old my mother was murdered by a drug addict. The state put me into a government facility, but I kept running away. Of course, with the damned IIDC chip in my thumb they always found me. I made the same mistake as everybody else in thinking I could interrupt the signal by covering my thumb. On one of my attempted escapes I met an old man in the hills. When he heard that I was a runaway he immediately informed me that he didn’t want the government bothering him. I thought that meant that I had to leave. To my surprise he brought me into his cabin where inside were all types of electronics. He smiled and said, ‘I can cut off your thumb, dig out the IIDC, or camouflage the signal.’ He knew I would choose the last solution. He placed a clip on my thumb with wires leading to a laptop computer. I didn’t feel anything. He explained that the signal was now garbled and unreadable. For all intents and purposes, if they were looking for me, I was nowhere to be found on their grid.”

“I guess that was before the thumb glove,” I observe.

“Only STUS has that device. The old man was what he called a ‘throwback.’ He was born in 1988 and witnessed the destruction of the American economy and society before the Reorganization. Politicians had become so corrupt that they blatantly lied to the people, weaponized government agencies, murdered people, ignored the *Constitution*, and became wealthy beyond your wildest dreams. As he put it, ‘those reprobate creatures stole the United States of America from its people.’”

I can hear the venom in Virginia’s voice.

“When my new ‘old’ friend was twenty-one, he met Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood. That was six years before the founding of STUS. He and Colonel Eastwood shared many opinions and fears about the future of America. Eventually, he moved west to California although he and the Colonel stayed in touch. He worked for some of the original computer and software companies but eventually became disillusioned by their social engineering and globalist dreams. He loved the America in which he grew up. Finally, when the Reorganization occurred, he would not cooperate. In essence, he dropped out. By the time we met, Colonel Eastwood had passed away, however, the old man had maintained contact with STUS so he was able to arrange for me to be smuggled to Texas.”

“So, at twelve-years-old, you were alone in Texas,” I confirm.

“I wasn’t exactly alone. That dear seventy-year-old man arranged for me to be taken in by a family that to my good fortune were ex-military, law-enforcement, and martial artists. I received years of valuable training. It was this little girl’s dream.”

At this point, I see Red in a different light. She isn’t a tough as nails, unemotional, force to be feared. Instead, she is a sensitive human being who had a tough life and yet received a life-changing lucky break on a California hillside. And, now she is sharing a private portion of her history with me. I have to admit that I am truly honored. Also, I have enhanced trust in my conspiratorial partner. Although, I cannot deny that I am still very attracted to her.

Virginia continues, “You have to remember that I went from horrible squalor to a comfortable life. I learned to appreciate what freedom really means. I escaped. It could have been easy to live in Texas and enjoy my life—but I couldn’t.”

“Why not?”

“That 70-year-old man who saved me was a patriot who watched his nation die. He knew he would never see its resurrection. Between him and that family in Texas I gained a better understanding of the true

value of liberty and the awesome effect it has on society. I envision all the downtrodden citizens of the United States simply existing on government handouts being released from their economic and legal bondage.” She pauses, then points out, “Like that program, *The Capitalist*, unleashing the natural drive and creativity of individuals will improve so many lives. I can’t ignore that possibility.”

“So, here we are, two—maybe three—leaders of a new revolution planning to change history.”

“Don’t overlook the fact that we have at our disposal far more sophisticated weapons than the original colonists. We also have the ability to communicate instantly and more directly with citizens. What we don’t have is a message or figurehead.”

I offer my idea, “I once told Dawn that our position is simple, ‘Freedom—it’s natural.’”

Virginia looks at me. I can’t tell if she likes or hates the concept. What I can tell, is that she is thinking. I just hope she isn’t thinking, “This guy is a boob.”

Virginia stands and goes over to the black side board cabinet where she keeps her chess set. I shudder at the thought of playing her again. She retrieves an object and brings it over to me. It is a red baseball cap. On the front are the words, “Make America Great Again.” Then she speaks, “At one time those who believed in liberty, a free market, and the American promise used this slogan to get elected. In truth, it is a powerful message. The socialists had imposed so many restrictions on citizens that the nation was in decline, more accurately, free-fall. This hat and that slogan led to a short period of recovery and hope. Unfortunately, it was for only a limited time. A combination of political statements, media misrepresentation, educational indoctrination, public relations stunts, and a gullible public it eventually was defined as a hate symbol. People were attacked for simply wearing this hat. It makes no sense and is hard to believe, but the media did their job well influencing public opinion. They later did the same thing to the American flag. Here, it’s a gift. However, you can’t wear it, now. Save it. In fact, don’t let anyone see it. I believe that slogan, along with opening the eyes of citizens of how wonderful things were, might awaken citizens and gain public support.”

I examine the hat. It looks like new—never been worn. The slogan does make sense. In an odd sort of way, it is empowering. It is a simple message. It creates an objective. It speaks to forgotten citizens. It defines us and our cause. I look at Virginia and know that my feelings can never be expressed. Unfortunately, they can neither be ignored.

Later in the afternoon, we board a military plane for our trip to the nation's capital.



Grover Cleveland

President: 1885 - 1889

“The upward course of a nation’s history is due in the long run to the soundness of heart of its average men and women.”

—Queen Elizabeth II

Chapter 22 | THE CAPITAL

As our military aircraft approaches Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Airport in Wilson, D.C. I see a golden city below. Everywhere there are magnificent glass and metal structures that reflect sunlight off of gold-tone windows. From above, the scene is mesmerizing. Ultra-modern buildings, paved streets filled with limousines, people walking on pristine sidewalks, a park sprinkled here and there, and a monorail.

At this point I have to make a confession. Last night, when I couldn’t sleep, I went on the Black Pearl Satellite Network and researched the history of our nation’s capital. The original *United States Constitution* provided for a federal district that is not part of any state to serve as the national capital. Article One, Section Eight, of the *Constitution* permits the establishment of a “District (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the government of the United States.” It would be managed under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Congress. Passage of the *Residence Act* on July 16, 1790, approved the creation of a capital district located along the Potomac River. The states of Maryland and Virginia each donated land and the City of Washington was founded in 1791. The initial shape of the federal district was a square measuring 10 miles on each side, totaling 100 square miles. I know, I had the same question, wasn’t it supposed to be ten miles square? Who knows?

On September 9, 1791, the capital was named in honor of President George Washington. The federal district was named Columbia, a feminine form of Columbus, which was a name commonly used for the United States at that time. Today, the D.C. stands for Democratic Collective. Congress held its first session in Washington, D.C. on November 17, 1800. Congress then passed the *District of Columbia*

Organic Act of 1801 that officially placed the entire territory under the exclusive control of the federal government. For thirty years Congress maintained the city of Washington, but ignored Alexandria on the opposite side of the Potomac river. Due to neglect and a fear that Congress would outlaw slavery in the District of Columbia, citizens petitioned Virginia to take back the land it had donated to the federal government through what is known as retrocession. In 1846, Congress returned the land originally ceded by Virginia which is why Washington D.C. had and now Wilson, D.C. has an odd shape and is not square. OK, enough history.

Washington, D.C. was a planned city. Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a French-born architect and city planner, was commissioned by President Washington in 1791 to design the capital. L'Enfant's design featured wide streets and avenues radiating out from rectangles. He also envisioned a National Mall which would be a garden-lined avenue 400 feet wide and approximately 1 mile in length. Due to conflicts among the parties involved President Washington dismissed L'Enfant in March, 1792. Andrew Ellicott, a surveyor, completed the design making revisions to the original plans. However, Pierre Charles L'Enfant is still credited with the overall design of the city. Sorry, I guess that was more history.

From my research I found a number of photographs of Washington, D.C. The tallest structure is, or was, the Washington Monument standing at 555 feet tall. It was located at the southwest portion of the government sector. Interestingly, it was supposed to be located where a line drawn directly west from the center of the Capitol crosses a line drawn directly south from the center of the White House. Unfortunately, the ground at that point was found to be too unstable to support the weight of the structure. The Washington monument location was, therefore, moved 390 feet east-southeast. At the axis point a small 3-foot-tall, 2.25' x 2.25' monolith called the Jefferson Pier was placed to mark the spot. More history—I know—but this is stuff you and I weren't taught in school.

In the old photograph, the White House, Capitol, Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial and other buildings reflect a neoclassical, Georgian, Victorian, gothic architectural style. And, believe me, I have no idea what that means. It was in the description. What I note are a lot of white buildings with columns and friezes and fancy designs. At least, that is what was in the picture. What I am observing now looks nothing like the photograph. To begin, the Washington Monument is nowhere to be seen. In its place is a large metallic globe reminiscent of the Unisphere I saw at the 1965 World's Fair in the Ghost Room. I wonder if it is the same

thing. Also, none of the other monuments are there, as well. In their place are ultra-modern buildings of glass and metal in a variety of odd shapes. Where the White House once stood is a large fortress. Made of cement and stone it stands at least five stories tall. Not a very attractive building. Compared to all the ultra-modern buildings that surround it that building stands out as a plain unappealing edifice. The plane banks to make a landing. Did I tell you I'm now comfortable with flying? I didn't, because I'm not. I'm still happier with my feet on the ground. Back to another observation. As we turn, I briefly see that outside the central government sector there are old buildings, dirty streets, and what might be tents—a whole bunch of tents.

We land at Roosevelt International Airport. Unlike the airport in Austin, Texas the building is clean and modern and functional. It also is sterile. There are no shops or restaurants. And, definitely no book stores. There also are armed guards—many armed guards. Walter, Virginia, and I follow our two hosts, Annette Larson the Presidential liaison with STUS and Derick Haynes a technology expert at the Pentagon. We will take our direction from them.

There is a monorail that runs from Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Airport to the government district. It is sparkling clean, fast, and quiet. While not crowded we are surrounded by numerous officials returning from wherever. When I'm not looking at Virginia, I'm quite observant. All the occupants of the car we are in are extremely well-dressed. The men are wearing expensive-looking suits, mostly dark colors, with pastel colored shirts. Many have on gold jewelry in the form of watches, bracelets, rings, and necklaces. A few have what appears to be diamond stud earrings. Then I notice the men with diamond earrings are wearing very pointy shoes. They must be uncomfortable. The ratio of men to women is about even. All the women are also wearing tailored suits, however, their garments are of brighter colors and interestingly they have on less jewelry. That which they are wearing are comprised more of precious stones than gold. One woman appears to notice my gaze and gives me an accusingly icy stare—brrrr. I look at Virginia to warm up. She seems lost in thought, or more accurately, she has that appearance while remaining acutely aware of her surroundings and everyone present. If I've learned anything about Red, she is never off duty. I wonder if she is still protecting me.

In a very short time, we arrive at the 3rd Street Mall Station. In the picture of the old Capital this whole area was one large park called the National Mall. Now it's where the monorail tracks run. Once again,

we take our two host's lead. Like three ducklings we follow behind. Quack, quack. Once outside before us is the Capital Building—a glass and steel oddly shaped pseudo-modern architectural eyesore.

Annette Larson states, “I have a meeting with the President. Derick will escort you to the Treasury Building. He'll give his report, after which you will answer the committee's questions, as well as note their concerns and requests.”

We eventually end up in a conference room occupied by about a dozen government officials. Walter, Virginia, and I sit in the back. Derick Haynes, technology expert at the Pentagon, does a short presentation in which he essentially concludes all is well with STUS facilities and functions. There is no concern about the Individual Identification And Data Chip (IIDC) operation, Social Compensation Program, Globalnet performance, communications networks, or The Keep. There is a slight murmur in the audience as they whisper to each other. Then one individual asks, “Are you satisfied that the facilities are adequately protected from the possibility of sabotage, given the political climate?”

With a slight smile and glance at the three of us he responds, “If you went through the security procedures that we did, you wouldn't have to ask that question. I am confident that STUS facilities are safe—if not impenetrable.”

A rather irritating, snide, arrogant sounding snip of a man asks, “And, management of STUS. Are we to blindly accept that they are to be trusted with so much responsibility and power?”

“That is not my area of expertise. I am a technology expert. However, based on decades of flawless operation and complete loyalty there doesn't appear to be any overt reason to become suspicious, at this time.”

Mr. Irritating counters, “Ah, but there is. With recent events and the upcoming United Nations globalization initiative we have to be highly suspicious of all persons and entities in positions of power. There are forces at work attempting to stop the progress we are about to achieve.”

Derick Haynes offers, “I'm sure there are other committees that are considering the trustworthiness of all individuals and organizations that the government deals with. Hopefully, they will identify any entities of concern.”

Still not satisfied, Mr. Irritating presses on, “What I want to know from you is whether or not we can access the facilities of STUS should the need arise.”

“To be honest, it would be nearly impossible.” He quickly adds,

“However, that is a positive factor as it also protects us from outside forces gaining control of critical operations”

“And, when the transition is complete, are you confident that STUS will turn over all operations to the United Nations Systems And Facilities Exchange (UNSAFE) when directed to do so?”

“I’m not in a position to answer that.”

“Technologically, if they refuse, what can be done?”

“The only solution I see is to recreate every system which would be very time-consuming—If even possible.”

At this point my brain is starting to smoke. Did I hear correctly that when the transition takes place the United Nations plans to take over STUS? Does David Trufire know this? Can they be stopped? I conclude, our revolution has to work if we are to avoid the world going into a New Dark Ages.

Mr. Irritating then asks, “Would it not be possible to simply replace the leadership of STUS?”

“I would have to assume that they have multiple safeguards to defend against any single individual alone being capable of accessing critical elements of any of the systems. There will most likely be multiple entity controls, redundancies, and backups throughout the operation. And, don’t forget Suicide Queen. I would wager that they have that program installed in various places.”

Little does he know that STUS created Suicide Queen and she is hiding everywhere in their systems. If they try to breach any system—no system.

“So, you are saying that we are powerless to control STUS.”

“Technologically, yes. However, I must point out once more that they have never failed to provide the government with what it needed at any time for decades. They are beyond reproach. There is no indication that this will change.”

“It is a time of change, sir. Nothing can be left to chance. All global citizens and enterprises must, and will, accept their fate. Order, conformity, and obedience will result in ten-thousand years of peace and tranquility. It is to be.”

I want to throw up. I want to stand up and shout obscenities. I want to grab Mr. Irritating by the neck and strangle him. I want to punch him in the face. I want to defend STUS. I sit silently.

Instead, Walter Tize stands and states, “Let me assure you that STUS will cooperate fully with the transition and abide by whatever regulations are implemented by the governing body. We do caution

decision-makers to consider, when making changes, that widespread access to systems will eventually lead to compromise, potential abuse, and system failure. Global chaos is not something anyone in this room wishes to experience."

"That, sir, sounds like a thinly veiled threat," Mr. Irritating responds.

"By no means, sir," Walter says with a tone of sarcasm, "Just a sobering dose of reality."

"You will find, sir, that reality is what those in power decide it is."

"Reality is a variable among men. You cannot change the direction of the wind only your perception of it based on which way you are looking."

"And, what does that mean?"

"Nature has a way of defining reality. Man's feeble efforts to be in control ultimately is only an illusion."

Derick Haynes regains control of the meeting. "I'm sure that STUS will provide whatever is needed for the United Nations leadership to have confidence that when the transition takes place all systems will be relinquished in an orderly manner."

A discussion follows and we are given numerous requests and questions to bring back to STUS management. All of the other participants in the room are arrogant, snobbish, condescending, self-important, and cold, but within those bounds friendly. Then the bomb is dropped.

Mr. Irritating makes a motion, "I move that we direct STUS to turn over control of all facilities, systems, and operations to the federal government within the next thirty days. This to include all documentation, passwords, safeguards, and codes for this Suicide Queen program. By the end of that time period the government will have complete irrevocable possession of the STUS enterprise." He looks venomously at Walter and says in a passive-aggressive manner, "Not too soon to start, wouldn't you agree?"

Walter shows no emotion as he points out, "What you are asking for is a very complex and delicate process. In all honesty, it cannot be safely executed in such a short time period."

I sit in stunned silence. You don't have to remind me, I know, I've been mute throughout. There was no warning or indication that this was going to happen. At least none that I was made aware of. I glance at Virginia. She is observing without showing any reaction. She could be seething, or fascinated, or amused, or thinking about the beach. No, I've learned enough about Virginia Morris to know that she is analyzing,

calculating, and strategizing. I see a chess board in my mind. Red is considering the situation and anticipating next steps. One thing for sure, if this decree is issued it will move up our plans dramatically. Things may get very ugly, very quickly.

At the conclusion of the meeting there is no resolution to Mr. Irritating's motion. We are told it will be reviewed and a decision made shortly. Without any pleasantries, we are deposited on the street and told to remain available. Very hospitable folks—if you ask me.

Walter breaks the silence, "I'm hungry. Let's find a place to eat."

As we walk down the street Virginia reminds us in a low voice, "We are most likely being observed and overheard at all times." She uses her telephone to send a text message. Both Walter's and my phone chime indicating that we received a message. It is from Virginia and reads, "We can talk freely about non-important subjects. If there is something confidential use text as these phones are secure."

"I want a steak," Walter declares.

There are numerous expensive-looking shops along the street and an ample number of restaurants. Limousines, government SUVs, and private luxury vehicles flow one way and another. Along the sidewalk pedestrians walk in both directions. It's easy to identify those who work for the government. They are all dressed similarly in expensive suits with lavish accessories. Even more revealing is their gait is quicker and they move confidently along as others step aside. I am fully aware that I am seeing the ruling elite firsthand. From the lowest undersecretary to the President these "chosen" guardians of freedom are convinced that they are above all others. They are the American aristocracy. Decades of inbreeding, nepotism, corruption, and murder have resulted in a form of royalty far more lascivious than the tyrannical king the Colonists rebelled against almost three hundred years ago. They enjoy a lifestyle beyond the imagination of the citizens over whom they lord. They rule while only focusing on themselves. Yet, as I observe them, I see vacant eyes, turned down mouths, and an apparent lack of awareness of all that surrounds them. Could it be that unlimited wealth and opportunity eventually reaches a point of total loss of sensitivity or appreciation? They have to keep feeding their addiction in a futile attempt to savor a taste long forgotten. Hollow souls seeking more and more while enjoying life less and less. I guess when you are obsessed with owning the world you no longer have the capacity to cherish what it offers.

After we eat there are more meetings, but no new bombshells. In fact, at one meeting the participants are quite complimentary of how

well STUS facilitates their agenda. We smile and thank them. In my mind, I'm thinking I can't wait until we pull the plug.

In the evening, I sit in my hotel room fully aware that there are multiple forms of surveillance keeping track of my activities. I'm confident that my phone and tablet are secure, however, I am concerned about prying eyes looking over my shoulder. The challenge is to keep their eyes from seeing my screen without it being obvious. If I hide under my covers, most likely they would find an excuse to knock on my door. An ersatz maid would arrive and attempt to get a glimpse of the screen of whatever device I was using. Or worse, steal them. Am I being paranoid? You bet your uncle's mustache I am. I don't even know what that means. Regardless, I have to find a way to innocently use my tablet without it being read. My solution? Leave the room.

In Wilson, D.C. there are cameras everywhere, but not adroitly hidden as they are in a hotel room. I walk outside the hotel to the outdoor pool area. There, under a surveillance camera mounted high on the wall aimed at the pool, I find a plastic patio chair against the brick wall. Unless there is a microscopic camera in those bricks, it's a good spot. I contact Dawn.

GEORGE: I'm in Wilson, D.C.

DAWN: I know.

GEORGE: Of course, you do.

DAWN: LOL. Where are you situated?

GEORGE: In the outdoor pool area with my back against a brick wall.

DAWN: Good. Still, be cryptic.

GEORGE: A decision may be made to order STUS to turn over all operations immediately.

DAWN: If that happens, they will start the wheels rolling in order to comply.

GEORGE: It won't be easy.

DAWN: The process will most likely take far longer than they realize.

GEORGE: They stated thirty days.

DAWN: It is your job to convince them that it cannot be rushed to avoid an irrevocable breakdown and loss of function. A broken system is not only of no value but will result in widespread panic. They should understand that.

GEORGE: Some will.

DAWN: George, remember, focus on the objective.

GEORGE: I understand.

DAWN: Don't get lost in the weeds. The process may seem off target at times, but trust those who are the experts. You might even call them prophets.

GEORGE: Profit or loss.

DAWN: Exactly.

GEORGE: I guess, if possible, the turnover will need to be executed as quickly as possible.

DAWN: As long as it isn't rushed which could lead to costly mistakes.

GEORGE: I understand.

DAWN: One more thing.

GEORGE: What is that?

DAWN: Don't believe the obvious.

GEORGE: I don't even believe the obscure.

DAWN: LOL. Good night.

When I sign off, I see that the latest episode of *The Capitalist* has been released. It opens in a dark conference room where all the attendees are but shadows. The music is mysterious and soft. A voice is heard saying, "We have word that there are a number of locales where the citizens are practicing illegal commerce. At present, it is a rumor, but rumors have a habit of being based on reality."

A different shadowy voice states, "It cannot be allowed."

Third voice, "It's treason!"

The second voice declares, "We must stop it before it spreads. When the people start to believe that they don't have to depend on the government to survive, in the long run it becomes more difficult for the government to survive."

A female voice is heard, "We must identify the perpetrators and stamp them out. Crush them. Deliver such a message that no one will entertain such a thought again. It is a matter of self-defense."

"Justifiable homicide," voice two concludes.

The original voice proclaims, "We need to investigate, search far and wide, and bring the criminals to justice."

The scene dissolves to a shot of a young female teacher on a learning channel. At first, it looks quite normal and innocent. Then she stands, walks over to a map of the thirteen original colonies, and states, "Original American history has not been taught for fifty years. There is a reason for that. Life in colonial America was challenging and difficult. Settlers faced hardships you and I could not endure. However, endure

they did, because they valued something for which they would risk everything—individual freedom. Much like we live today under the yoke of tyrants, Colonists were ruled by an oppressive king and parliament.”

She puts up a picture of King George III and continues, “This was a time of magic. A moment in the continuum of human existence when all the ingredients came together to create something that had never existed before. The concept of individual freedom protected by a government—not granted by a government—took root. Colonists had tasted freedom in the New World and were unwilling to relinquish it to a far-off government. At the same time brilliant, courageous, and inspired men joined together to throw off the shackles of an unjust government.”

The teacher holds up a parchment and proceeds to read, “When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over

these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”

She is holding a copy of the original *Declaration of Independence*. A list of grievances is read and the final paragraph, “We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”

You have to understand that this is wonderful, however, I’m about to panic. If she shows the names of the signers of the *Declaration of Independence*, my name will stand out like a skunk in an elevator. Give me a break, it’s the best I could think of while panicking.

She says, “Fifty-six selfless men so valued liberty that they risked it all. From their heroic acts a nation was born. A nation “of the people” that established a new and unique perspective. A nation dedicated to protecting its citizen’s rights—even from itself. A nation that thrived and grew to become a world power. A nation that served your forefathers. A nation men died to protect. A nation that was stolen from you before you were born.

The scene changes to shots of Falcon standing with his back to the camera in front of changing scenes of productive and happy people. A group making acoustic guitars, a farmer tilling his field, a technician working on a generator, a busy restaurant, and people laughing in a town square. He turns toward the camera and states, “Freedom; once the seed is planted it grows and spreads and cannot be stopped.” The camera fades to black.

As I’m thinking about the program I just watched, my phone indicates that I received a message. It’s from Virginia and reads, “We must leave immediately. Grab your gear and meet me on the roof.”



Benjamin Harrison
President: 1889 - 1893

***“Tricks and treachery are the practice of fools,
that don’t have brains enough to be honest.”***

—Benjamin Franklin

Chapter 23 | THE ESCAPE

My heart is pounding, hands shaking, and sweat is beading on my forehead. These are all signs of a guilty man. And, man do I feel guilty. Virginia’s text message had a finality to it that dripped with danger. Or, is that sweat? “We must leave immediately.” There is no question about meaning. We aren’t late for a ball or appointment. There isn’t a storm approaching. Or maybe, in a sense, there is. Without question, we are in danger. From a pocket in my overnight bag I stealthily sneak out a thumb glove and deposit it in my pants pocket. I don’t want whomever might be watching to see me put it on. Eyes thousands of eyes in my hotel room are staring at me. Everywhere I look something appears to be a lens. They must see me packing. They must know I’m about to run. They’re probably waiting outside my door. Paranoia is so much fun.

I leave my room, close the door, put my hand in my pocket and slip on the thumb glove. Their cameras might be able to follow me visually, but I am no longer on the grid. I wonder what my signal is now showing me to be. If Virginia had anything to do with it there is no telling. Out of caution I press the elevator down button. It arrives and is empty. I press the button to go down two floors, as well as the button for the lobby. Here is my thinking. If they are monitoring our movements, they can’t possibly be watching every camera at once. They would be following Walter, as well. So, hopefully, they are now watching the lobby not the elevator I entered. This is probably ridiculous, but I get off two floors down and press the up button. When an elevator arrives, I ride to the top floor, find the stairs, and climb to the roof.

Virginia and Walter are waiting. “What took you so long?” Walter asks.

Of course, they laugh at my attempt to avoid surveillance. Now, I

am listening to events that have brought us to this place at this time.

Virginia explains, "After our meeting, I did a little checking on the gentleman who wants immediate turnover of control of STUS. His name is Charlie Schumer. He is an undersecretary in the Department of Homeland Security. I visited his website." She looks at me and asks, "Do you remember the program named 'Back Door?'" Before I can give her a blank stare, she explains, "Our tablets operate on the Black Pearl Satellite Network not the government network. By being on Black Pearl we can't be tracked, traced, or turned off. Whatever website we visit has no idea that we are there. We are invisible. On a website that requires an IIDC identifier to enter, we activate Back Door and we're in. When STUS designed the IIDC technology they included a universal over-ride. So, when a website is created and locked only allowing access to certain approved IIDC individuals, they place their thumb on a reader to register. Their IIDC code is saved along with our universal over-ride code. The locked website maintains a list of approved IIDC identifiers and one hidden digital key."

I interrupt with a low whisper, "Shouldn't you keep this quiet? We are likely being monitored."

"I told you to come to the roof because the few cameras up here have been disabled. Wireless technology is extremely vulnerable. Plus, they have no way of knowing we are up here," Virginia explains. She looks at my thumb to confirm that I have on a glove. "Given what I've found out, we have to leave Wilson, ASAP. I read private locked emails stored on Schumer's website. He is part of the conspiracy. When the coup failed, he was not implicated. However, from what I uncovered it is clear that Charlie Schumer is one of the leaders of the insurrection. There are others, but I can only identify a few. Without question, it goes deep. They want to gain control of all STUS operations as it would give them the capability to control the government. They are opposed to the United Nations restructuring. Instead, they want to take over the United States and run it as a Marxist communist totalitarian state." She pauses and looks around. When all seems quiet, she continues, "With the power of the STUS programs they believe they can compete with other global powers." As an aside she comments, "They have no idea what STUS has the capacity to do. In fact, I have an idea, but I'm sure there is far more beneath the surface than even I realize." Virginia looks at Walter who shows no reaction even though he probably knows a lot more than he is telling.

"There's more," Virginia states. "This Charlie Schumer and his

cronies have introduced fraudulent information that they say proves beyond a shadow of doubt that we are part of the very failed coup that they attempted. Warrants for our arrests have been issued. The Secret Service, National Police, FBI, and Federal Marshalls have been dispatched to apprehend us.”

“What no CIA?” Walter comments.

I feel like a rat in a trap or a goof on a roof—take your pick. With all those agencies looking for us we really don’t have much chance. I ask, “What’s the plan?”

“Right now, we sit tight,” Virginia responds. “According to all tracking sources we are not in the hotel.”

“If we are nowhere on the grid, won’t they search the hotel?” I ask.

“They will have photos of us—that’s for sure,” Walter points out. “However, before they start a door to door search of the hotel, they will be chasing us in all the different locations where we are indicated to be on the grid.”

“Prophet?” I inquire.

“No, simple code swapping,” Walter states. “The folks at STUS Intelligence locate an individual in a specific geographic area and swap their IIDC code with one of ours on the uplink. In essence, they become us, authorities rush to the location, and we are not there.”

“STUS has an Intelligence Division?”

Walter shrugs.

Virginia takes over the conversation, “Local police will still have our photographs, so we are not out of the woods, even though our IIDC chip is showing us as someone else.”

I have to ask, “And, who am I this time?”

An unwelcome and devious smile crosses Red’s face, “You are a twenty-nine-year-old ballerina named Natasha Kovachenko.”

“Why do you do that?” I ask in frustration.

“It amuses me,” she replies. Then adds, “So, move gracefully, so as to not blow your cover.”

Walter chokes on a muffled laugh.

Virginia gets back to business, “We have to leave here while it’s still dark.” She stands and walks over to the edge of the roof—we follow. “Our target destination is over there. That slum will be a good cover before we make other arrangements. There is far less surveillance there. The risk is that it is a designated ‘no go’ zone due to an elevated crime rate. In addition, we will stand out as it is predominately black.”

“Do you think they will turn us in?” I ask.

“I think they’ll try to rob us,” Walter interjects.

“Unfortunately, their reaction to our presence is an unknown,” Virginia admits. “I guess we will find out when we get there. But first we have to get there.” She does some texting and waits for a response. When she receives it, she says, “I called for a diversion. An alert will be sent out that we have been spotted at the Global Citizen Sphere. That should get most of the attention going that way. We will take the elevator to the second floor and then the stairs to the lobby. The exit door is on the right about ten steps. I’ll go first. You two follow quickly. When we are on the street, stick to the shadows, move briskly, but not so fast as to bring attention to yourself.” She smiles and tells me, “Don’t trip over your tutu.”

I owe Red one. Not sure what it will be but she’s on my list. However, we have to get out of Wilson first. We head downstairs and exit by the side door. On the outside we are stopped by a policeman who was watching the door. I think I blinked and missed seeing the blow that took him down. Virginia takes his gun, handcuffs him to a railing, and ties a gag around his mouth. We proceed down a quiet street. In the distance there are sirens. They seem to be heading away from us. As we travel and turn onto different streets the surroundings grow less and less opulent, or well-designed, or kept up. Less than ten blocks from the government sector we are in a depressed area—a slum. Boarded-up windows and doors are seen in the shadows of poorly lit streets. Garbage is strewn on the sidewalk and in the street. The odor is oppressive. No one is on the street, yet I feel eyes watching us.

Virginia abruptly stops. I walk into Walter. He whispers some kind of curse. We wait in silence. A cat knocks over a box, I jump, and a dog barks. We wait. Distant sirens are heard. The damn cat walks by meowing loudly. We wait. A light comes on which feels like a lightning strike. Then an old wooden door creaks partially open. Inside, eyes peer out. In the darkness, I can’t tell if it is a male or female, young or old, hostile or friendly. Virginia moves in the direction of the hidden observer. We follow.

“Who that, out there?” a voice that sounds like that of an old woman inquires.

Virginia cautiously approaches the woman. When she is near the door she says in a low non-threatening tone, “We need your help.”

“My help? There’s nothing I can do. Go away.”

“Let us come in and I’ll explain.”

"How do I know you ain't no robbers?"

"Because if we wanted to rob you, we already would have," Virginia points out.

"Maybe so. I don't need no trouble. Go away."

"Let us come in. We have no intention of hurting you. As I said, we need your help."

"I can't help you."

"If you help us, we'll help you."

"You talk crazy."

"Let us come in and I'll tell you how we can help you."

"Help me? What help can you give me out in the dark night wandering around asking strangers for help?"

"I think you'll be surprised. Let us in," Virginia adds a little more authority to her voice.

"I must be out of my mind." The old wooden door swings inward with a low creaking sound.

We enter. The first thing I notice is the strong aroma of fried food mixed with a mildew odor. Inside we find a small parlor lit with candles. The furnishings are a mismatched mix of two tattered easy chairs and a couch with a blanket draped over it. A few low end tables are placed next to the chairs and couch. In the subdued light I trip over a well-worn rug with turned up ends. Don't worry I don't fall—I do a pli  . Old draperies cover the window which is why we didn't see light from outside. I hear the door being bolted with multiple locks.

The person who let us in is an old woman who appears to be in her sixties. She moves with relative ease for her age. At approximately five-feet-four-inches she is shorter than all three of us. Thin wrists and a lean build indicate that she could use a good meal. Her short cropped grey hair makes her brown eyes appear large and striking. When she looks at you it is directly at you. She's wearing a flannel robe over cotton pajamas and slippers. Oh, and by the way, she is black and carrying a baseball bat.

With one swift move Virginia takes the bat from the surprised woman and states, "You don't need this. We wish you no harm. As I said we need your help and in return will help you."

"More crazy talk."

We all sit down wherever we can and Virginia explains, "We are wanted by the government even though we haven't done anything wrong."

The woman doesn't react.

Virginia provides a brief explanation of our circumstances and how we need to get out of Wilson as quickly as possible.

After listening, nodding, and remaining expressionless, the woman states, “You can’t travel at night—not in this neighborhood. The only ones on the street are no goods. You’ll have to stay here until morning.” Her gaze goes from one of us to the other as if sizing up the situation. “I have two eggs. We can share them in the morning. You’ll have to make yourself as comfortable as you can until then.”

Something bites me. I think it’s a flea. I hope it’s a flea.

“Can you tell us how we can get across the Potomac without being caught?”

“Oh, you can’t go that way. If you want to escape you have to go by the underground.”

“Can you get us to this underground?”

She hesitates, looks at each of us once more, and asks rhetorically, “Are you sure you’re not government?”

“If you look at your television news channel most likely by now our pictures are being shown as wanted conspirators,” Walter offers.

The woman looks toward the corner of the room where a small monitor leans against a wall. The screen is cracked. Obviously, she can’t watch the news channels.

“Do you have a phone?” Walter asks.

“The government phone doesn’t charge on the limited electricity we are allocated.”

“How do you get your Social Compensation Program payments?” he inquires.

She tilts her head, smiles, and states, “I go to the money man. He lets me check to see that I have money and pay my rent and other bills, for a small fee.”

“That’s just wrong,” I remark.

“It’s the only way to pay my bills and know that I have money for food.” She shrugs and adds, “Of course, food money sometimes runs out before the month runs out.”

Virginia speaks up, “I told you we would help you and so we can. By the way, my name is Virginia Morris. This is Walter Tize and George Clymer.”

“I’m Garnette Poodle—like the dog,” she smiles.

“Do you live here alone, Garnette?”

“My boy, he died. He was twenty-seven when he got stabbed. They took him to the hospital but there were so many people waiting he

just couldn't hang on. He looked at me and said, 'Mama, this is the only way out,' and he closed his eyes. He was right. With no jobs, crime everywhere, everything falling down, and not enough government money to eat, it was the only way out. So, here I stay until I follow my boy."

"Garnette, I'm sorry about your son. The government that failed him and you is the government we are against," Virginia said in the kindest voice I've ever heard from her. There is a big heart in there somewhere. She continues, "Because you helped us, we're going to help you." She taps some keys on her phone, asks Garnette to place her thumb on the thumbpad, and after looking at the screen states, "According to your file you have no IMUs in your account."

"I have to wait until the new month."

"Well, we're going to fix that," Virginia says as her fingers dance on her phone to do their job. After a few moments she shows Garnette her balance.

"That can't be true."

"It is."

"That's more money than I get in years—it can't be right."

"I moved some IMUs from a general fund where we work. Don't worry it's all legal." Virginia looks directly at Garnette Poodle and instructs her, "Don't go back to the money man. He is most likely cheating you. Use some of this money to buy a new phone. Combined with the SCP payments it should allow you to go someplace that is safer and better than here."

Garnette sits in silence for a period of time. She then looks up and says, "Well, I better make sure to get you out of the city safely."

The next morning Mrs. Poodle offers to fry us some eggs but we all decline. My back hurts from sleeping in a not-so-comfortable chair. Our host declares that she has to go out for an hour to make arrangements for our escape. She leaves.

"Do you believe she will be able to shepherd us out of town?" Walter asks.

"We're kind of counting on it," I reply. After a moment of thought I ask, "You don't suppose that she would turn us in to the authorities, do you?"

Virginia responds, "It's among the possibilities. Low potential, but we better monitor the Metropolitan Police website through Back Door." She uses her phone to invisibly enter the site and opens a communications channel. We now hear various calls. None refer to us.

Time passes and our stress level rises. Virginia paces, stops to listen to the police scanner, looks out the window, paces, pats her hip, looks out the window, and says, “Heads up, here she comes.”

“Anyone with her?” Walter asks.

“No. But, she is carrying something.”

We wait.

In a few minutes, Garnette Poodle enters her apartment. In her arms is what appears to be a bundle of rags. The old woman is breathless. She flops into one of the chairs. We wait. Virginia brings her some water. After a short rest, Garnette speaks, “There is a man with a panel truck who will take you north through the National Arboretum to a place where you can cross the Anacostia.”

“Can he be trusted?” Walter asks.

“Can you?”

“Point taken.”

Garnette addresses Virginia, “I told him you would pay him. Not like you gave me—a few IMUs is all he wants to get his family some more food.”

“If he helps us, I’ll reward him generously,” Virginia declares.

Garnette smiles, “Somehow I thought you would.” She then becomes serious, “He can’t come here. He fears his truck would be hijacked. You have to go to him.” She explains further, “This is Black Mamba turf. They control all of Kingman Park. It’s a wonder that you got this far last night. They must have been busy somewhere else.”

“What about police?” I ask.

I’m surprised by her piecing stare. Then she explains, “Police don’t come to Kingman.”

Virginia asks, “Where are we supposed to meet your friend? What’s his name?”

“His name is Redmond, Tyrone Redmond. He’s an outsider, but a good brother.” The old woman sighs, “You don’t know nothing about outsiders and throwaways.”

“Throwaways?” Virginia asks.

“I’m sixty-five-years-old. I was born in 2010. When the world changed and the government took control of everything, I was fifteen and in high school. They called it the Reorganization. Overnight, hope became hopeless. Food was hard to find, school closed, people lost their jobs and became homeless, and gangs took over everything. I had some nice clothes and shoes. Some gangster-girls beat me up and took them. Sent me home in my underwear. My mother lost her job because a

foreign company became the owners. They brought in their own workers. She had been a manager and made a good salary. After the Reorganization, she cleaned houses in the government sector. Some black people kept their jobs, worked for the government, or found a way to survive. Others turned to drugs, and crime, and death. My mother told me that her whole life politicians promised to make it better for minorities like us which was why she always voted for them. After the Reorganization, elections were controlled by the government and didn't really count. That meant that our votes no longer counted. We weren't needed anymore. No more pretty promises. We were throwaways. Survival became a daily effort. My mother got robbed so many times she would hide her money in her body. I was twenty-six when they stuck that IIDC thing in my thumb. It stopped my mother being robbed by gangs but not by the government that taxed her small cleaning salary so much she simply quit. We lived on what the government gave us which wasn't much. Both of us did odd jobs for food or some clothing."

As I listen to Garnette Poodle I have a wide range of emotions. I'm embarrassed for feeling like I have it hard. Disgust as I see what our government has done to its citizens. Hatred for those less than two miles away callously living like royalty. Helplessness, knowing that there is little I can do immediately to change how things are. Anger that pushes me to the edge of violence aimed at unseen elitists who have no conscience, values, or humanity. And, finally fear. Not fear for me, but for Virginia and Walter and my family. If I'm a wanted fugitive they are in danger.

"When I was thirty, I was raped which is how I had my boy." She pauses and sits in silence.

It doesn't take a genius to see a mother clinging to fading images of a lost son. Her dreams of a better future for him long gone, replaced by the nightmare of what happened. Infinite love trapped in grim memories that overpower too few reminiscences of joyful exhilarating times together. Memories fade but the pain remains. A tear, single and lonely, searches once more for a reason why. I think of my mother and wonder if she would shed a single tear for me. After all, I'm a traitor and a wanted criminal. Innocent though I be.

"That money that you gave me. It would take me away from here. But, maybe, it can free another momma and her boy or girl who have a whole lot more living to do. It would be better to save someone worth saving."

Virginia walks over to Garnette and hugs her. In a soft voice she says, "You're worth saving. Use that money anyway you wish, but don't

forget to take care of yourself. Change is coming and we will need a lot of people like you to rebuild our damaged nation.”

Garnette composes herself and outlines our escape plan. “I brought these clothes for you to wear over your clothes. They’re rags, but the raggier the better. Dressed the way you are, you wouldn’t last ten minutes on those streets. It’s not going to be easy for you to blend in, but we gotta try. Your whiteness is going to stand out like a flashlight at night. So, I got these to help.” She hands each of us a hat. Virginia’s has a type of veil in front, Walter’s is a wide brimmed hat that he can pull down in front, and mine is a top hat with a skeleton face mask attached. Can you say Vudu?

While we are donning our fineries, I tell Virginia that I’m worried about my family.

“I took care of it last night,” she tells me. “STUS was going to have them picked up and brought to an undisclosed location.”

With a burnt cork Garnette darkens any part of us that stands out. As she does, she tells us how to get to the pick-up point with Tyrone Redmond. “Take the alley behind my house east. Cross 15th Street and go between the buildings. After you cross 16th street turn left and a few blocks up there is a food co-op. There’s an alley on the right of it. Go through it to 17th street. This is the most dangerous part. You are smack dab in the middle of Kingman Park and the Black Mambas. There’s an old dilapidated football field where the high school used to be. Stay between and football field and the boarded-up school. Then on the other side of 19th Street there is a tent city in what used to be the parking lot of RFK Stadium. Be careful there are a lot of druggies in that tent city. On the left side of the stadium there is a stand of trees. Wait there.”

Virginia made notes and reads them back to Garnette.

“Good. Now, Tyrone drives a dark green panel truck. He’s gonna stop and wait five minutes and then he’s gone. It’s too dangerous to remain in that area too long. So, get there as quickly as possible, but you may have a wait because he wants to give you enough time to get there.”

It’s late morning when we set out. We camouflaged our overnight bags as cardboard boxes with junk hanging out. Someone might get inquisitive, but it’s less likely. The first few alleys are empty and we go through without incident. It’s when we go up 16th Street to the food co-op that things get interesting. There are a group of ten to twelve people waiting outside. We try to slip by into the ally on the right side of the building. That is when two young punks follow us. Halfway up the alley one questions, “Hey, what you got in them boxes?”

Virginia stops, turns around, and aims the police officer's pistol at the two surprised stalkers. She spits, "You have a choice. I can put two holes in each of you or you can walk over to that pole." They choose the pole. Using their belts, she ties their wrists together as they are hugging the pole. "By the time they get out of that we'll be long gone," Virginia announces as she passes Walter and me at a brisk pace. We follow.

We come up to the abandoned school and football field. Unfortunately, there are a lot of seedy and dangerous looking characters all around. We don't have a lot of time as those two punks might get loose quicker than we figured. Also, we don't want to miss our connection. Quick action is needed. Virginia looks at me and says, "George, in chess, sometimes you have to sacrifice the queen. When I draw them away, you and Walter get to the rendezvous point."

"No. we're not going to leave you behind."

"This isn't a debate. Do what I tell you. Here, take my bag with you." With that she jumps up and walks right out into the middle of the street, pulls off her hat, and yells, "What's a girl have to do to get a drink around here?" Virginia walks at a fast pace down a street away from the school. A pack of Black Mambas follow making crude remarks.

I stand looking in disbelief. There is no way I'm leaving Virginia behind. Walter slaps my back and orders, "Come'on, we have to go." When I hesitate, he grabs my collar and half drags me across the street into the area between the school and football field. At the next street we stand opposite the tent city in the abandoned parking lot. I still want to go back and help Virginia. Walter pulls me toward the array of tents. There are drugged bodies laying in different positions and states of bliss. A few look as though they are permanently beyond bliss.

A somewhat sober skinny man of premature age tries to stop me. Without thinking, I drive my elbow into his face knocking him backwards over a pile of rubble. In my mind I'm making a plan. I'll get Walter to the pick-up location and then I'm going back for Red, uh Virginia. Behind us I hear the report of a gun. One, two, three shots echo in the distance.

Walter and I are half way through the tent city when three men step out in front of us. "What's in the boxes, dog?" the one in the middle asks with enough venom in his voice to show he means business.

"None of your damn business, shithead," Walter roars.

I get into the spirit and add, "Is it worth your life to find out?"

He snaps open an eight-inch switchblade knife and replies, "Is it worth yours?"

From behind there is a commotion. I don't dare turn away from

my adversary. Before I know it, someone pushes past me, shoots the knife-wielding man in the foot, and continues on. Bright red hair tells me who it is. With the sound of the gunshot everyone scattered so Walter and I run to catch up with Virginia. We cross the street near the stadium and find our hiding place in a stand of trees.

"Can't you two stay out of trouble?" a winded Virginia asks facetiously.

OK, just between you and me, I have the dumbest grin on my face when I say, "I'm so glad to see you. I was going to go back to help you."

"I appreciate it, but I knew I could work faster alone."

"What were the shots about?" I ask.

"I was reasoning with them," she answers. "I had to get their attention."

In a few minutes a dark green panel van stops at the curb. We hustle over to it and confirm that it is Tyrone. It is a reassuring feeling to be traveling in a vehicle. We enter the National Arboretum. It is 446 acres of winding trails and narrow roads on the west bank of the Anacostia River. When we get to the north edge of the Arboretum, Tyrone points at a grove of trees and bushes and says, "On the other side of those trees are railroad tracks. Follow those tracks to the right and you can cross the Anacostia on an old bridge. There are two sets of tracks so it's pretty safe. Look out for trains, though, because its passenger trains and they go really fast."

Virginia moves IMUs into Tyrone's account. When he sees the amount he says, "Thank you. That's a lot more than Garnette said you would pay."

"Do me a favor," Virginia requests, "Get Garnette a new phone and help her move out of that dangerous area."

"I'll do what I can. Now, on the other side of the bridge when you get to an abandoned sewage treatment plant you're out of Wilson. Stay on the railroad tracks and go under a big highway. On the other side of the highway go right on a small road and you'll come to a Baptist Church. The preacher will put you up for the night."

As dusk settles over the area we reach the illegal church.

Walter observes, "We forgot to eat."



Grover Cleveland

President: 1893 - 1897

***“The best hiding spots are not the most hidden;
they’re merely the least searched.”***

—Chris Pavone

Chapter 24 | THE FUGITIVES

I can’t help but think back to finding that history book in the attic. There was no way I could have known that opening a book was indeed opening Pandora’s Box. Yet, here we sit in an old church waiting for word as to how we are going to get rescued. On my tablet I see our faces, our names, the word “traitors,” and IMU rewards broadcast on all the news channels. We are on the FBI’s most wanted list. Then, to my surprise and dismay, I see a statement issued by David Trufire, president of STUS.

“At STUS we are shocked to have learned of the illegal actions of three of our former employees. STUS has a proud history of absolute support of our government and will not tolerate even the smallest of offenses against it. We are cooperating completely with law enforcement and have pledged to assist in the location and apprehension of these suspects. At a time when we are about to embark on a global initiative aimed at generating the greatest prosperity and level of peace in the history of mankind, we must not let a few dissidents slow the process. I urge these three fugitives to give themselves up.”

The tires of that bus really do hurt and leave a lasting impression. You know where I turn.

DAWN: George, what took you so long?

GEORGE: I’ve been a little busy.

DAWN: I can tell. Overthrowing the government and all, you must be exhausted.

GEORGE: I’m not laughing. This is serious.

DAWN: Yes. You are correct.

GEORGE: We are fugitives from justice.

DAWN: Fugitives from injustice.

GEORGE: Whatever. We are on the run—probably for our lives.

DAWN: There is no probably about it.

GEORGE: Then, why are you making so light about what is going on? I don't understand.

DAWN: Foxhole humor.

GEORGE: What?

DAWN: In past wars, when bullets were flying overhead, soldiers expressed their fear with humor. Sometimes dark humor, lewd jokes, not-so-funny perspective, and downright hilarious comments. They didn't realize it, but their emotions had to have an outlet. It was laugh or cry.

GEORGE: I'm about to cry.

DAWN: Just don't get your tutu wet.

GEORGE: Lol. How do you know about that?

DAWN: I hear things.

GEORGE: Virginia?

DAWN: I thought you went in the other direction toward Maryland.

GEORGE: Very funny.

DAWN: I try.

GEORGE: Why did David Trufire turn on us?

DAWN: Why do you think?

GEORGE: Great! More questions answered with a question. He's trying to save STUS.

DAWN: Wake up and smell the brimstone, George.

GEORGE: I'd like to believe that he is just saying those things to appease the government. If he condemns us and distances STUS from us there is less suspicion or risk to the company and the revolution.

DAWN: During the original American Revolution there were spies and traitors. It became essential to know who to trust and who to keep at arm's length. Do you trust David Trufire?

GEORGE: I'm not sure. After seeing him behind the President at the announcement of the United Nations initiative and now this statement it makes me wonder.

DAWN: Do you trust me?

GEORGE: Absolutely.

DAWN: Than trust David.

I guess that pretty much makes up my mind. In some ways, it clears my mind. Without STUS there is no revolution. The brilliance of nine Americans sixty years ago, anticipating the need for a new revolution, who developed the tools by which this campaign may be won cannot be

overstated.

Virginia joins me and says, “George, your father and sister have been moved to a safe place. Your mother refused to go. She’s been arrested.”

“Arrested? She’s done nothing wrong,” I spout. “In fact, she’s been the loyal socialist—calling me a traitor.”

Virginia nods and points out, “It’s their way of trying to get to you.”

“What do they expect, me to storm the jail guns blazing?”

“They expect you to give yourself up.”

The government never plays fair or, for that matter, within legal bounds. It is that very reason why it must be stopped. However, this is my mother we are talking about. How can I ignore her plight? My evil side tells me that she brought this on herself. She could have gone with my father and sister. That doesn’t help or change the fact that she is my mother. I wonder if there is anything STUS can do. It is a passing thought. They have to continue to be loyal to the government in every way. And, in the end, I have to be loyal to the revolution. I want to cry but instead say, “I hope the food is good in lockup.”

Virginia looks at me and smiles. I do love her . . . smile.

“Any word on next steps?” I inquire.

“We are to stay put. Airports, roads, railroads, and waterways are all under surveillance. At present, we have been located on the grid in New York City.”

“Oh, where are we staying?” I jest, “I mean, I don’t want to stay in some sleazy fleabag hotel.”

She just stares at me. I love her . . . stare.

Walter joins us. He reads a news alert, “Government forces have surrounded the headquarters of STUS Corporation. According to unnamed sources, they are executing a search warrant. No comments have been made by the government or officials at STUS Corporation.” He looks up, “Boom!”

“What does this mean?” I ask.

“They could be looking for us,” Walter surmises. “More likely, they are beginning the process of attempting to take over all STUS operations.”

“Game on,” Virginia exclaims.

“How vulnerable is STUS?” I ask.

Walter answers, “The headquarters building contains everything that is already in the public domain. Or, at least data and information the

government already has. If they try to find the location of the various mirror facilities, they will come up empty. We can take them there, but no maps exist that would allow them to go there on their own. If they try to access secure computers, or tablets, or phones . . .”

“Suicide Queen,” I respond.

“A billion zeros.”

“Can they gain control of any of the programs?” I inquire.

“No more than what we have given them. If they wish to change the Social Compensation level of an individual, they can do it. If they wish to track spending habits of any citizen it is readily available at their central operations facility in Wilson, D.C. They can find any person with an IIDC chip in their thumb on the Geographic Positioning Grid (GPG).”

“Except us,” Virginia points out.

“Except us,” Walter agrees.

Walter continues, “If they make any attempt to find or access The Keep a message will be sent to every government official that uses that institution warning that the result will be the complete elimination of any record of them or the amount of IMUs they have available. While some might think that is a good thing because they are in debt, they will not welcome loss of the ability to perform all confidential or anonymous financial transactions. They will fall in line with everyone else and be subject to the same scrutiny. I’m sure they will protect the integrity of The Keep at all cost.”

Virginia is examining the handgun she took from the police officer at the hotel. As she does so, she gives a running dissertation, “A Ruger Security 9, 9mm pistol. Lightweight. Polymer frame. 15 round magazine. Given that I used three there are twelve remaining. Fixed front sight. Adjustable rear sight. No night sights. It will do.”

“You expecting trouble,” I inquire.

“Always.”

Out of curiosity I have to ask, “What did you shoot back in Kingman Park?”

She looks up, holds out the pistol, and answers, “I shot this gun.”

“So, you’re not going to answer.”

“I like to remain a mystery.”

“You and Dawn. If you were blond, I’d think you were one and the same.”

Virginia laughs. I love her . . . laugh.

After a few minutes, Walter announces, “We’ve been captured in Connecticut. At least that is what all the news channels are saying.”

"I wonder if we put up a fight?" I comment.

I hear the slide of a pistol snap closed and Virginia says, "We did."

While we wait for instructions I think about the revolution. We can't simply turn off the money spigot and say "you're free" now go out and enjoy life. People with jobs might get along, but the masses that have been essentially wards of the state would perish. They have to be weaned. The first question is how do we do it. Second, how do we make people both understand it and welcome it. And, lastly, how do we determine who must remain on public assistance. I consider Garnette Poodle. She is approaching retirement age and most likely will depend on the government for subsistence. With all that in mind, I wonder from where the money will come. I conclude, we need an economic transition team working on solutions right now.

"Time for us to go," Walter announces. "Our ride will be here in ten minutes."

Virginia cautions, "Keep in mind, not every law enforcement officer has seen the news or been ordered to stand down. They are still on the lookout for us." She asks Walter, "What does our ride look like?"

"Doesn't say." He looks out at the depressed neighborhood with old houses in sore need of repair and paint. The few vehicles that could be seen are also old and of questionable reliability. "I have a feeling that we will know it when we see it."

We wait.

In exactly ten minutes, three police cars arrive at the Baptist church. Immediately, I look toward Virginia because she doesn't wrestle with flight or fight. And, quite honestly, I'm at the point of agreeing with her. Someone turned us in. Garnette Poodle? Tyrone Redmond? David Trufire? Dawn said, "Trust David Trufire." I'm here because of Dawn. I'm now irretrievably involved in a world-changing enterprise. I'm destined to be a part of history—good or bad. I'm committed to the new revolution. So, do we fight our way out? "Trust David Trufire."

"That's our ride," I state with confidence.

"The question is, our ride to where?" Walter says with a tone of concern.

Virginia watches the three police vehicles in silence. They sit like three bombs that could detonate at any moment—large, imposing, dangerous, and unpredictable.

Walter receives a text. "We've been instructed to split up. Virginia in the first vehicle, me in the second, and George in the last."

"Why split us up?" I ask. Believe it or not, and I know this is

absolutely counter-intuitive, I feel as though I might be needed to protect Virginia. Ah, the male ego. Truly, that is why women live longer.

“Why do birds always crap on my car? Why can’t Hollywood ever make a decent movie? Why do you have that stupid look on your face? Why does my stomach hurt?” Walter responds.

“We have to make a decision,” Virginia states while maintaining her observation of the police vehicles.

I give my opinion, “It could be that they are not certain that they will be able to get all of us to a safe location. If we split up, we might have a better chance of one or two getting through. It comes down to a matter of trust. Do we trust David Trufire and STUS enough to risk our lives? As this conflict continues, we are going to be put in positions like this again and again. I trust Dawn, therefore David Trufire, so I vote we take the chance.”

“Done. Let’s go,” Virginia states as she gathers her things.

I feel I have to say something to my cohorts before we part. “I guess we’ll see each other in an undisclosed location. Take care of yourselves. I kinda like having you around. You know what I mean.”

Virginia nods and says, “You take care of you.”

Walter displays his softer side, “Up yours!”

We walk out of the church cautiously, waiting to be rushed by a group of SWAT team members who have been in hiding. None appear. It’s a clear sunny morning. A few birds fly about but their chirps are drowned out by the steady overpowering din from the large highway on our left. As we each approach our designated vehicle a police officer steps out of the passenger seat and opens the rear door. I have a flashback of when I was thrown none-too-gently into one of these law enforcement vehicles. My greeter opens the rear door and says, “We need to get going.”

I’m not sure why, but I reply, “Profit or loss?”

He smiles and replies, “There are profits and there are prophets.”

“Freedom is not an economic concept.”

“Freedom is an act of God.”

The correct answers ease my apprehension. I climb in and the door is shut. The driver doesn’t turn around, but says to the windshield, “We will be heading north toward Baltimore. Relax, it will be a slow ride with a number of twists and turns.”

“Where are the others going?”

“No idea—that’s for security purposes. There’s coffee and donuts in the bag.”

We begin our journey on back roads in industrial sections. The vehicle turns onto—I'm not making this up—Sheriff Road. For a brief moment, I wonder if I made a huge mistake. We pass numerous highways but remain on winding back roads. I observe, as we get further from the Capital, the roads, buildings, houses, and people appear less and less well-off. In fact, we are now in obviously impoverished areas only a few miles from the golden city. One particular pothole leaves its signature on my spine.

The police officer in the passenger seat turns to face me and asks, "Were you and your friends really part of the coup attempt?"

A huge red flag appears in my mind. On the other side of that flag is a mean killer bull charging at me. "I don't know anything about that."

"You know, that is what you three are accused of doing?"

"You know more about it than I do."

"How did you three escape?"

"I can't tell you."

"You're being evasive," he concludes.

"That's because I have nothing to share."

He surprises me when he says, "Good. Keep it that way." My inquisitor turns back toward the front and states, "We never met. You never rode in our vehicle. Someone helped you elude the law and we're going to do all we can to find out who." He finishes with, "In libertatem filiorum Dei." That being the tagline of EOTS—Equal Opportunity Traitor Society.

South of Baltimore we enter the Baltimore Beltway and head east. We cross a bridge over water, then an island, and another bridge over water. It's a long freakin' bridge. From there we go north, west, east, south, I think we're lost. Finally, we leave the highway and are on a winding back road in an industrial section that gives way to a forest. They're going to kill me in a dense forest and my body will never be found. My only chance would be if the authorities are looking for a twenty-nine-year-old ballerina named Natasha Kovachenko. Out of nowhere we find ourselves on a gravel parking area next to a row of five tin roof low buildings. Straight ahead is a runway beyond which is a river.

The driver says, "Welcome to Essex Skypark Airport."

I look around and see a few old—and I mean old—airplanes. They are single engine propeller airplanes. Something tells me I'm about to embark on a new adventure—one I'm not too sure I want to embark upon. Remember, I just got introduced to flying and haven't totally warmed up to idea of hanging in the sky praying the engine doesn't stop.

My chauffeur remarks, "Have a good trip. Don't know how you got here, but you slipped through our net, that's for sure."

The door opens and I leave the vehicle. The second unnamed officer says, "The clock is ticking and we're waiting. Stay the course." He points at a metal building and states, "Pop is in there."

Within a few seconds, I'm standing alone. The sun feels good on my skin. It's odd how when you face countless threats, endure high levels of stress, and have a questionable future, simple things become more apparent and welcome. I'm aware of a breeze off the river and its subtle sound of flowing water. Birds sing in trees in the thick forest through which we drove. A splash draws my attention. I can't tell if it was a bird, or fish, or other creature. The gravel crunches beneath my feet as I approach the metal hanger.

Inside, I find a sleek-looking airplane with a pointy nose on which is a large five blade propeller. It looks to seat at least ten passengers as it has five porthole windows. The small rear wings sit on top of the tail. The main wings are narrow and about as wide as the plane is long. I wonder how such narrow wings can lift such a large craft. It's painted white with red and black swirls going from a point at the nose to wide ribbons at the rear. I have to admit it is a pretty aircraft.

"She's a beauty," an old man says as he rounds from behind the airplane. "A Pilatus PC-12 NG made in Switzerland in 2019."

"That's fifty-seven years ago," I conclude none too confidently.

"She'll get you there," he replies. "Nothing's changed in aerodynamics. Only the machines have changed. At the correct speed you create a vacuum and go up. Too slow and . . ." he makes a motion with his hand resembling a plane diving toward earth.

"That's reassuring."

Pop pats the aircraft, "She can takeoff on a short runway, cruise at 285 knots, and has a range of over 1,800 nautical miles. Her ceiling is 30,000 feet and she'll carry 2,257 pounds payload." He smiles and asks, "How heavy is that overnight bag?"

Three thousand pounds. I guess I can't go," I reply.

"Feeling a little nervous? Just, don't you worry. I'll get us there," once more a smile. "If not, I'll refund your money."

"By the way where is there?" I ask.

"You'll know when you get there."

"More mystery."

"It's better that way."

Let me describe Pop. He's shorter than me with a beer belly. His

long grey hair tied into a ponytail is his most distinct characteristic. A light beard and mustache, both grey, give him a seafaring look. Powerful arms reflect a man who has done more than his share of physical labor in his time. His eyes are an odd shade of green and a little too close together. Overall, he has a stern but friendly countenance.

“This skypark hosts general aviation aircraft, seaplanes, and remote control models. It has quite a history. An avid pilot named William Diffendahl cleared the land and built the airpark in the 1930s. It only had grass landing strips at the time. The Glenn L. Martin Company plant was near here. They built the Martin M-130 flying boat, Martin B-26 Marauder bomber and other aircraft during World War II and afterward. The airpark has been sold a couple times since then. I believe the Essex Skypark Association purchased a 99-year lease for the 44-acre airfield and associated seaplane base in 2012.” He looks at me with that same wry smile and concludes, “We should get off the ground before the lease runs out.”

“I guess you’re ready to go,” I offer.

“All aboard,” he pulls down a set of stairs built into the main cabin door. “You can sit upfront with me if you want. If not, there’s plenty of seating in the back.”

I decide to ride up front. If something goes wrong, I guess I’d rather see it coming than be surprised. We settle in our seats and tighten our seatbelts. Pop flips switches and reads dials. The propeller starts to turn slowly. My thought is that it has to go a lot faster than that to keep us in the air.

“I do have to warn you about one thing,” Pop admits. “This airport’s runway is 2,084 feet.” After an excruciatingly long pause he points out, “On paper, this aircraft requires 2,600 feet for takeoff.”

“That’s an important fact—don’t you think?” I ask, my voice an octave higher.

“That’s on paper. I can get her airborne in about 2,000 feet—give or take.”

“Give or take what? Give or take 84 feet? Because that’s all you have.”

“Relax, there’s five hundred feet of grass at the end of the paved runway. We might bounce a little but we’ll get off the ground.”

“Maybe I should take the train.”

“Too late,” he powers up the engine and we taxi to the end of the runway which looks as short as a diving board at a pool. The engine roars as he moves the throttle forward but we don’t move as he stands on the

brake. Do you know when a propeller spins fast it becomes invisible? I would think that is cool if I wasn't trying not to scream like a girl. I'm thrown back into the seat when Pop releases the brake. The plane bolts forward gaining speed at an incredible rate. Unfortunately, the end of the runway draws near at an equally incredible rate. I inhale as we reach the end of the concrete but don't feel any bump or bounce. Instead, I stare at blue sky. Pop declares, "Room to spare. Ye-ha!"

"Sounds like you had doubts."

"I didn't want to worry you," he admits, "but I've never taken off from that airpark. This trip was a special request."

A little confused I reply, "But, you flew into that airport. Didn't that prove that you could fly out?"

"Not exactly. Generally, takeoff requires more runway. The airplane is heavier at takeoff than for landing and usually takes off at a higher rate of speed than when it lands. In addition, most aircraft have more braking power than engine power. You see, at the same weight it takes less time and distance to decelerate from 150 knots to 0 than it does to accelerate from 0 to 150. I used almost 90% of the runway landing."

"So, you are telling me you weren't sure we could make it?"

"Well, let's say it wasn't a sure bet."

"Anything else you're not telling me?"

"Where we are going."

I sit back and stare out the windshield at the earth passing below. Somewhere down there Virginia and Walter are being taken to their undisclosed locations. Where they are headed and how they are getting there is unknown. I only hope they didn't have to risk their lives to get there. The plane banks and we turn south. Given what just took place, I am compelled to ask Pop, "Is there a runway at our destination?"

With a smile he answers, "No."



William McKinley
President: 1897 - 1901

***“One just principle from the depths of a cave
is more powerful than an army.”***

—Jose Marti

Chapter 25 | THE CAVE

We fly east until we reach the Atlantic Ocean then turn south along the east coast. As we do Pop shows me various points-of-interest. The Delaware Breakwater East End lighthouse, Harbor of Refuge Lighthouse, Fort Miles, beaches, historical buildings, and more. At the end of the peninsula he banks right and we head west.

“Settle back,” Pop says. “We have about a thousand miles to fly to get to where we are going. Should take four hours, maybe a little more if we run into headwinds.”

“And, there’s no runway?” I have to know.

“According to my information there’s a grassy field northwest of your destination.”

“You haven’t flown there before?”

“Son, this location is so remote I’ll be lucky if I can find it. When I do, I’ll worry about landing.”

“That’s comforting.”

“What are you worrying about? After I dump you, I have to get back into the air.”

I don’t know why I bring up the subject. Maybe, it’s just to pass time. Whatever the reason, I say, “My father wanted to be a pilot, but the government wouldn’t allow it.”

“A familiar story. It seems if you want to do something, you have to do it without permission and in secrecy.”

We fly in silence for a few minutes.

Then Pop says, “If we get through this thing. I’ll take your daddy up and let him ride this pony awhile. I’ll teach him enough to handle the controls. Let him break the bonds that hold him on Earth.” He paused, “But, first we have to break the bonds that keep us down.”

"That's really nice of you," I state. "He will really appreciate it. And, I would appreciate it." Pause. "I'm just not going along."

"Now don't say that," Pop responds. "You know damn well you will be there if for no other reason than to see the look on his face and glow in his eyes."

"You're probably right, but I'm afraid of what the two of you might attempt when you get together."

"Chance you have to take," Pop smiles as if knowing something that I don't know.

I change the subject, "What do you think of this thing we are attempting?"

"It has to be done and was a long time coming. Mankind is at a critical point in history. Those who wish to rule the world can see their goal. If they achieve it, the masses will be thrown back into serfdom like that of the middle-ages. Individual freedom will be a fading memory and may not happen again for a very long time—if ever."

"What worries me is that they seem to be expecting a lot from me. I never ran a revolution before. Hell, I never broke any rules until this year."

"I'm certain the founding fathers were inexperienced when they undertook their rebellion."

"I see your point. But there were more of them and they were smarter than me."

"Son, you sell yourself short. Granted, those were different times. This is your time. And, you're not alone. So, quit feeling sorry for yourself."

Pop is right. I constantly conclude that I am unprepared and all alone in this new revolution. It's time that I damn the torpedoes and forge ahead or full speed ahead, or go to the head. Whatever! I know I read that somewhere. A decision made—if I survive this airplane flight, I'm going to actively become involved in this effort to refound America. History will refer to me as a Refounding Father. That sounds ridiculous.

We fly for a length of time in silence.

I receive a text message from Virginia. It reads, "Reached my undisclosed location. Interesting place. Wish you were here."

I text a reply, "I wish I were on the ground."

Ahead I see it and I don't like it. Forming in the distance are thick dark clouds. It almost looks like the sky is tearing apart and smoke is escaping. An ominous storm grows larger and larger. Before I know it, black clouds seem to cover the entire sky ahead of us. I turn to look at

Pop. He is adjusting radio dials and apparently listening to weather reports—I hope. Finally, when I can't sit silently any longer, I ask, "Shouldn't we be turning?"

"Do you see a way around it?"

"I guess if you go far enough."

"I was thinking of going over it. Thunderheads can go as high as 30,000 to 40,000 feet. Big ones, that are concentrated storms, have gone as high as 75,000 feet. This aircraft's maximum altitude is 30,000 feet. Based on the breadth of those clouds that storm appears to not be very concentrated. I'm guessing the top of it is under 20,000 feet. That gives us lots of room to go over it."

"And, if you're wrong?"

"It will be a bumpy ride."

I receive a text message from Walter. It reads, "I'm at my undisclosed location. I'm a little surprised, but glad to be here."

So, I'm the only one still enroute. Great. I feel the plane shudder as crosswinds from the storm reach us. Pop increases power and we start to climb. The storm appears as a huge black/grey wall. Wisps of clouds start to pass around us. The aircraft bounces and complains as it climbs higher and higher. We are now fully engulfed in clouds. Water droplets appear on the windshield. It's hard to tell if we are still climbing or level or heading earthward. Gusts of wind cause the plane to rock back and forth. I get the sense that we are slowing down, but that's impossible as the propeller is spinning as fast as ever. I look at Pop and he seems calm attending to flying the airplane. How can he be calm? I'm not calm. I want to scream, "I want my momma." But, she's in jail. I snicker. That's not funny. I'm a sick puppy. Then we break through into a blue sky. What a beautiful color.

Pop concludes, "She's a whopper—27,000 feet. Let's hope she stays there until after we get by."

I look out and below us is a swirling cauldron of dark clouds. Lightning flashes add to the menacing appearance. My stomach tightens as I consider what it would have been like trying to fly through nature's dragon.

"Let's hope it doesn't stretch west to our destination," Pop announces.

"What if it does?"

"Find an unmarked grass field through thick clouds with a low ceiling and then land on it through unpredictable crosswinds? I'm crazy but I'm not insane." He refers to a number of maps, "We would have to

find an alternative airport with a good solid cement runway.”

“Wouldn’t that have been better in the first place?” I ask.

“Secrecy lad, we’re about to land on a hard to locate, short, wet grassy field to keep you alive.”

“That doesn’t sound like the ingredients for staying alive,” I comment, my voice revealing a level of fear. Black death remains below us.

Pop sounds insulted, “Now, how can you question my skills after I got us off the ground?” He looks at his maps as he mumbles, “It’s enough to shake one’s confidence.”

OK, I have no answer for that. My stomach does, but I keep it down. We continue for a half hour. Remarkably, the storm clouds have begun to dissipate and we can see the landscape below through white nearly transparent clouds. As I’m looking down, Pop announces, “Ah, things are looking up.” Hey, I don’t make these things up.

After almost an hour, we fly over a small, and I mean small village. Pop tells me that is Jasper which means we are close. He tells me to be on the lookout for a grassy field. What I see are rocky hills, thick forests, no roads, and a lot of wilderness. It doesn’t appear to be the kind of terrain someone would attempt to land in. Then I see a pond surrounded by large stones. It must be manmade. I point it out to Pop.

“That’s it,” he states.

“What’s it. There’s nothing there.”

Pop ignores my comment and says to himself, “The field is northwest of the pond.”

I see a field. It’s small. It’s surrounded by mountains and trees. It has ruts. It scares the daylights out of me. “How are you going to land there?”

“With my eyes closed,” Pop responds.

“That helps.”

“Relax, let me do the worrying.” Then Pop says as an aside, “God knows, I’m worrying.”

I’m speechless. We slowly bank and Pop makes a pass over the landing, uh, field. He circles and begins an approach. Because of the mountainous terrain he approaches at a fairly high altitude. Then pulls back on the throttle and the aircraft slows. He then moves the wheel forward and we dive at the field in slow motion. If you ever rode a roller coaster and remember what it was like when you came over the top of the highest section and headed straight down you have an idea of how it feels.

The field comes at us fast. At the last second, Pop pulls back on the wheel and the plane noses up. Almost immediately, the wheels touch down, we bounce, go up in the air, drop back down, roll across the field, and finally come to an abrupt stop.

"All ashore who're going ashore," Pop announces. I look over and see sweat dripping from his forehead. He smiles and remarks, "I did my part. Now, you do yours."

"Where do I go from here?"

"Based on what I've been told, there's a path back that way." He points back where we almost drilled ourselves into the ground.

"There's nothing there."

"You'll see it when you see it."

"What will I see?"

"Beats me. I'm simply telling you what I was told."

"So, if there is nothing out there and I get eaten by wolves it will be your fault."

"Son, there are no wolves out there. Coyotes, bears, wild boars, snakes, and perhaps your destiny. The wolves are back where we came from. They are dangerous. They have to be eliminated."

I know Pop is right. He did his part and got me here—whatever here is. I ask, "Where do you go from here?"

"If I get this baby back into the air without taking a tree with me I have to get to an airport to refuel. After that, I have my orders. You take care."

I climb out of the airplane and walk in the direction indicated by Pop. Ahead, I see nothing but trees and mountain ranges. Without question, I am in the wilderness. Pop taxis past me to the end of the field, turns around, and waits. I reach the tree line and stop. Pop salutes, revs the engine, and bounces across the field picking up speed far too slowly to take off. I watch in horror as he approaches the far trees. Then the aircraft lurches skyward engine complaining. In an instant he disappears over the trees. I don't hear a boom or see smoke so I assume the old guy made it. Without question, I like Pop.

Here I stand. Somewhere there is a path. It's a well-hidden path. Step by step, I walk along the tree line. The grass crunches beneath my feet. It's getting to be late afternoon. Wandering in the darkness is not a welcome thought. Ten more steps. Nothing. This is getting worrisome.

"You're going in the wrong direction," I hear Dee's voice say behind me.

I turn and there before me is my fifteen-year-old sister Darsey.

Her auburn hair is back in a ponytail and she is wearing jeans and a tee shirt. She steps forward and hugs me, "What took you so long?"

"We had to fly over a storm."

"Sounds scary."

"Just another day at the office."

"So, you weren't frightened?"

"Not a bit." I look around at the mountainous terrain and ask, "Are we camping out?"

"No, we're living in a cave," she replies with a smile.

"A cave? You're kidding."

"Follow me." Dee turns and almost disappears into the woods.

An evergreen tree stands in the middle of the entrance to the path effectively camouflaging it. Once around the tree the path is clear. We climb upward through the forest. After a few minutes, we break into a small clearing. There before me is the cave. Into the wall of a cliff has been built a two-story stone structure complete with doors and windows. Long green vines hang down from above partially covering the façade. Cement pavers form a courtyard complete with a round stone firepit. The main entrance boasts a low wooden fence on either side. It consists of a wooden door with a large half round window at the top. Above the door is the second half of the circle window surrounded by additional windows forming an arch and sidelites on both sides of the door. It is quite an impressive entrance into, uh, a cave.

"It's a cave," I exclaim.

"Nothing gets by you," Dee says sarcastically.

Inside is amazing. It's a hotel, or it was. A large main room greets me. What is immediately obvious is that the ceiling is bare rock, uneven, high above, complete with stalactites. The floor is absolutely smooth, level, polished concrete. Directly in front is a metal railing system with a flat wood top. Beyond the railing is a sitting area with a couch two chairs and a wood and metal coffee table. Behind the couch is a long wood table upon which are two lamps. On the right wall opposite the couch is a large flatscreen monitor. To the left is a large round table with eight wooden chairs. I assume that is the dining area as on the other side of another metal railing system is a large kitchen. Over the dining table hangs a large round chandelier. On the right side of the room is a huge rock formation forming a type of waterfall. Also, I see a corridor leading deeper into the cave and a staircase.

"This is amazing," I state.

"I had the same reaction," Dee admits.

"What about dad? What did he think?"

"Dad's not here," Dee confesses.

"Where is he?"

"We were shocked when we saw that you were wanted by the authorities. Almost immediately after the report was run on the news channels, three men and a woman came to our house. At first, we thought they were police seeking information about you. They weren't. One of the men spoke very quickly and explained that we were in danger. He said the government would stop at nothing to find and arrest you and your associates. That included using your family as hostages. They identified themselves as a citizens group opposed to illegal actions by the government. Dad asked a few questions and was convinced that they spoke the truth. He agreed that we must leave and should trust them. Mom refused to go. After a short discussion . . ."

"Argument."

"Right. We had to decide, so dad and I left with our protectors. They gave us these thumb gloves." Dee holds up her left thumb. "We were taken very quickly to a building in some part of town that I couldn't find again if I had to. A man met us and explained that for the time being we had to be split up, but that we both would be safe. Dad protested, but I agreed and convinced him to go along." Dee's voice changes and her face brightens when she says, "That's when I got my first airplane ride. I loved it!"

"You landed in that pasture?" I say in amazement.

"No silly, we landed at a regular airport and then a big SUV brought me here. There are a few roads out there if you know where to look."

I wonder out loud, "Then why did I have to risk my life landing on a blade of grass?"

"You are on the run, big brother. At the airport the Government News Network (GNN) had your face and Virginia's and Walter's showing on every screen."

"That's true. Wait. How do you know their names?"

"Because they're here," Dee states as she raises her eyebrows.

"They landed on that field?"

"Walter did. He's got quite a mouth. Virginia parasailed from a plane. She made a pinpoint landing."

"Of course she did." I pause then add, "Don't take Walter personally."

"I won't." Dee walks into the kitchen and gets a glass of water.

“Thirsty?”

“Yes, thanks.”

Dee walks over to the dining table, places a glass of water in front of me, and removes her thumb glove.

“Put that back on!” I bellow. “You’ll get us located and caught.”

“I was told, as long as you are more than three feet from any window or door it is safe to remove the glove. The signal is too weak to penetrate a thousand feet of rock. Your phone and tablet will work because wifi uses a different satellite system and the signals are stronger.”

“If I wanted my ass spread all over the countryside, I’d find a better way,” Walter’s voice booms as he enters the room. He walks up to me and says, “You’re late.”

“Ran into a storm,” I point out.

“Always some damn excuse.” He smiles and offers, “It’s good to see you.”

The cave is named Beckham Creek Cave Lodge. It was originally built as a bomb shelter in what had been the Arkansas Ozarks. In case you forgot or never knew this area was once the state of Arkansas. Today, it is in the state of Clinton. It was for-the-most-part an unexplored cave until 1983 when John Hay, co-founder of Celestial Tea purchased 240-acres that included the cave for \$146,000. He was concerned about the possibility of thermonuclear war between the Soviet Union and United States. This was to be his doomsday shelter. Hay invested \$2 million converting the cave into a bomb shelter with its own hydroelectric power and source of spring water from a naturally formed waterfall in the dwelling. It took four years to complete.

When world tensions eased Hay sold his cave shelter to a man named Richardson in 1987 who turned it into an exclusive nightclub. Shortly after, it was renovated into a luxury hotel that could accommodate up to 8 guests. Sold and refurbished in 2007 and again in 2014 the rock formations of the cave were preserved as it became a four-bedroom, four-bath 5,800-square-foot home that was eventually purchased by STUS in 2019. Since then all reference to Beckham Creek Cave was kept quiet until its very existence has been forgotten. In many ways—a perfect hideout.

Virginia enters the room toweling her long red hair after a shower. I love her . . . hair. She looks at me and says, “Good to see you, George. We all made it. Now, it’s time to develop our plans.”

“Are we expecting anyone else?” I’m compelled to inquire.

“Nope.”

"It's just the three of us?"

"Hey, what about me?" Dee asks.

"I'm sorry, the four of us. I'm so used to it being three."

Virginia explains, "What David Trufire told me was strategy by committee is a fool's errand. Too many opinions cloud the situation, it is impossible to please everyone, and critical decisions become delayed. They've already experienced these limitations. A group of leaders tried in vain to find a workable strategy that they all would agree is the best direction to take. Time was also a factor. It was Dawn who suggested that they would be best served by fewer heads rather than an excessive number. That opened the doors to more discussion. Who should this group be, how many are needed, what type of experience is required, how much power or authority should they have, and what happens if they fail?"

"No pressure, there," I conclude.

"Think about baseball," Virginia continues. "A team might have a Chief Operating Officer, Coaches, Equipment Manager, scouts, team doctor, and a dozen other officers who run the operation. But there is only one Field Manager. When the game is on, he or she calls the plays, makes strategic adjustments, uses pinch hitters, brings in relief pitchers, and more. The Field Manager runs the team until the game is over." Virginia walks into the kitchen and gets a glass of water. She turns and states, "STUS, Strategic Technology—Universal Systems, which we know in reality stands for Save The United States is a large and far-reaching corporation with layers the government doesn't even know exists. From its inception it has evolved with that singular goal in mind. The directors at STUS have a wide range of skills, extensive experience, moral strength, and an overwhelming desire to rekindle the spark that shone so brightly in 1776. They made a momentous decision. Identify ancestors of the founding fathers, pick the most promising, and cast their fate with them. In fact, it was Dawn who proposed such an outlandish approach. She convinced a group of highly intelligent, opinionated, hard-boiled, alpha individuals to take inconceivable risk—put the future of the free world in the hands of untested, unprepared, unknown characters like us. At this moment they are praying for Divine inspiration that once founded the greatest nation on Earth to reappear. They have taken a vow to support our efforts without reservation. In a nutshell, for better or worse, we are it. Now, all we have to do is decide who is our George Washington."

I give my opinion, "Virginia, it should be you."

"Not me. I handle problems, remember."

“Walter?” I ask.

“Sorry, I don’t have founder’s blood running through my veins. I’m a technical wizard—nothing more.”

Before I can say anything, Dee says, “I’m too young. Besides, you have half the George Washington name already.”

“Oh, no, not me,” I state, “I’m not going to be responsible for the future of the world.”

“You are the logical choice,” Virginia offers.

“I’m an illogical person,” I counter. “Besides, I lost to you in chess. You’re the strategist.”

“That’s chess. I’ve watched you. You have leadership qualities. You’re perceptive, persuasive, and have a sense of humor. Honesty and courage define you.”

“It’s getting deep in here,” I remark. “Courage? You didn’t see me in that storm or on the landing in the field.”

“There are four bedrooms, three downstairs and the master suit up in the loft,” Virginia points out. She says to me, “Why don’t you take the upstairs bedroom.”

“That won’t convince me to take the reins of this runaway wagon,” I state.

“Sleep on it. Tomorrow we will make a decision,” Walter suggests.

The upstairs is incredible. There is a sitting area with a desk that overlooks the downstairs. The bed, which by the way is round, yes round, is farther back in the cavern. The floor is comprised of various shapes and size pavers. The uneven rock ceiling creates an odd arrangement of shadows. It gives one both a claustrophobic and natural beauty feeling. Off in its own side chamber is a modern bathroom. Ah, rank has its privileges. Yet, the key question is do I want the rank? Do I deserve the rank? Can I live up to the rank? You know where I turn.

DAWN: Are you safe and sound?

GEORGE: Yes, in an undisclosed location that you most likely know where it is.

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: I think you probably picked the undisclosed location.

DAWN: Lol. Maybe. Maybe not.

GEORGE: We’ve come to a crossroads and I need your opinion.

DAWN: Go right.

GEORGE: LOL. I haven’t asked, yet. You know, because you suggested it, that the leadership of the revolution has been put in our hands.

DAWN: Desperate times call for desperate actions.

GEORGE: The point is that we agree there should be a single leader for a variety of reasons. I believe it should be Virginia, but she declined. They want me to be the leader, but I don't want the responsibility.

DAWN: Throughout history, common men have been thrust into uncommon situations that required them to make decisions, take actions, and bring about remarkable outcomes. They were called heroes.

GEORGE: I'm no hero.

DAWN: They found themselves with no alternative than to reluctantly accept a leadership role. Many didn't want it. Most feared it. Few were prepared for it. None shied away from it.

GEORGE: Can I tell you something?

DAWN: Anything.

GEORGE: I fear that I'm not smart enough to make the right decisions. I feel like a child in an adult world still not ready to be on my own. With that mindset, how can I direct the actions of adults?

DAWN: My father died when I was eleven and my mother when I was fourteen. When I was twenty-years-old I was the head of a large company. Nothing had prepared me for that role. Believe me, I understand how you feel. What I can tell you is once you accept the position you will think differently. You will change. It will no longer be about you. Your focus will turn outward at the task-at-hand. You can't worry about your ability or qualifications because you're too busy getting things done. You will quickly grow into the role and it will define you. George, you are ready and this is your time.

GEORGE: Thank you for sharing that. A little less mystery is refreshing.

DAWN: I try.

GEORGE: I can think of hundreds of reasons for not accepting the position, but none for taking it.

DAWN: Take the position because I am asking you to.

GEORGE: You make it very hard for me to turn it down.

DAWN: Don't fight your destiny.

GEORGE: Not sure which is more compelling, destiny or Dawn.

DAWN: Lol. The world awaits.

GEORGE: With great reluctance and a sense of dread and with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, I pledge my life, my fortune—little as it is—and my sacred honor in leading America out of her Dark Ages.

DAWN: Well said. Now, get to work.



Theodore Roosevelt
President: 1901 - 1909

***"I cannot trust a man to control others
who cannot control himself"***

—Robert E Lee

Chapter 26 | THE PLAN

The round bed in my room went unslept in. After my Dawn conversation and ultimate reluctant commitment, an adrenalin drip became a full-fledged flash flood. There was no way to turn off the flow or resulting energy. I had so many questions and so many thoughts. The only thing I could do was to document them. On and on, I let random thoughts rule the night. My only hope is that amongst all the mental dribble will be a gem or two. My other hope is that the others slept well.

With the first wisps of daylight I make my way downstairs and push the button to brew a cup of coffee. Amazingly, I'm not tired. Just between us, I did think of emailing Dawn at about four in the morning. Good judgment won out.

About an hour passes. Dee wanders out from the inner caverns. She sees me and smiles.

"Would you like a cup of coffee?" I inquire.

She nods, though appears to still be half asleep.

When I place a cup of coffee before her, I say nonchalantly, "I've decided to do it."

"You have? That's wonderful," her wide-open eyes show that she is definitely awake, now. "What made you decide?"

"You."

"Me?"

"I don't know if I'm a good choice or not. However, I thought about who would I most trust to be responsible for your future. There are many capable people out there, but the only one whose complete dedication to doing everything possible to secure a better life for you—is me. If that means having to change the world, you're worth it. Future

generations deserve to have what past generations once enjoyed. I'm going to do this thing."

"I'm with you. You have my word."

I jump when Virginia states behind me, "Good to hear that."

"How long has she been standing there?" I ask Dee. She shrugs.

Virginia answers, "Long enough to hear your acceptance speech."

"Well, then you know how I feel."

Walter joins us and breakfast is peppered with light talk and some salty language. I inform the group that I've put together some thoughts as a starting point. We adjourn to the main sitting area. Virginia and Walter sit on the couch facing a large monitor on the wall and Dee flops into one of the chairs. This is it—I'm on.

"As I sat in the dark, I saw strange shadows in my mind. It was as though there were thousands and thousands of unidentifiable people aimlessly milling about. They were lost, but didn't even know it. It struck me that when you don't have a destination or even know your starting point you can do no more than keep moving in circles. I decided the best thing to do was a situational analysis. It consists of eight parts.

1. What is the objective
2. Take into consideration all who will be involved
3. Identify and evaluate the opposition
4. List our resources and assets
5. Create a plan of action
6. Coordinate all information and activities
7. Have a means to handle unforeseen problems
8. Define success

I may have left something out. If so, let me know."

"Damn," is Walter's response.

"If we are able to do those eight things effectively, we have a good chance of saving the United States of America," Virginia concludes.

"That's my brother," Dee adds.

So many thoughts went through my head during the night, I'm sure that I didn't get to write them all down. I continue, "Let's start with our objectives. I originally wrote reinstate the Constitutional government created by the original founding fathers. That sounded good but somehow was not enough. In my opinion, we need to revise and improve the original *Constitution* to better protect the people from the government. As Thomas Jefferson indicated, 'The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.' There were flaws in the original *Constitution* that allowed politicians to gain too

much power. There must be a mechanism by which the government is kept in check by the people. That one I haven't figured out, as yet."

"But you believe the structure of the government was correct?" Walter asks in a civil tone indicating his keen interest.

"The structure is nearly perfect. It is more about the function of each branch. From the little I've read, at one time or another each branch exceeded its authority or trampled on the *Constitution* without consequence. This in effect rendered the *Constitution* impotent. Men of ill-will simply ignored the *Constitution* and the cowards in the other branches failed to react."

"Point taken," Walter replies. Without an insult or curse word he seems so different, I'm not sure what to make of it. Well, eventually he'll blow and we'll have the old Walter we know and tolerate back.

"Another objective is to maintain the sovereignty of the United States of America. This includes getting foreign entities out of our government, services, and businesses."

"Amen to that one," Virginia says.

"Then reignite the American Spirit that William Bradford discovered so long ago."

"Capitalism," Dee says softly.

"Yes. It's not perfect, but capitalism is the best economic model with the individual in mind. Winston Churchill, whoever that is, said, 'The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of the blessings. The inherent blessing of socialism is the equal sharing of misery.' Most Americans don't even know what capitalism is. America has been turned into a huge zoo with the zoo keepers in Wilson, D.C. doling out food in the form of IMUs."

"Baaa," Walter imitates a lamb.

"The last objective is made up of two-parts," I explain. "If we are successful, we will need to put in place an interim government and then facilitate free and honest elections as quickly as possible."

"I have an additional objective," Walter states which gets everyone's attention. "Well, it's more than one objective." He stands. "You know I have researched history. We need to fix the damage done to the actual structure of the United States. To begin, the 28th President of the United States who served from 1913 to 1921, Woodrow Wilson was an ass. He personally implemented many of the destructive progressive elements into the federal government that began the slow dilution of individual liberty. Among other things, we need to change the name of that damn city."

It is obvious that Walter has more to say so I walk over and sit in one of the chairs.

Walter walks to the front and continues, “He was an egotistical, unpleasant, self-righteous, fool who was so full of crap, they should have hung toilet paper next to his mouth.”

I don’t think Walter likes Woodrow Wilson.

“A typical academic who never held a real job, he pioneered the concepts of globalism and progressive government. While a professor at Princeton, Wilson wrote *Congressional Government* critical of the United States system of government advocating for reforms to move it more to a parliamentary system. He wanted a form of dictatorship where one branch of government could decide at once and with conclusive authority what should be done. An elitist who believed he knew what was best for all citizens.”

Old Woodrow would have fit right in after the Reorganization.

“He wrote a textbook in which he stated that charity efforts should be removed from the private domain and ‘made the imperative legal duty of the whole’ or government which was a philosophy that supported a welfare state. As President, he oversaw passage of the *Revenue Act of 1913*, which lowered tariffs and introduced a graduated federal income tax which over time increased the top rate to 77 percent. Not satisfied they implemented a federal estate tax. Wilson also worked to get passage of the *Federal Reserve Act* creating a central banking system. He also signed the *Federal Trade Commission Act* and the *Clayton Antitrust Act* to regulate and break up large business interests known as trusts. In the end, the Wilson administration fundamentally changed the approach to government revenue taking it from tariffs and placing it on the backs of working Americans in the form of taxes.” Walter looked at his audience and observed, “We all know how that worked. One tax leads to another and another, rates keeps increasing, and individual liberty is replaced by government programs.”

And, the government claims to care about the people after picking their pockets by giving them back a small pittance in the form of inferior services and strangling regulations.

Walter isn’t finished. “Interestingly, Woodrow Wilson’s parents were slave owners and supported the Confederacy. As a result, he was a racist and fervent segregationist which was demonstrated when he was President of Princeton University. During his tenure, through his efforts, Princeton did not admit a single black student. Later, as President of the United States, he continued to support segregation. Many departments,

including the Navy, had segregated work spaces, restrooms, and cafeterias. He placed segregationists in his cabinet and was in favor of the effort to separate the races in federal buildings. In a letter written July 1913, Wilson defended his policies stating that segregation removed ‘friction’ between the races.”

“Sounds like a real nice guy looking out for the rights of all the people,” I offer.

“As Wilson moved to get America into World War I, he signed into law the *Selective Service Act of 1917* establishing a draft. In addition, he created a propaganda office called the Committee on Public Information (CPI). Then pushed through Congress the *Espionage Act of 1917* and the *Sedition Act of 1918* to suppress opposition. As a result, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) was founded in 1917 which somehow lost its way over the years.”

Virginia chimes in, “Incredible how much damage that can be done in such a short amount of time.”

Walter looks at her and states, “The damage to the nation Woodrow Wilson left in his wake was irreparable and the beginning of a slide into socialism that brought us to this cave at this time.”

“From a cave to bright new sunlight,” Dee comments. We all look in her direction. She appears surprised at our attention. After a moment, my little sister smiles sheepishly and adds, “We may have to work in the shadows, but the people have to be shown the light.”

I stand and take over, “That brings us to the second part of my analysis—take into consideration all who will be involved. In truth, as I thought about this it occurred to me that there are so many groups and organizations that will be affected it may be impossible to address them all. We will have to prioritize target audiences and do what we can. In one obvious case, the government, we need to keep them as much in the dark as possible.”

“That is until we act,” Virginia provides her thoughts. “Once the trap is sprung, we need to have clearly defined next steps.”

“Agreed.” I outline my thinking, “Prior to any action being taken we have to prepare certain key groups to hopefully react appropriately. The general public will be passive and go along with whatever changes take place.”

“At first,” Walter points out.

“Yes, at first. A majority of citizens have to understand capitalism, free markets, and the value of their individual liberty so that they welcome them. I believe that program *The Capitalist* is a good start. I

only wish I knew who was producing it so that we could recruit their help. Hopefully, by the time the revolution takes place people will be clamoring for freedom.” I pause and then add, “Somebody knows who is doing it or it wouldn’t be up on the Black Pearl Satellite Network.”

“If it’s being kept a secret,” Walter states, “there must be a reason.”

I continue, “I’m concerned about the reaction of the military and police. We can’t tell them ahead of time because we don’t know who or how many will support the revolution. Just like with the general public, we need to persuade them to support our efforts without letting the cat out of the bag.”

“And, don’t forget the world at large,” Virginia warns. “When things begin to happen, we have to be prepared for every possible response.”

A discussion follows with a number of predictions, possible strategies, and many unanswered questions. All in all, we are developing a picture of what the upcoming revolution will entail. It is neither a clear nor optimistic image with countless unknowns and undefined variables. I wonder if the founding fathers had the same sense of trepidation as I have as they pursued their dream. Did they have unfaltering confidence or inevitable doubts of success? Were they strong and unwavering or did moments of weakness bite at their heels? At one time or another did any of them regret starting down the path to freedom? Something inside of me offers partial answers. The lust for freedom cannot be quenched. It is not an object to be desired. It is a human dimension. With freedom your path is undefined and unencumbered. Your world expands exponentially. That miraculous energy we call spirit becomes white-hot with anticipation and unbridled hope. This thing called freedom grows at a rapid pace once the seed is sown. No drug can compete with the euphoria it offers. It is addicting. It is not riches, fame, power, or logic that drives us in our pursuit—it is our natural inability to live without it. Patrick Henry summed it up perfectly, “I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!”

“Let’s talk about what we are up against—our opposition,” I bring the group back into the discussion. “The elite entrenched socialists are not going to go away quietly. Even when the financial spigot is turned off, they will resist. We have to give them an avenue of retreat, if you will. With choices they might prove less of a formidable force. My initial thoughts are that we offer them three options; 1) take a substantial but set number of IMUs and leave the country, 2) pick a location and join

their fellow citizens and start over, or 3) be arrested.”

“Arrested for what?” Walter asks.

“I don’t know.”

“How about crimes against humanity?” Dee asks.

“There might be a fourth option,” Virginia interjects. “If they take an oath to support the new government and new *Constitution* they can run for office.”

“Are you out of your big-floppy-ear, jackass mind?” Walter asks courteously.

Virginia laughs. I love her . . . laugh. She responds, “They are familiar with many of the government functions. As long as they adhere to the law, they could be assets.”

“You mean ass . . .”

“Walter, child present,” I interrupt. Dee gives me a dirty look.

He finishes his sentence, “. . . assorted job functions.”

“State and local officials will be an unknown,” I suggest.

“They will fall in line and do whatever is best for their families,” Walter concludes.

“After the regime in Wilson, our biggest opponent will be the United Nations. They are on the brink of world conquest and we are trying to tear down everything they think they have achieved,” Virginia warns. “They will not go into the sunset quietly.”

“That’s for damn sure,” Walter adds. “There will be opposition from foreign governments and businesses who have dealings with the United States.”

After a brief discussion, we move on to consideration of the tools and resources that we have available. Prophet is our greatest asset. I get the feeling that Walter is more familiar with this ultra-super computer than he lets on. The fact that we have the capability to shut down the economy of the United States offers us a powerful advantage. Add to that the ability to communicate over government channels through the Black Pearl Satellite Network which is both untraceable and unstoppable. Then there is the Keep with its secret financial transaction function. And, let’s not forget control of the Individual Identification And Data Chip (IIDC) system, Suicide Queen, Back Door, and only God and possibly Walter know what else. What becomes clear is that we have formidable weapons that can give us an overwhelming advantage. The question is twofold. Is it enough and how do we best implement these tools for the greatest effect?

“With all we have as far as technology, we can shut down almost

everything. We also can send out messages to the population. But, how do we get the people to cooperate and accept a change in government?" I ask the obvious.

Virginia provide a point-of-view, "A segment of the population are sheep. They will go and do what they are told. Another group will be critical but will cautiously cooperate as long as it is in their best interest. Then you will have the emotional crowd. To them the sky is falling and they will panic. They will also be unpredictable, but not a major threat. More a threat to themselves than the government. Loyalists who have done relatively well in the socialist system will seek ways of resisting change. For the most part it will be refusal to comply rather than violent insurgency. Displaced government officials will range from those who try to prove they can remain in their job, to those who protest, to those who try to sabotage operations. This brings us to organized protestors. Without question they will pop up and seek attention. Without national news coverage their actions will be mostly local in nature. Finally, the anarchists and criminals will immediately take advantage of any breakdown in authority. Maintaining and enlisting support of the police forces will be essential."

Walter adds, "Unlike the founding fathers, we have the tools to initiate change. It is what happens after the, uh, attack on the government that will be of critical importance and greatest concern."

"I have an idea," Dee says. We all look in her direction which causes her to hesitate. Then she suggests, "Why not produce a movie that shows the new revolution happening. It could be a story about a family and how all the technological hardships lead to a better future. We don't have to tell exactly what is planned only that a revolution takes place and a new government 'by the people and for the people' is being established. The characters can exhibit confusion and fear. They will be opposed to change because that is a natural response. Then opportunities will come their way and they will taste true freedom. We paint a picture that shows how wonderful it turns out to be. Give them a preview of what lies ahead. Then when the revolution comes, they have a positive vision of the future embedded in their minds."

"Son-of-a-bitch—that's brilliant!" Walter bellows.

"I like it," I add as I give Walter a critical stare.

"Darsey, you and I need to play chess one day. I have a feeling you will be a true challenge," Virginia glances at me.

I add, "If done right it could even convince some in the military and law enforcement officials of the value of supporting the new

government.”

We decide to take a break even though there is high energy in the room. It had been a long session. I slip on a thumb glove and walk outside onto the slate courtyard. The air is warm with a cool breeze that makes it comfortable. Our hideout is in a valley surrounded by forests and mountain ridges. It gives the impression of being a safe oasis from the world. The only sounds are those of nature; insects, birds, the rustling of trees, and a far-off sound of water. I can’t help but think, “the calm before a storm.”

After a sleepless night, I’m feeling relaxed and awake. I’m aware of another feeling that is hard to define. Let me try. From the beginning, as events unfolded, I felt as though I was either an observer or being dragged along by outside forces. My focus was on myself. How was it going to affect me? Will I survive? Do I have a choice? Understandable, as things were out of my control. Today, here and now, the subject of my focus is my country and the world at large. How I got to this point in history is no longer important. Anything dealing with me personally is a distraction. This revolution is perhaps the final battle between good and evil. And, evil has a head start. For whatever reasons, those who wish to see a revolution take place have placed their faith, hope, and lives in our hands. Maybe, Prophet ran computer models and determined that this is the most logical approach. By concentrating the decision-process into a small team the actions of the multitude of others will be coordinated and more effective. We live in a split-second world. Or, is it picosecond world? Decisions have to be made immediately, not after a lengthy conference. For better or worse, we are the team and I know you will not believe what I am about to say. “I am ready and we have no alternative but to win.”

A hand touches my shoulder. Remarkably, I don’t jump. I turn to see Dee and smile.

“Do you remember when we first sat in your room and read that history book?” Dee asks.

“It seems so long ago.”

“Doesn’t it. From that night, I’ve watched you change. You went from a pain-in-the-neck brother to a philosopher, businessman, criminal, rebel, and now leader.”

“I don’t feel any different, and yet I do,” I confess. “I don’t see myself as George Washington, but I see a great challenge ahead and wonder what he felt when he was burdened with having to make difficult decisions. When he faced defeats, he never wavered. He was a man of

courage and honor and strength and devotion and of faith. And, here I stand ready to pick up the sword and hope, no pray, that we can achieve one more glorious victory in the name of liberty.”

Dee smiles and pats my arm, “I still say we need a new *Declaration of Independence*. The people and the world need to know why we are revolting.”

“You know, I think you’re right,” I agree. “I want you to write it.”

“No, not me.”

“Yes, you. You’ve said many insightful and forward-thinking things. I know you can do it. The question is will you step up and do your part in this endeavor?”

“Oh, posh. I know when I’m being played.”

“Is it that obvious?”

“What do you think?” Dee steps back, looks around, and states, “Even though you tried to snow me, I’m going to take you up on it. I’ll write the new *Declaration of Independence*.” She stares at me waiting for a response.

Then it hits me, “You wanted to do it all along! Talk about being snowed. You little . . .”

“Watch it.”

In the afternoon, we reconvene. The mood is energized and positive. I am about to announce that Dee will write a declaration of independence when she announces, “I have a copy ready for you to look at.”

Well, well, little sister has been busy. Little liar. I walk over and sit allowing Dee to project the New Declaration of Independence on the screen.

New Declaration of Independence

Whereas, the present socialist political system does not support basic liberty of the citizens of the United States of America thus denying them the ability to live full and prosperous lives, enjoy equal opportunities, receive fair treatment under the law, and experience self-determination it has become necessary for the people to provide a better alternative.

Our founding fathers had a divine vision of a nation that offers all of its citizens equal rights, protection, freedom, opportunity, and representation. Toward that end, they established the government of the original United States of America. With great

foresight they also created a mechanism for an orderly, peaceful, and constructive continuing evolution of this government. How fortunate we are that these true statesmen came together at just the right time, shared their wisdom, recognized truth, sought justice and put aside personal differences in order to create the greatest nation that has ever existed in history.

Unfortunately, that great nation was stolen from the people by the unscrupulous public servants who took a vow to uphold and defend the *Constitution for the United States of America*. For too long this elite class perpetuated a form of tyrannical government that restricts citizen's rights ignoring the fact that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by God with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Enlightened people understand that for a government to truly be legitimate it must derive its power from the consent of the governed.

When a government exceeds its just power and becomes a destructive force in citizen's lives, it is the duty of the governed to alter or to abolish it. Though many will fear the unknown and be reluctant to step out into the bright light of liberty as they have become complacent with the present form of government for the long-term good of all citizens they must. From the very founding of our nation there were guiding principles that have allowed Americans to enjoy prosperity, peace, and hope for the future.

The actions of the present ruling class have betrayed these principles in the following ways:

- removed any representation of the people from the government
- failed to protect the unalienable rights of all citizens
- destroyed the economic system that built the greatest nation on Earth
- been dishonest with the American people, thus betraying the public trust
- provided for greater personal compensation, reward, and provision of services than would be considered reasonable by the average citizen

- sold their influence for political financial support and other considerations
- rendered the justice system ineffective
- allowed undue foreign influence in the affairs of state
- at various times undermined the defense of our nation with near treasonous acts
- allowed the infrastructure of the nation to fall into disrepair
- tarnished the reputation, image, and position of the United States of America in the world community
- exercised the worst judgment and most destructive fiscal management
- allowed crime, injustice, intimidation, and other threats to run rampant
- created an environment of negativism and distrust
- exhibited arrogance, self-righteousness, and contempt for the average American citizen
- surrendered the sovereignty of the United States of America

Given all of the above crimes and misdemeanors of which our present leaders are guilty of being a detrimental force in the management of our government they have become ineffective and expendable. For this reason, a change in form of government, leadership, and representation is direly needed to protect the future of our once great nation. Thank God our founding fathers provided a nearly perfect blueprint for such a government.

We, therefore, in the name of the oppressed American people solemnly publish and declare, that these United States are absolved from all allegiance to the tyrannical socialist government, the United Nations, and any other powers that make claim to any political, legal, or economic connection with this nation. A new government will be created and the United States of America will become a free and independent nation. In support of this declaration with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.



William H Taft
President: 1909 - 1913

***“Society is always taken by surprise at any
new example of common sense.”***

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Chapter 27 | THE SURPRISE

A military tank, big and foreboding, rumbles down a familiar street. It is the latest episode of *The Capitalist* and the street is the one from the very first episode. Additional improvements have been made to the houses, gardens planted, automobiles are parked in driveways, and people are scurrying about. With the arrival of the metallic monster all activity stops. People stare with fear in their eyes. It is clear that their illegal activities have been discovered. The massive and heavy hand of the government has arrived. A day of reckoning has descended upon the valley. Ominous music adds to the tension.

Behind the tank are two military vehicles from which twenty soldiers in full combat gear emerge. They take up defensive positions. Also, climbing from the second vehicle are two military officers, a Major and a Captain. Together, in step, shoulders back, heads held high they proceed to the center of the road in front of the looming tank. They turn slowly as they consider their objective. Townspeople watch from hidden places. The camera shows different faces all showing some degree of fear.

A man walks out of a house. It is Falcon. He walks with an easy relaxed gait. When he reaches the two military officers he says in a friendly tone, “Gentlemen, welcome to the future.”

“Are you spokesman for this community?” the Captain asks.

“In a manner of speaking, I am a spokesman for tomorrow.”

The Major requests, “Please, explain the meaning of that remark.”

Falcon nods and responds, “These people were living in intolerable privation under the present government. They had nothing. Scarce food, intermittent electricity, poor public utilities, deteriorating infrastructure, no medical services, highly restrictive regulations, lowest

Social Compensation Program funding, and no voice in the government that was the cause of their suffering. I gave them the means to survive and become self-sufficient. The people in this valley are now prosperous, living once more, and represent the future. You, gentlemen, are witnessing tomorrow.”

“I am witnessing the breaking of the law,” the Major barks.

“Yes,” Falcon agrees. “Isn’t it beautiful?”

“You don’t seem to understand, it is illegal. We are here to put down this insurgency.”

“Let me show you around. You can blow everything up later,” Falcon states with a smile as he waves his arm.

“I’m not here for a tour.”

“You will have to catalog everything you found in your report, correct?”

“Yes.”

“Then let me show you all the illegal activities and the criminals guilty of participating in them.”

The camera dissolves to each venue where townspeople are busy breaking the law. The two officers accompanied by two soldiers take photographs and videos of all the felonies. Music from an acoustic guitar is heard in the background. At one point, a young girl runs up to the soldiers and hands each of them a flower.

Falcon’s voice is heard as different happy faces appear on screen, “These are Americans. They were the forgotten ones left to die. Their passing would mean nothing to the elitists in Wilson. Yet, their existence is now considered a threat. You are judge, jury, and executioner.” Intense blue eyes stare directly at the major. “If you wish, I will have them line up in the street to make your assault easier. They will listen to me.”

“I’m not here to murder people,” the officer insists. “I’m here to put a stop to their illegal activities and bring the leader—that would be you—to justice.”

“If you take away their ability to live all you’ve done is prolong the death sentence. It would be more humane to execute them here and now,” Falcon states sharply. He then adds in a more friendly tone, “As for me, I won’t resist.”

“You do realize as of now you are under arrest?” the Captain points out.

Falcon appears to ignore his comment. “Look over there, volunteers are clearing that field to build a medical clinic. They have hired a doctor to visit once a week and two nurses who will be on staff

full time.” He runs his fingers through his blond hair and concludes, “Maybe, we should cancel the medical personnel so you won’t have to execute them, as well.”

“As I already told you,” the Major states with a tone of frustration, “We are not here to execute people.”

“Ah, but you are,” Falcon responds. “You have been sent to put down a—how did you put it—an insurrection. That sounds extremely serious and force will be used, if necessary. These people will not give up what they have earned. The heartless socialist government cast them aside. All of these people are Americans with just enough of that long-forgotten colonial spirit and courage to climb up out of the pits of despair and make a life for themselves. And, now the government sees what can be done and knows it cannot be allowed. It must be stopped, crushed under the treads of that great machine, wiped out for all to see what happens to those who are disobedient. They will not fight you. Oh, one might throw a rock, but they are fully cognizant of the fact that you have an insurmountable advantage. This will not be a battle, or a skirmish, or any other event that you might be proud to have won. No, it will be a massacre of innocent Americans by misguided Americans.”

The Major looks at the street and the few citizens who dared to come out to listen to Falcon. He then turns his attention to his men who stand silently. Then he speaks to Falcon, “I have a duty. I also have orders. If I fail to complete this mission, it will be my neck.”

“It is a quandary,” Falcon agrees. “Kill over a hundred innocent people who have done no harm to anyone or sacrifice oneself. Not a good set of choices.” Falcon surprises the officers by changing the subject, “Have you ever had fresh homegrown vegetables?”

The two officers look at each other in amazement and then back at Falcon. The Major asks, “Aren’t you aware of the gravity of the situation?”

“Very aware. I simply want you to see what you are about to destroy and, in the process, enjoy something you have never tasted before. We’re not savages.”

“Neither are we,” the Captain interjects.

Falcon turns toward him and states, “That’s what I’m counting on.”

The Major points out, “Whether or not we agree with what these people have done, we can’t disobey orders and ignore what is going on.”

“You and your men should join us for a meal. Enjoy this beautiful day . . .” as acoustic guitar music is heard in the distance, “listen to some

relaxing music, and then decisions can be made.”

The scene dissolves to a feast in the refurbished town hall. In spite of what hangs over them the villagers and soldiers share food, stories, opinions, and laughter. The camera pans to two men standing off by a window looking out.

“I know what you are doing,” the Major informs Falcon.

“I’m not sure that you do,” Falcon responds.

“You think if I get to know these people, I will hesitate to do my job.”

“No Major, I believe if you get to know your men and yourself you will have a better understanding of your duty.”

“You are a strange character—who by the way remains under arrest.”

“What happens to me is inconsequential, what happens to America is of paramount importance.” Falcon points out the window, “This is a beautiful country barely surviving under a socialist shroud. And, even under the worst of circumstances these magnificent people build, rather than destroy, prosper under the most difficult circumstances, and demonstrate what the future will be.” Falcon turns back to the military officer and continues, “I told you I am tomorrow. I am America’s tomorrow, this village’s and a hundred like it tomorrow, your men’s tomorrow, and your tomorrow. Even though mortally wounded, America is rising from the ashes. Quite understandable, as the American spirit is a gift from God. It cannot be extinguished. It is embedded in man’s nature. It lights the path to liberty.”

“You’re quite the poet.”

“Poets express the emotional side of life; I present the practical element.” Falcon continues his penetrating gaze as he states with conviction, “Your orders are to level this village and exterminate all residents. No quarter.”

“How do you know that?” the Major asks revealing his surprise.

“How is unimportant. Why is because they have to make an example of any who dare attempt to remove their shackles. Earlier, I said you have a choice; kill over a hundred innocent people who have done no harm to anyone or sacrifice yourself. What if there is a third alternative?”

“I knew you were getting around to something.”

“First, let me provide a clear and objective view of the situation. The elitists in Wilson only know how to use force and intimidation. That works for a while. There are over a hundred villages like this one who are

involved in a silent non-violent revolution. Destruction of this village and murdering its citizens will not turn the tide. In fact, it will provide an emotional wave and call to action that will expand the rebellion. You can't kill them all."

The military officer does not respond, but reflects the countenance of someone who is paying close attention.

"You and your men are in a unique situation that can end very negatively or highly positively. The negative direction is that you follow orders and this beautiful valley becomes a wasteland, much like a once proud nation has become. You and your men return to your predefined roles, income, and lifestyle. Your families live modest lives with little hope for a better happier future. But, why not, you're alive, not dead like these villagers. Then the United Nations takes over and the United States becomes part of the UN Euro/American Sectional Enterprise Zone (UNEASEZ). Our sovereignty is gone," Falcon presents a wry smile and adds, "And the need for you is gone. Foreign troops will take your place and your place will be among the common unnecessary citizens."

"You paint a bleak picture," the Major admits.

"I am tomorrow and I see the clouds forming."

"So, what is this third alternative?"

"Become a traitor."

"That's it!?"

"No. However, I want to bring that thought front and center instead of allowing it to fester in the back of your mind possibly warping your judgment. You have to consider what I am about to propose with as much open-mindedness as you can. Let me begin by assuring you that you don't have to sacrifice yourself or your men."

The major shows obvious interest.

"This village can remain safe, happy, and productive. We simulate its destruction. There are plenty of old buildings and barns to blow off the face of the Earth. You can record the action from an angle that creates the appearance of complete destruction. Townspeople will be happy to run into a field and fall when they hear gunshots. Others will drop in buildings and other locations. The government will get what they want, you and your men will be spared, and the village will survive."

"It's not that easy," the major offers.

"Wait, there is more. You will record the IIDC codes from all the villagers to confirm their demise. They will subsequently be removed from the Social Compensation Program."

"However, they can still be tracked."

Falcon holds up a thumb glove, "All villagers will wear these to interrupt their signal. They will no longer exist."

Now, my friends, you and I know it changes the individual identification rather than interrupts the signal, but we don't want to reveal that fact. Good thinking producers.

"I see." The career military officer remains silent as he ponders what he has been told. He then makes the next statement, "There are twenty-five members on this team. That means twenty-five chances for someone to become a whistleblower."

"The decision must be unanimous," Falcon concedes. "What you must tell them is they each can improve their family's lives immediately and in the future. If they agree to the charade, they will have an opportunity to participate in ventures of their own to earn additional income. They will also receive a regular payment from our organization that is untraceable. Most importantly, together we will block the turnover of America's sovereignty to the United Nations. That alone should convince them. Once the UN is in charge, every American citizen's life is expendable. Foreign influence will render them to second-class status."

The Major nods which indicates that he is in agreement.

Falcon finishes his effort, "Finally, General . . ."

"It's Major."

"Today, but I am tomorrow. When we declare independence, we will need a standing army to defend our renewed nation. You and your men are the beginning. I would hope, over time, that you would help us recruit additional," he pauses, "honorable traitors."

The episode ends with the tank and two military vehicles driving away from the camera down a country road. Ever so slowly the camera pans 180 degrees to show the familiar street, houses still standing, townspeople watching, and acoustic guitar music playing. Fade to black.

Dee enters the room.

"Did you see the latest episode of *The Capitalist*?" I ask with excitement.

"Yes."

"It's brilliant! Whoever is doing this is incredible. They just did what we were talking about and answered all the questions the military might have. It's a perfect recruitment tool. I wish I knew who was doing this. I'd give them a big kiss."

"Well, pucker-up, big brother," Dee responds.

"You know who it is?" I ask.

"Quite well."

“Who is the genius?”

Dee raises her right hand and sort of waves as she says, “Hi.”

It takes a minute to break through the cement, then I realize,
“You?”

“I guess I’m the genius.”

“You are!” I exclaim. “How did you do it? Why didn’t you tell me? Who is putting it on the Black Pearl Satellite Network? Why are you smiling?”

“We felt it was better that you not know,” Dee shrugs. “Something about deniability. Plus, you would be the over-protective big brother and try to stop me.”

“We? We who? And, yes, I would have.”

“Uh, I think I hear someone calling me.” Dee leaves the room and heads toward the kitchen.

I don’t follow. She has a right to her secrets and I’m not going to pressure her. Instead, I open a conversation.

DAWN: George, how are the conspirators doing?

GEORGE: I must admit, we are doing well.

DAWN: You seem different.

GEORGE: Just more focused.

DAWN: I know a lot of good things will come from your group.

GEORGE: You mean like *The Capitalist*?

DAWN: Have you seen the latest episode?

GEORGE: Yes. I also met the person who is producing the program.

DAWN: She told you.

GEORGE: Yes. Something tells me you have had a hand in it.

DAWN: As of this moment there have been over four million views.

GEORGE: This episode is very good and addresses an important segment of the population that we need to convince to support our efforts.

DAWN: Very true.

GEORGE: How is Dee creating the program and how is it being uploaded?

DAWN: You’ll have to ask her.

GEORGE: What other surprises are you keeping from me?

DAWN: That’s an open-ended question. Impossible to answer.

GEORGE: Of course. You do realize if I am to be an effective leader, I am going to have to get straight answers when I need them.

DAWN: You're being forceful and are right. I will try to be more forthcoming in the future. As to *The Capitalist*, Darsey can provide you with an overview of the process.

GEORGE: Good enough. I better get back to the group. There is a great deal to be done.

DAWN: We all have faith in you, George. Your team is pleased, those in the trenches are ready, and just to put your mind at ease Pop made it.

GEORGE: Ha, good to hear.

Back in the main room of our cave—that does sound funny—Dee is the center of conversation, now that her secret is out.

"Are you going to do that movie about a revolution and the positive outcome for all citizens that you spoke of yesterday?" Walter asks.

Dee nods.

"*The Capitalist* is so professional in appearance it has to be produced using an advanced program," Virginia observes. "You can't possibly do it on your tablet. How do you develop the program?"

"In truth, I write the script with production directions and send them to a computer contact called Prophet," Dee explains. "After that I get the final version, approve it, and next thing I know it is on the national network."

My jaw drops. Prophet! I should have known. Then I realize the final surprise is—Dee is the third ancestor Asayo Nakahara, aka Prophet, spoke of. The question is when did Darsey become involved? Has she been a part of this all along? I make a mental note to ask her and demand she tell me giving me her word. No, that's wrong. She'll tell me if and when she is ready.

Then I hear Dee saying, "Our movement needs a spokesperson. Obviously, it should be George. I have a few ideas."

Now, these I have to hear.

"I have an idea for George to interview founding fathers. Show people firsthand what these wise men envisioned and sought to create. His first interview should be with George Washington. At least they still teach a little about him in school. At the end, we can have the 'Clymer Corner' where he persuades people to welcome the New America."

I caution, "Remember, the government doesn't know a revolution is taking place. We shouldn't turn our hand and forewarn them."

"I agree. Surprise will be our best weapon," Virginia adds.

"Never underestimate the power of surprise," Walter chimes in.

A thunderstorm forms off to the west. Flashes of lightning enter the cave followed by distant rumbles of thunder. It makes one think of the sounds of war, of distant battles, of men falling, of a new nation entering the world. The storm grows nearer.

The revolution grows nearer as we plan our next steps.

When the rain arrives, an interesting phenomenon takes place. From somewhere inside the cave water runs down and increases the flow on the inside rock waterfall. It's really a sight and somehow very soothing. Without saying a word, we all move closer to the indoor, or is it incave, waterfall. The rushing water connects us with nature. Four conspirators sit and reflect on what is taking place and what lies ahead. We each have our own individual visions, perspective, and fears. Together we are a team but in those dark hours of the night, in silence, we face our demons alone. Shadows reach out delivering grave warnings of danger from that entity called the unknown. The only solution is to step through that dark curtain and see what awaits on the other side. The waterfall soothes and reminds me that I too am a part of nature. I long to be free. I thirst for liberty. Like a dog chained in a yard my only desire is to break those bonds. Virginia, Dee, and Walter watch the waterfall and experience their own thoughts.

A tone on the monitor announces a special announcement from the President of the United States. The screen glows and there is President Sandra Holmes sitting in a large modern office at an antique wooden desk. Behind her are heavy maroon curtains covering a window. Two stanchions stand on either side of the window. One holds the Reorganization American flag while the other has the United Nations flag. I can't help but think how beautiful the stars and stripes would look standing proudly alone.

The look on President Holmes' face can best be described as unfriendly and stern. She begins, "My fellow Americans, I come to you with a grave message that is of extreme importance to you, your family, and the future of America." She is obviously reading a prepared speech. "You may have seen a program titled *The Capitalist* on satellite channels. Let me begin by telling you this is illegal propaganda created by a rebel group that is attempting to overthrow the government. I know you have seen F.B.I. wanted announcements for the three conspirators; Walter Tize, Virginia Morris, and George Clymer."

"Hey, I got top billing," Walter observes.

"While they have not yet been apprehended, I have been informed that the F.B.I. has information about their location and are

preparing to make arrests.”

I joke, “Should we pack our bags and call Pop?”

President Holmes continues, “This illegal and insulting program is designed to undermine the government and our upcoming plans to join the global community. Therefore, we have decided in the interest of public safety and tranquility to outlaw the viewing of the program, *The Capitalist*. You should not be exposed to the blatant lies presented by this hate-filled program. Any citizen caught viewing this traitorous program will be arrested and their Social Compensation Program payment will be decreased two levels. Do not put yourself or your family at risk!” Her voice has the definite tone of a direct threat.

Virginia announces, “Viewing of the latest episode of *The Capitalist* just passed forty million.”

In a conciliatory tone President Holmes concludes, “A bright prosperous future lies ahead for all of us. Don’t believe those who wish to return to the dark ages for personal gain. They do not care about you or your family. Trust your government to take care of you and keep your best interests at heart as we have for fifty years. Stay strong and let’s complete our journey to world peace together. Thank you and good night.”

“What a load of crap,” Walter concludes.

“How can they tell if people view the program?” Dee asks.

Walter answers, “They can only tell if they are monitoring a specific computer, tablet, or phone. Of course, they could monitor a limited number of citizens in an attempt to catch them. Then they would make an example of them.”

“They won’t waste their time doing that,” I contend. “Instead, it wouldn’t be beyond their typical unscrupulous behavior to grab up ten innocent individuals and accuse them of viewing the program without any proof. They would then make examples of the poor randomly selected souls.”

“Because the government can’t block the program—thanks to the Black Pearl Satellite Network—the only thing they can do is try to intimidate people. Scare them off,” Walter points out.

I look at Dee and tell her, “That program is the most powerful tool we have used so far. You did great. It needs to be continued.”

She informs me, “I think we should add a part on the end where you talk to viewers.”

“I’m not sure that is a good idea.”

“You have to tell people about what the original United States

was like, what freedom is all about, and why the United Nations is not going to look out for them.”

“Every rebellion needs a leader,” Virginia states. “Tag, you’re it.”

OK, I could object, but I won’t because I do see the logic and need. I only hope that I come across better than President Sandra Holmes. In addition, I pray that I can find the right message and best words to convince the American people that they deserve better. When we take a break Dee and I go up onto the balcony that overlooks the main room, or is that cavern.

“George, do you remember who told you about that old desk in the attic?” Dee asks.

“You did,” I recall. Then a bolt of lightning—no not outside, in my head—provides enlightenment. “Wait a minute. Did you plant the history book in that desk? You little conniver!”

“I didn’t know anything about the book. All I did was tell you about the desk.”

“Were you up in the attic?”

“You don’t think I would go up into that filthy, dusty, spider-infested attic, do you?”

“Dumb question. Then how did you know about the desk?”

“It was really weird. I received a text message from someone named Dawn that simply said, ‘Tell George there’s an antique desk in the attic that he might like.’ I didn’t give it much thought. She knew your name so I assumed she was a friend or relative.”

“Weren’t you suspicious?”

“George, that was back before all this intrigue and rebellion began.” Dee pauses, then adds, “There was no reason to think about a conspiracy coming from an innocent text.”

“That seems so long ago,” I admit.

“A lifetime.”



Woodrow Wilson
President: 1913 - 1921

***“There’s a fine line between gossip and history,
when one is talking about kings.”***

—Michelle Cooper

Chapter 28 | THE KING

“You know, I can’t be Falcon,” I tell my sister.

“You are Falcon,” she surprises me with her response.

“I’m nothing like him.”

“You are, in so many ways. Both of you have a quiet strength. When mom and dad gave you a hard time, you never yelled, or cursed, or lashed out. You never surrendered, either. That’s Falcon. Our pledge that we made and the resulting power of giving our word shows you are a man of honor who can be trusted. That’s Falcon. And yet, you haven’t used that power indiscriminately. You give people respect. That’s Falcon. After discovering that history book and reading about America, you now love America more than most Americans. That is definitely Falcon. And, whether or not you will admit it, you care. You care about America, people in general, Virginia, Walter, and me. Over these past few days you’ve demonstrated both leadership and intelligence. Finally, you have courage. Far more than me. I rebel from the shadows. You stand tall in the light. Face it, big brother, you are Falcon.”

“I can’t play the guitar,” I joke not knowing what else to say after having so many undeserved compliments heaped upon me.

“I left out the worst sense of humor known to man.”

Dee and I are sitting at the dining table planning a comment section at the end of *The Capitalist* to introduce a new program. After lengthy discussion among the four of us, we decided on a program where I interview famous Americans about our nation’s history from those who lived it. With Prophet’s high-tech holographic ability, it will appear as real. We will bring to life history that has long been kept from citizens. Of course, I have to do my part in front of a green screen so that through color keying I appear in the scene. It’s going to take some adjusting as I

will be sitting in a comfortable chair facing—nothing. Prophet will provide the background and my interviewee. To allow me to interact with the holograph we will set up the green screen on a right angle to the large monitor on the wall. This way I will face the monitor and see the character, uh holograph, and hear their voice. Their responses will be driven by Prophet based on past quotes, written documents, and historical facts. In a way, I'm looking forward to the whole experience. Imagine asking George Washington about his view of America and the *Constitution*. By the way, the title of the program is *Discover America* with the subhead, "see what you've been missing."

We try to write a script for me to read in order to introduce the new program, but I do a lousy job. It comes off choppy and I speak with a monotone voice. There's nothing natural, inviting, or believable about my presentation. We try and try. I can tell Dee is getting frustrated. Finally, I tell her that it would be better if I just make an extemporaneous statement. She shrugs and says, "Go for it."

With no other recourse, I stand in front of the green screen and begin, "My name is George Clymer and I'm a traitor. You also know that I am a fugitive and considered an enemy of the state. Please understand there are many reasons why I chose this path. Our government has failed us. No, they have cheated us—you and me. While they live in luxury we live under unreasonable regulations and unbearable conditions. They have enslaved an entire population by controlling income and opportunity. They use intimidation and legal system weapons to keep us in line. They monitor our activities and censor what we can read and watch. This very program *The Capitalist* has been declared illegal. Why? I'll tell you why, because it shows that people can live better lives if left to their own devices. But that would loosen the iron grip the elite government has on you. They know a little taste of liberty is a dangerous thing to tyrants."

"Now, they plan to give America away and make it a part of some global government that—believe me—will not give a hoot about you. Things will only get worse. So, I am a traitor. In a way I'm joining a long list of traitors who risked everything to break the bonds with England and found a new nation that grew to be the envy of the world. However, don't be fooled it is not the nation you presently live in. It is the nation that was stolen from you. The government erased history so that you remain unaware of what America was and what it offered its citizens. It was beautiful beyond belief."

"One of my ancestors signed both the *Declaration of Independence*

and the original *Constitution for the United States*. These two documents defined a government like no other that existed in history. Unfortunately, you have been denied access to that history. So, here I stand defiant, just like my ancestor risking everything. He did so to support freedom. I am doing so in support of truth. It is time that you see the real history of America. In a program, titled *Discover America*, I am going to interview founding fathers and other persons who helped shape our nation. Using incredible virtual reality and holographs you will be right there with me hearing what the founding of America was really like from the very individuals who fashioned a miracle. While the government has taken away your liberty, I'm returning your right to know the truth. Thank you."

"That works," Walter deadpans.

"I like it," Virginia offers.

Dee adds, "Now all I have to do is create the next episode of *The Capitalist*."

A chime tells us that a news feed is about to be broadcast. We turn our attention to the large monitor on the wall. A familiar government news channel announcer appears. As the screen shows large crowds filling the streets of Wilson, D.C. she reads the news, "Enormous crowds have spontaneously gathered in support of the upcoming United Nations economic zone transition." The camera pans to show a vast number of people waving blue United Nations flags. A voice-over provides details, "Police estimate the crowd to be over one-hundred-thousand. President Holmes issued a statement saying it is heartwarming to see so many enthusiastic citizens in favor of our nation joining the global community." A chant is heard from the crowd, "U.N., U.N., U.N." The announcer adds, "President Holmes assures all citizens that the very small group of traitors among us will be dealt with quickly and that plans for the transition are moving along at a rapid pace." Then a man-in-the-street style interview shows two young people holding a sign that reads, "We Are Global Citizens." The interviewer asks, "Why are you here?" One responds, "We want the world to know that a peaceful and prosperous future lies ahead with the United Nations."

"Bullshit!" Walter spits.

Virginia has a different take as she states, "The perception war has begun."

"Do you really think all those people just showed up?" Dee asks.

"I don't believe anyone was there," I conclude remembering Professor Hofstra. "You can't believe anything that the government puts out. That whole scene could be computer generated and the people

have no way of knowing. The state media certainly isn't going to blow the whistle on them."

Another chime draws my attention. Now on the screen is a woman—my mother. She is sitting at a grey table with her hands clasped in front of her. Her features are drawn and stern. Fatigue is reflected in her deep eyes. By all appearances she has not been treated very well. Then she speaks, "This is a message to my son George Clymer. Give yourself up. What you are doing is wrong and will only lead to more trouble. Don't turn your back on the country that has given you everything. Please, George, stop this foolishness. Give yourself up." She looks to her right as if to ask someone off screen if she did what they wanted well enough.

"She doesn't look well," Dee says with concern.

I can only shake my head, "They're not treating her right. I wish she had escaped with you and dad."

We all sit in silence for a short period of time. I feel like I should say something to keep the process moving. Virginia is correct, the government is going to do all it can to convince the population that what is planned with the United Nations is a good thing. They are also going to do all they can to disparage anything we try to present. My fear is; have they succeeded in dumbing down a large enough segment of the population to be able to maintain their control with lies and misrepresentation. Of course, it may not matter when the economy is shut down. Most will go where the means of survival are available. However, that's not good enough. Freedom is more than a word—it's a way of life. With freedom comes responsibility. If you sit back and wait for the government to take care of you, most likely you will perish. If you use your new found liberty to achieve more than you ever could under tyranny you will prosper. It's those who fail to take positive action that we must initially consider.

"Let's discuss transition," I say to the team. When all eyes are on me, I continue, "When the plug is pulled and the government is shut down a lot of people are going to be in a state of confusion, lost, frightened, and upset. Many depend on their government stipend to survive. If everything just stops there will be chaos. There has to be an easy-to-understand process for every citizen to painlessly leap from the nest and fly."

"Nice metaphor," Walter states.

"Thanks, there will be those who immediately see the potential and use their new found freedom to build a future. Then there will be

those who nibble at the edges.”

“Another good one.”

I stare at Walter for a second, “I fear a large number will cling to the old way. Even with the promise of a better life they will be unable to relinquish their security blanket.” Before Walter can speak, I add, “I know, another good one.”

“No, that one sucked.”

“None-the-less, we need to have a transition plan and be ready to present it on E Day.”

“E Day?” Virginia inquires.

“Econoclysmic Day. When the economy stops, every citizen needs to immediately be told not to panic because there is a plan.”

Dee offers her thoughts, “I’m sitting at home considering what to have for dinner. I make a shopping list and blammo my money is gone. I need more than a plan—I need food.”

“How do you transform an economy overnight?” I ponder.

“You don’t,” Walter states. “The mechanism is in place to continue to provide an, uh, income to the population. It will just be in the form of Dollars instead of International Monetary Units. To keep it simple we will make the conversion rate one-to-one.”

“The difference will be that government officials will not have the capability to make any expenditures, change any citizen’s compensation, get access to funds, or direct any government operations. The new government will immediately take over.”

“What happens if the existing leaders refuse to cooperate?” I ask the obvious.

“I’m sure they will resist. Wilson will become a battleground, unless we come up with an efficacious plan. State and local politicians will be a mixed bag. Some might try to fight, but will not have the means. It will depend on the position of law enforcement.”

“And the military,” I add.

Virginia speaks up, “For the most part, when people wake up one morning and nothing in their individual lives has changed except for the fact that they now make purchases with dollars they will simply accept it. Those who have something to lose will resist. The degree of resistance will be determined by what is at their disposal.”

“We can use the Reorganization as an example of what might happen,” I suggest. “From the little that I have seen about it, martial law was declared, people were confused, people disappeared, instructions were issued by the government, and most citizens fell in line, literally.”

"I have a crazy idea," Dee chimes in. Now, all eyes are on her. "The government uses entertainment to brainwash its citizens. Movies, shows, news all support the concept that the government is the solution to all mankind's problems. If we take that lead, we can use entertainment to get citizens involved in the transition back to a representative republic." We continue to stare. "Well, when the change is made, we will have to have new state governments. You know, when the states are given back their rights and their governments are no longer just administrative functions implementing federal government dictates. Each state will need a governor to oversee the rebuilding of a real state government, election of representatives, and appointment of senators." She looks at us and asks, "We want them to support liberty and freedom, right?" We all nod. "And, the best way to find the right people is to use an entertainment venue. We have a program named, um, *America's Got History*. Contestants compete to see who knows the most about pre-Reorganization American history. If they know what America was founded to be and initially became, they have a better chance of wanting to have that kind of government again." Dee gets a self-conscious, almost embarrassed look as she concludes, "The winner is appointed governor of that state."

"That's crazy," Walter says.

"I'm not sure," Virginia admits.

"That's brilliant," I declare.

Darsey Patricia Clymer looks at me and smiles. Her idea makes the creation of my interviews of famous historical figures all the more important.

The first interview is with George Washington. I don't mind telling you when the hologram walks onto the screen, he is an imposing figure. At six feet three inches, with grey-blue eyes, reddish brown hair, and an easy confident gait he is everything I imagined a great man would be. We both sit.

"President Washington, I am honored to meet you and look forward to hearing about the birth of the original United States of America."

"The foundation of our empire was not laid in the gloomy age of ignorance and superstition, but at an epoch when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined," Washington states.

Immediately, I realize he will be speaking in the vernacular of his time. This gives me pause as I conclude that I had better choose my words carefully so that he doesn't misunderstand my questions. He sits

erect and in a formal manner. In every way, he is the epitome of a self-assured and trustworthy leader. I ask, "How did you come to get involved with the rebellion?"

"The establishment of civil and religious liberty was the motive which induced me to the field—the object once attained—now remains to be my earnest wish and prayer, that the citizens of the United States make a wise and virtuous use of the blessings placed before them." He goes on to describe the events and battles of the Revolutionary War in remarkable and moving detail. Without question those who fought and died for freedom were a noble, awe-inspiring, courageous breed of men.

"When the war was won, what type of government did you expect to be established?"

"In politics as in philosophy, my tenets are few and simple. The leading one of which, and indeed that which embraces most others, is to be honest and just ourselves and to exact it from others, meddling as little as possible in their affairs where our own are not involved."

"Did you expect to be the first President of the United States?"

President Washington looks up as he recalls, "After the surrender of Yorktown in October of 1791, the final outcome was inevitable. It was at that time when the shape and form of a new government became the subject of consideration. I had no political aspirations. I wished to return to Mount Vernon." He frowns, "I recall, earlier on May 22, 1782, I received a letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola of Pennsylvania who enjoined me to rally the army, seize power, and declare myself king." The imposing man stares right at me and states with disarming directness, "I replied to his letter thusly; With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment, I read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war, has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. If I am not deceived in myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes were more disagreeable. Banish these thoughts from your mind and never communicate a sentiment of like nature."

"It is obvious, you neither wished to be king nor saw a government based on royalty?"

"The foundations of our national policy were laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the preeminence of free government exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world. No country upon

earth ever had it more in its power to attain these blessings than United America. Wondrously strange, then, and much to be regretted indeed would it be, were we to neglect the means and to depart from the road which Providence has pointed us to so plainly.”

“I understand that you were in favor of a strong federal government.” I inquire.

“During the war many promises were made to those who fought. Regrettably, the Continental Congress was a lion without teeth. Delegates had to request troops from state militia and could order that they be provisioned, but had no power to enforce such action. The army nearly starved in several winters of war. A strong federal government was necessary to unite thirteen armies into one resolute force. We had two favorite toasts in the army, ‘A hoop to the barrel’ and ‘Cement to the Union.’”

“Mr. President, doesn’t a powerful government pose a risk to individual freedom?”

“Government is not reason and it is not eloquence. It is force! Like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action.” He pauses, then explains, “I believe a Divine power watched over battlefields, was involved in the outcome of war, was protecting my life, and was involved specifically in the creation of the United States. At this auspicious period, the United States came into existence as a nation and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.”

“Do you support free market capitalism?”

“A people who are possessed of the spirit of commerce, who see and who will pursue their advantages may achieve almost anything.”

“The *Constitution* begins with ‘We the People’ which means the government derives its just power from the will of the people. What could have prevented the ultimate loss of liberty at the hands of the people who were elected to represent the people?”

George Washington shakes his head as if disappointed by the turn of events. He then states, “A primary object should have been the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?” He runs his hand across his cheek and admits, “We did not anticipate that while political parties may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and

unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.”

“Do you have any advice for us as we try to rekindle the spirit that was once America?”

“No morn ever dawned more favorable than ours did; and no day was every more clouded than the present! Wisdom, and good examples are necessary at this time to rescue the political machine from the impending storm. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.”

“Can we save America, Mr. President?”

“Do not seek to return to the imperfect union we created—miracle that it be. Take the most noble, reasonable, and enlightened elements and reject the imperfections, such as the recognized gap between the ideals of liberty and slavery. Our time was a period when slavery was an accepted practice without question throughout the world. Men were pressed into his majesty’s navy, women were indentured servants who labored until their debt was satisfied, convicts were utilized in forced labor camps, tenant farmers toiled without compensation, and negro slaves were imported from Africa. I wished from my soul that the legislature of this state could see the policy of a gradual abolition of slavery.” He leans forward, “It was the American love of liberty that kept the thirst for abolition alive that eventually lit the light of universal freedom for all citizens to enjoy. Many died in that just cause.”

After the interview is complete, I have a strange perception that I actually spoke with George Washington. My brain assures me it was Prophet, but my heart feels as though I just touched a magnificent past. Its conclusion leaves me with a sense of loss.



Warren G Harding
President: 1921 - 1923

“It’s not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves.”

—Sir Edmund Hillary

Chapter 29 | THE MOUNTAIN

“Pack your gear, we have to move—NOW!” Virginia announces.

No one asks why. Her manner says it all. We are about to have unwelcome visitors. Luckily, we are all traveling light. It takes but a minute to pack. I fold and throw the green screen in my pack and Dee takes the video camera. There is no need to hide the fact that we—or someone—had been here. They already know that. Thumb gloves on we exit the cave.

“Don’t forget to lock the door,” I jest. Virginia looks at me with what might be, maybe, perhaps, a slight grin—I’m not sure. I add, “At least make them work for it.”

To shut me up, Virginia locks the door and breaks the key off in the lock. She then sprinkles pepper all around the entrance as she explains, “If they have dogs with them this will delay any attempt at tracking us.”

Outside we are surrounded by high mountainous ranges. As we don’t have any vehicles or horses we start out on foot. Virginia leads the way up a path—if you can call it a path. It’s more like a web of tree limbs, bushes, ground cover, and some kind of thorny plants that seem to like me. I must admit that it is not the type of trail that would be easy to spot or follow. Unless they follow drops of my blood from those damn thorns.

Not too deep into the forest the trail becomes steeper and is broken up by large rocks. I believe a mountain goat just passed me. Upward and upward we climb among the dense trees. Suddenly, Virginia abruptly stops. I immediately know why. We can hear distant helicopter rotors. I wonder if it is ours or theirs. From the look on Virginia’s face, I conclude that they are not friendly aircraft. The sounds become louder and louder. There are multiple helicopters, however, how many I can’t be sure. They either just dropped off an assault team, are flying cover, or

are searching for us. Or, all of the above. Chop, chop, chop we can hear the blades cutting the air above us. Four traitors freeze.

Now, I know there are good snakes and bad snakes. The problem is the one under a bush near my foot doesn't have a label on it. It does have a forked tongue and is tasting the air. As my full attention is on the reptile, I don't see Virginia approach. In the blink of an eye, she grabs the snake behind the head and picks it up. I don't know who was more surprised, me or the snake. Without saying a word Virginia carries the serpent over to a grassy area away from us and releases it. The helicopters become more distant.

We continue our trek under the cover of a thick tree umbrella. When we reach a rock outcropping, we huddle together under it.

"They are most likely watching all the roads and small villages in the area. It appears we have a traitor in the organization. One of our embedded spies in the government alerted their contact of the impending raid. None too soon, I might add," Virginia says. "We don't have an escape plan as we felt this was a safe location known to very few. This is the Ozark Mountain range which is very sparsely populated. STUS can't send us any mode of transportation to extract us. For the time being we are on our own."

"What kind of snake was that?" I have to ask.

"Copperhead."

"Is it poisonous?"

"Yes, but it is one of the least poisonous of the pit vipers. Most often, a copperhead will inject only a small amount of venom when it bites a human."

"That's comforting."

"It doesn't consider a human prey so the bite is a defensive warning. That doesn't mean it isn't painful or dangerous. Left untreated you could lose a limb or suffer from a secondary infection."

"And, you grabbed it," I point out.

"A copperhead has a unique characteristic. It doesn't flee when approached. Instead it will freeze in its position. Most people get bitten because they don't know it's there and literally step on it. I counted on it not moving."

Virginia's phone vibrates. She takes the call. After a few "I understands" and "will dos" she ends the call. "There is a safe house with allies approximately four miles from here. We're going to have to make our way through some tough wilderness and mountain terrain to get there. We also have to avoid any contact with locals. What are you

doing?" she asks Dee.

"I'm taping some footage of our trek."

"Just don't fall off a cliff."

"If you do, toss me the camera," I add which brings a smirk from my sister.

"OK, by what the satellite images are telling me, we head due west."

Four miles on a paved road is difficult enough, but going that distance while climbing over a mountain in a dense forest is a different story. There aren't any well-defined paths. Sometimes you have to go north or south to get around an obstacle which leaves you wondering which way is west. No wonder people get lost in the woods. Yet, all-in-all, we all trust Virginia.

"You sure we are going the right way?" Walter asks.

"Didn't we pass that tree before?" Dee adds.

"If we die in these mountains, what happens to the revolution?" I inquire.

Virginia stops, turns, and states, "I know you are all just kidding. However, you have a right to know that I have no idea where we are." She turns back and continues on. That shut us up.

After half an hour we stop on a hilltop. Remarkably, there aren't any helicopters within earshot. They either all landed at the cave house or gave up any search given the terrain and dense forest. A wisp of smoke draws our attention. Beneath it just barely visible is a cabin.

Virginia refers to her phone and concludes, "If that is the northern cabin of the two in this area, we should come to a dirt road shortly."

Before we locate the dirt road, we come upon a small mountain waterfall and stream. The water is ice-cold, clear, and refreshing. We decide to take a break.

"When this is over," I ask, "what will we have created?"

Walter Tize answers, "Hopefully, a return to a government by the people not over the people. Kings and emperors rule over their subjects. They tell them what they are allowed to do and not permitted to do. The founding fathers of the United States of America grew up in that type of society. Whether enslaved by economics, edict, laws, or chains the idea of individual freedom did not exist. How fortunate early Americans were that the founders had the wisdom to look at government from a completely different perspective. Every individual has a God-given right to their life. Governments didn't create them—God did. One man has no right to control another, take from another, or wrong another."

“What about the slaves?” Dee asks.

“Consider the world they lived in. All nations were governed by some form of noble class, military leader, or tyrant. Those who had the capability were busy building empires. France and Britain were openly hostile during the War of Austrian Succession. The Marathas, using French supplied artillery, battled the British in an area later called Afghanistan in one of the bloodiest encounters of the 1700s. As many as 80,000 soldiers died. Portugal declared Mozambique in east Africa a colony. The Manchu Chinese took over power in Tibet. Napoleon, with his French army was building an empire. Spain fought to expand in South America. There was conflict and conquest in every corner of the world.”

“Along Africa’s Gold Coast, the Asante kingdom supplied slaves to British and Dutch traders in exchange for firearms with which to achieve territorial expansion. Luanda had become the leading point of departure for slaves where power was measured by the number of slaves one owned. Slave labor built the city buildings and paved roads. Contrary to what has been taught, America did not create slavery. The practice was widespread throughout the world for centuries.”

“Even free citizens didn’t have it easy. Consider London at that time. It was during the height of the British Empire that ruled over large parts of the world. Riches were brought back to England from India, the Caribbean, America, and numerous other colonies. Industrialists and merchants were wealthy, while the aristocracy inherited their wealth. People were drawn to the city in hopes of finding employment to better their lives. What they found were slums and little work. Families lived in abject poverty. Crime, violence, abuse, and disease were all part of everyday life. Large tenement houses were quickly and shabbily built because city regulations only allowed parcels of land to be leased for 21 years. Why build something that would last? Buildings would leak during the rain, had little insulation, and often collapsed killing occupants. Then there were doss houses that rented beds for a few hours. People slept in shifts and the bedding wasn’t changed between guests. Finally, there was the option of a four-penny coffin. There a homeless man could sleep in a wooden box lined up in rows in an abandoned warehouse. For a single penny they could sit in a chair, but if you were caught sleeping it was double—two pennies. Many of London’s homeless gave up and entered one of the workhouses.”

“Workhouses?” Dee asks.

“A workhouse was a large building that housed poor people who had no means to support themselves. They weren’t very pleasant places

and were avoided as much as possible. The facility had small windows, dark corridors and staircases, low ceilings, unbearable stench, and poor air circulation. It was surrounded by a high wall giving the appearance of being a prison. It might as well have been. Families were separated with men, women, and children living in different locations. There were as many as ten beds in each room. Inmates were given a uniform and were not permitted to talk with one another. Work was tedious, dirty, demanding, and hard for the people living there. Failure to be productive or breaking any rules brought punishments. Meals were insufficient and bland. While they claimed to provide education to children, they neglected to teach them how to read or write. Disease spread quickly and vermin were widespread. Workers were not paid for their labors.” Walter looked directly at Dee and stated, “There are many forms of slavery.”

Darsey nods.

Walter continues, “The founders were visionaries. They changed what had been common practice for centuries—the powerful controlling the lives of those not in power. It was a dramatic departure from accepted practice. Human beings as property was the norm. Serfs were subjects—or property—of the king. It was a turbulent time in a world where conquests were being made, endless wars fought, and populations subjugated by nations seeking to build empires. As they did so little thought was given to the peasants. They were numbers. We have four hundred cows, two hundred goats, three hundred eighty peasants. The founders turned the equation upside down. They sought to create a government that answered to the people, not the other way around. If not for the slave-owning southern colonies that depended on free labor, all Americans would have been free and equal right from the founding. Good men with great intentions faced a dilemma. To get the *Declaration of Independence* passed they were forced to leave slavery untouched or there would be no independent nation. Thomas Paine summed it up quite well, ‘The Grecians and Romans were strongly possessed of the spirit of liberty but not the principle, for at the time they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind.’”

“It’s hard to imagine what the world was like back then,” Dee concludes.

“Especially, when none of it is taught anymore,” I add.

Walter pauses to consider what I said and offers, “You asked what will we create. I hope a better world where education and

acknowledgement of history raises up all people.”

I recall my interview with President George Washington and restate what he said, “A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?”

Virginia announces, “We better get moving. We don’t want to be in this wilderness when it gets dark.”

“For sure. When it gets dark—it gets goddamn dark. And, I for one don’t wish to meet the Ozark Howler in the dark.”

“Ozark Howler?” Dee asks.

Walter presents a wry grin. He explains, “Legend has it that there are one or more very large catlike creatures that roam the Ozark Mountains. Eyewitnesses claim to have seen the creature and describe it as a gigantic cat, even bigger than a cougar. Still others describe a massive beast with glowing eyes and horns protruding from its head. At least, most agree that it is a dark color or black. It’s called the howler because of its terrifying cry much like that of a hyena.” He leans back and concludes, “Not something you want to meet in the dark—or the light for that matter.”

Dee looks at Virginia, “Let’s go. What are we waiting for?”

“The Howler,” I deadpan.

We arrive at the dirt road. There is no sign of life—human or animal or howler. Virginia refers to her GPS map. She explains, “We have a long way to go and not a lot of time. We can take a chance and follow a number of dirt roads.” She looks skyward, “There is tree cover. All we have to do is move quietly, listen carefully, and avoid contact.”

I respond, “Let’s do it. We risk being injured or getting lost going through the wilderness.”

The dirt road is a welcome relief to climbing across rocks in dense forests. Unfortunately, after forty-five minutes our dirt road ends and we are back in prehistoric wilderness. Did I hear a howl? On and on we go up then down, circumvent an obstacle, trip, curse, push branches out of the way, stumble, curse, get cut by thorns, curse, and finally come to a cliff that overlooks a paved road.

“That road is going to take us to our destination,” Virginia announces. “It’s the only way we can cross that fast-moving stream. We have to go north to get to another dirt road that will lead us down to the paved road.”

After another forty-five minutes we reach a dirt road and now head south back toward the paved road. At the T where the roads meet there is a house. Luckily, it is in a gully that is lower than the road. We turn north.

"If you hear any vehicles approaching, get out of sight," Virginia instructs us.

It's great being on a paved road. As we walk it winds right then left. In a short distance we come to a bridge. Unfortunately, as luck would have it, we hear a vehicle approaching from the north. Each of us finds an appropriate hiding place. And, it's a good thing that we do. A national police patrol SUV drives past our location. They don't appear to have seen us. Back on the road we cross the bridge. There is a farm on our left, however, we don't see any people. We come to a second and larger bridge over the main branch of the stream. After crossing, we pass a few more houses situated a long distance from the road. Next, we pass a road with an old sign for Boxley Baptist Church. I can't help but wonder how that sign is still standing. Before I was born the practice of Christianity was outlawed. Something to do with discrimination, intolerance, and hate speech. After half an hour we cross another bridge. The road remains quiet with no cars or trucks passing by. The road splits in an inverted Y with the main portion going left. We take the right fork. A short distance around a bend we come to a two-story white house on our left. Our destination according to Virginia.

The first thing that strikes me is a red and blue Reorganization American Flag and a United Nations flag waving in the breeze on a flagpole. I turn to Virginia and ask, "Are you sure this is the place?"

"According to my GPS and what David Trufire told me—this is it."

"You see those flags?"

"Hard to miss."

"Well?"

"Well, what? It's a safe house."

"Safe for who?"

"What better disguise than being seen as one of them."

"If you say so."

"I'll check it out and see if it's safe," Virginia offers.

"No, I will," I insist.

"Oh, now you're getting all macho on me," Virginia opines.

"I'll tell you when I start feeling macho," I retort. "I'm just tired, thirsty, and hungry enough not to care."

Virginia stares into my eyes and finally says, "Have it your way."

Let me first describe where we are. The two-story white house has a porch with four white columns. Above is a balcony that matches the porch complete with white columns. It doesn't appear to be a large house from the front elevation. There are double windows on either side of the door. On the porch are two white rocking chairs. A flight of five stone stairs leads up to the house. As I stated, it doesn't appear to be a large house from the front, however, from a side view the depth is equivalent to three houses.

I approach cautiously, which is my way of saying scared-to-death. In a few moments we will be safe or the unhappy guests of the government. All is quiet with no sign of life. I reach the white door and it opens.

Before me stands a man with long grey hair wearing a plaid shirt and jeans. His weather-beaten face and deep-set eyes complete the image of an individual who has lived in the frontier or enjoyed an eventful life in the military. He stands tall at six-feet-four-inches. The only thing I can think of is to ask, "Profit or loss?"

"There are profits and there are prophets," he immediately responds.

Ah, the correct answer. It is one that has greater meaning now that I've met Prophet. "I continue, "Freedom is not an economic concept."

"Freedom is an act of God." He steps back and says, "Welcome to my home."

I wave for the others to join us as I admit, "Your flags threw me off."

"You and any other inquiring minds."

Inside the house we find ourselves in a large great room.

Dee asks with a noticeable degree of urgency, "Where is the bathroom?"

Our host smiles and points to a hallway. I begin to introduce myself, but he cuts me off.

"I know who you are. My name is Seth Underwood. Rest assured, you are in safe hands."

"Can you tell us what is happening at the cave?" Virginia asks.

"A contingent of unhappy military and law enforcement arrived in force only to find nothing. They briefly searched the surrounding mountain ranges but failed to identify any trail or sign of you having been there. Roadblocks and monitoring waterways and other venues continue as they execute a house-to-house search.

“Have they been here?” Virginia inquires.

“Not as yet—but they will.”

“Should we be concerned?”

“There is no danger here. This is considered a pro-government house.”

“Will they search?”

“No.”

I am compelled to ask, “Do you have any idea how we are going to get out of here?”

Seth looks directly at me with penetrating eyes. “That I have not been told. I was drafted to provide a safe haven which I will do. Until contacted, I had no knowledge of your being in the vicinity. Resolution of the situation will be determined by other minds.”

Why do I get the distinct impression that we are not being told all there is that is taking place? It may be necessary, but I don’t like it. From the look on her face, it is obvious that Virginia isn’t pleased, as well.

Seth continues, “You are welcome here, as long as is necessary. I suggest you remain inside. Things will most likely die down in a few days. They will either assume you were never there and the tip was incorrect or conclude that you escaped to another far-away location.”

After a well-appreciated meal, we all sit in the great room. Little is said out of an abundance of caution. Seth then surprises us with a lengthy statement.

“No more noble an endeavor can there be than to risk everything in order to afford liberty for millions of lost souls so deserving of the promise of a full and fruitful life. The thieves who reside in Wilson and their predecessors have effectively dragged humankind back hundreds of years to before the enlightenment. Little do they know or care about the damage they have done to the evolution of man. Instead of enhancing individual freedom they have removed it from the human equation. That great God-given experiment that was born three hundred years ago laying the foundation for worldwide recognition of the potential of mankind to enjoy the fruits of a glorious future has been squandered. Unbridled greed and lust for power trampled the flower of freedom through deception and treachery. Must the baser needs of man overpower his noble aspirations? Are we doomed to repeat again and again the errors of the past that destroyed flourishing societies? Is man’s self-indulgence the route to his self-destruction? Cannot freedom be valued over all other temptations? Or, is it too fragile to survive neglect and indifference? Freedom’s atrophy seems inevitable as societies age.

Much like the seasons; freedom is born in its spring, enjoyed when in full bloom of summer, then slowly withers through its fall, until another cold winter of repression occurs. Government is not the answer. It is the instrument by which one has dominion over others. Isn't it time we realize that the human race can only break the cycle when they see Divine truth? The answer lies within."

Silence reigns as Seth Underwood walks over to a chair and drops heavily into the cushion. It was quite a soliloquy. I look for a shadow and am relieved to see one. You have to understand, I have experienced so much manipulation, as well as surprises that I'm now a full-fledged member of the cynic's club—if one exists. Once more, Dr. Hofstra appears in my mind. He seems to be nodding as I tell myself to question everything. Was that a planned speech? Were we brought here intentionally? Was there ever a threat at the cave? If I burp really loud will it kill the mood?

Dee speaks, "That was incredible. Can I use those words in *The Capitalist*?"

Seth looks at my sister and says with a fatigued voice, "It is simply the ranting of an old man. My frustration with a reality that I don't understand. Do we not all have the desire to pursue our own adventure unfettered? I think not, and that is dismaying. Young lady, you may use whatever you wish. I would be honored if you did."

I look at Dee and she doesn't have a shadow. Just kidding. I want to see if you are paying attention.

As evening falls, we each find ourselves in our own room. I, of course, have to make contact with Dawn.

GEORGE: It was a long and eventful day.

DAWN: So, I hear.

GEORGE: How do you always know what has happened before I tell you?

DAWN: I don't.

GEORGE: Do you know that the cave was raided by the government?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: Do you know where I am at the moment?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: Do you know who is here?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: Then how can you say you don't know what is happening before I tell you?

DAWN: Because those are three simple facts. Whatever else has occurred I am unaware of it.

GEORGE: We traveled practically the entire day through the mountain wilderness. I almost got bitten by a snake. As of this moment we don't know how we are going to get out of here or where we need to go next.

DAWN: Where do you want to go?

GEORGE: I don't know.

DAWN: Then you are already there.

GEORGE: What?

DAWN: If you don't have a desired destination, there is no reason to leave where you are.

GEORGE: Are you telling me we should stay here?

DAWN: Was it a big snake?

GEORGE: Not really. Answer my question.

DAWN: You won't like my answer.

GEORGE: Try me.

DAWN: You must decide the next move. Time is running out.

GEORGE: You're right. I don't like the answer.

DAWN: No surprise.

GEORGE: Are you telling me everyone is sitting around waiting for me to direct this revolution?

DAWN: What do you think?

GEORGE: What if I blow it?

DAWN: You won't.

GEORGE: How do you know?

GEORGE: How do you know?

GEORGE: How do you know?



Calvin Coolidge

President: 1923 - 1929

***“All warfare is based on deception.
There is no place where espionage is not used.
Offer the enemy bait to lure him.”***

—Sun Tzu

Chapter 30 | THE SPY

Morning brings with it rain. There is something about showers washing the countryside that is refreshing. It is an oddly relaxing sound. I’m tempted to run out into the yard to enjoy nature’s offering. However, while it would be pleasant, there is much to be done.

At breakfast, I announce, “We have to identify the spy who revealed our location. I’m certain David Trufire is on it, but we cannot proceed if our tactics are to be compromised.”

“The latest I heard from David is that they have narrowed it down to three suspects,” Virginia states. She sips her coffee and provides the list, “The manager of Beckham Creek Cave, Pop the pilot who flew you here, and . . .” Virginia pauses before naming, “Seth Underwood.”

Seth doesn’t overtly react. Instead he observes, “I made the list, eh?”

I address Seth, “I thought you told us that you didn’t know we were there.”

He shrugs.

Virginia abruptly stands and states, “He’s a spook.”

We all look in her direction.

“Seth works for the Company—the CIA. They are trained to deny everything out of an abundance of caution until lying becomes second-nature.”

“I deny that,” Seth states lightheartedly.

“I’d be surprised if it was Pop,” I interject.

Seth peers at me and gives his perspective, “The best spies are those you least suspect.” He turns his attention to Virginia and says, “You obviously are security. Ask me anything you wish to determine if I was the leak.”

"You're too professional and experienced to be caught through interrogation," Virginia replies. "I could have not mentioned you and simply observed your actions. Instead, I'm making a judgement call. If you are associated with the government, we would have awakened in handcuffs."

"Not with you watching from the shadows down the hall. Did you get any sleep?"

"Enough."

Two intelligence experts stare at each other mentally sparring. In addition, they are each sizing their opponent up evaluating potential skills. Callouses on hands could indicate martial arts training, certain postures both standing and sitting might reveal the carrying of a weapon, eye movements reflect potential hazards in the surroundings, a twitch or unconscious movement betrays what one is thinking, and even something as simple as breathing exposes the preparedness for aggressive action. I get the impression that if it wasn't for the cloud of suspicion hanging over the table, they might actually like each other. Or, at least, respect.

"We both know that there is no conclusive way for me to prove my non-involvement," Seth points out.

"You are a dangerous man," Virginia states with conviction.

"And, you a dangerous woman."

I find that I have to jump into the discourse. "You made quite a speech last night. It sounded unrehearsed and sincere. What is most revealing is the fact that it was unnecessary in order to gain our confidence. For that reason alone, I'm going to choose to believe you are innocent." It might prove a fatal mistake, but at times like these we have to make risky decisions and may not always be right. We don't have the luxury of time to carry on a lengthy investigation to lessen our suspicions.

Virginia surprises me when she sits back down and simply says, "Done. No more need be said."

"I appreciate your confidence," Seth says. "You won't regret your decision. Now, in recognition of full disclosure, I must inform you that indeed I was the source of the leak."

Virginia is on her feet and holding her 9mm Smith & Wesson pistol aimed directly at Seth.

"Put that down," he orders calmly. "I was also the one who alerted STUS of the impending raid."

"Whose side are you on?" I ask feeling somewhat embarrassed and taken aback after just declaring him innocent.

"My statement last night was in earnest. I am completely

opposed to socialism and vehemently against the United Nations economic zone approach.”

“Then why interfere with our efforts?” I ask. “It doesn’t make sense.”

“It makes more sense than you realize. Seth explains, “Time is running out.” He pauses. “Whatever you plan on doing must occur now before it is too late.” Another pause. “You are not aware of the fact that the government is preparing for anticipated resistance and localized uprisings.”

“How are they preparing,” Walter asks.

“Foreign national troops are being trained to be deployed at strategic locations throughout the United States to handle any insurgency.”

“When?”

“As soon as they are ready. I’d say a few months at most.” Seth turns to me, “I leaked your location and then informed STUS knowing my home is the closest and most logical safe house. It was essential to get you here.”

“Why not just come to us with this information?” Dee asks.

“Because, young lady, it would risk my being identified as a collaborator.”

“Then contact us on a secure line.”

“You don’t understand—I need you here!” Seth stated forcefully which caused Dee to jump.

Big brother to the rescue. “Don’t talk to her in that tone of voice.”

Seth is unfazed as he addresses me, “Then I’ll talk to you. In every confrontation the deciding factor is not overwhelming force—it is information. The side with the most accurate facts ultimately wins. The British were winning the Revolutionary War until intelligence changed everything.” In a professorial tone he continues, “His name was James Rivington. He was a journalist, publisher, loyalist, and spy.” Seth waited for a reaction. Got none. “James Rivington was born in London in 1724 to a family of publishers. He and his brother John ran the operation until James opened his own publishing business with James Fletcher, Jr. They were extremely profitable because of their publishing *History of England*, a book by Tobias Smollett. Unfortunately, James Rivington enjoyed fine things and betting at the race track in Newmarket. It wasn’t long before he was forced to declare bankruptcy. To avoid debtor’s prison, Rivington decided to begin a new life in the American colonies. He sailed to North America in 1760 and opened a book shop on Market Street in

Philadelphia, a second store in Hanover Square in New York, and a third on King Street in Boston. By 1773 he was publishing a number of newspapers the *New York Gazetteer*, and the Connecticut, New Jersey, Hudson's River, and Quebec *Weekly Advertiser*."

"Originally, he wanted his *New York Gazetteer* to be impartial and address both sides of the argument as to whether the American colonies should rebel against England. However, as the public became split, he found that he had to choose a side. For their part the patriots needed newspapers to print stories that would fire up readers against the British. Rivington responded by doing the opposite and printing more stories that gave reasons why the colonies should remain tied to England while severely attacking the rebellious patriots. He quickly became a hated man. In 1774, Captain Isaac Sears, one of the patriots criticized in the *New York Gazetteer* led a mob of supporters that ransacked Rivington's print shop and damaged his printing plates. Rivington himself was arrested and brought before the Continental Congress, but later released. The Sons of Liberty hanged James Rivington in effigy, and the patriot poet, Philip Freneau, published a mock speech of Rivington's supposed contrition at his execution, which Rivington reprinted in his newspaper. Meanwhile, his newspaper continued to print loyalist stories and editorials. In November 1775, the Sons of Liberty again attacked Rivington's shop burned it to the ground and destroyed the printing press. With no livelihood and extremely frightened, James returned to England in January 1776. During his year in England, the colonies declared independence, open warfare began, and James Rivington was appointed the Royal Printer of New York by King George III. He returned to British-occupied New York in 1777 with a new press and authorization to print the King's royal coat-of-arms symbol on his newspapers. He renamed his newspaper *The Royal Gazette* with the legend 'Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty' and ran stories that clearly favored the British. In addition, editorials, letters, and other writings poked fun at patriot leaders. News of American losses on the battlefield were also used to weaken public support for the war. *The Royal Gazette* was published five days a week from the summer of 1778 until the summer of 1783 when the war ended. Based on this fact, it is considered the first daily newspaper in the United States."

I find all this very interesting but wish Seth would get to the point before the government police arrive to arrest us.

"Why and exactly when James Rivington chose to change sides is unknown. He might have been a patriot from the beginning executing

a magnificent deception. The sign of a true professional is never being completely uncovered or understood.” Seth glances at Virginia then continues, “Like many newspaper operations of the time, James Rivington’s shop functioned as a gathering place. Subscribers would pick up their latest edition of the newspaper while some remained to read aloud for the benefit of those who could not read or write. It became easy for Rivington to overhear British officers and loyalists discussing the news. Eventually he opened a coffee house that was a hangout for high-ranking British officers. Vast amounts of information were gathered from simply listening. An interesting note is that he had a silent partner in this enterprise. It was none-other than American spy Robert Townsend one of the principal agents of the American Culper Spy Ring.”

When Seth realizes that we have no idea what he is talking about he explains, “In the summer of 1778, during the British occupation of New York City, General Washington instructed Major Benjamin Tallmadge to organize a spy ring. He needed to know as much about the British activities as possible. It became known as the Culper Ring, a name that was suggested by Washington as a play on spelling from Culpeper County, Virginia.” Seth shrugs, “Why not?” He returns to his explanation, “The two main members of the ring were Abraham Woodhull, aka; Samuel Culper Sr. and Robert Townsend, aka; Samuel Culper Jr. Their mission was to gather information about the activities of the British Army in New York City which was the British operational headquarters. Covert operations began in October 1778 and continued until the British evacuation of New York in 1783.”

“The Culper Ring was very successful in providing George Washington with vital information. Some examples are knowledge of the British plan for a surprise attack on the allied French forces under Lieutenant General Rochambeau at Newport, Rhode Island, the British plan to counterfeit American currency on the actual paper used for the Continental dollars leading to the Continental Congress retiring the bills, a strategic ploy for Major General William Tryon to raid in Connecticut in July 1779 as a diversion to induce Washington to divide his forces allowing Lieutenant General Sir Henry Clinton to attack them piecemeal, identification of the plot by Benedict Arnold and British Major John Andre for the surrender of the garrison at West Point to the British, and attempts to kidnap American officers including George Washington.”

“Now, here is where our old friend James Rivington came in. He gathered information directly from British officers who trusted him. His communications were written on book cover boards so no one would

see them, bound into the books, and brought to the American camp by agents that were unaware of what they carried.”

Seth stands and begins to pace. “Here is the most consequential part. On September 5, 1781, the largest naval battle of the Revolutionary War took place off the Virginia coast. Admiral Francois Joseph Paul Comte de Grasse, commander of the French fleet, had twenty-four ships of the line against Rear Admiral Thomas Graves’s nineteen. The French Admiral had a distinct advantage by knowing the British naval signals. This helped them intercept messages between British ships and then execute counter moves. The result was a decisive French victory, continuation of a strategic blockade at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, British inability to re-enforce General Cornwallis at Yorktown, his ultimate surrender, and America winning the Revolutionary War. All because of information obtained by a spy.”

“There is a firsthand account of James Rivington’s involvement in a letter written by Allen McLane, a Captain in the Continental Army. ‘After I returned in the fall from the West Indies, I was employed by the board of war to repair to Long Island to watch the motion of the British fleet and, if possible, obtain their Signals which I did threw the assistance of the noted Rivington. Joined the fleet Under the Count D Grass with the Signals.’ At the end of the war in 1783 the British departed from New York City. Immediately, General Washington sent troops to James Rivington’s home to protect him from overzealous patriots. Local citizens thought it strange for American troops to guard a Tory newspaper publisher who worked so hard against the cause. There are unsubstantiated stories of Washington himself visiting Rivington at his home. In the December 16, 1783 edition of the *Massachusetts Gazette* the following appeared, ‘It is reported as an undoubted fact, that Mr. JAMES RIVINGTON, Printer at New York, was, as soon as our troops entered the city, protected in person and property, by a guard, and that he will be allowed to reside in the country, for reasons best known to the great men at helm.’ James Rivington tried to keep his newspaper going. He renamed it *Rivington’s New York Gazette and Universal Advertiser* and removed the royal arms from the masthead. However, prominent Sons of Liberty John Lamb, Marinus Willett, and Isaac Sears visited Rivington, beat him up, and shut down the paper. Afterward, Rivington tried to set up as a bookseller and stationer, but his business failed to flourish as many Americans did not patronize his shop because they remained bitter about his loyalist leanings during the war. James Rivington died in comparative poverty in New York City in 1802. Such was the reward of Culper spy number 726.”

“You sound bitter,” Virginia observes.

“Bitter? Perhaps. Espionage is a dirty business. It is also a thankless one. It involves subterfuge and great risk without any expectation of reward. It tests a man’s mettle. The only reason any sane individual would enter this arena is if the cause is greater than personal wants and needs. Then again, too many fall victim to avarice and turn altruism into egotism. Finally, there is the fact that you are not immune to the effects of being exposed to information of which others are unaware. The dark side of man is a bitter repast often difficult to digest.” Seth addresses our group, “You’re not rebelling against a single tyrannical government—you are rebelling against the world.” His voice goes higher to emphasize the point.

We sit in silence as we consider his words.

Seth points out, “Ever since the Reorganization, foreign entities have taken control of the United States. All automobile manufacturing is owned by Japanese and Korean companies. The Arab League owns all the oil refineries and runs the power grid. High technology, with the exception of STUS, is monopolized by China. The European Union and Russia dominate the food industry. Even the entertainment industry is controlled by foreign companies. Why are they all interested in the United States? Natural resources and cheap labor. The president of the United States is a puppet and overseer of a vast plantation. Everywhere there are people who are at the low end of the Social Compensation Program payment schedule who have to work in workhouse-like factories just to survive. The twenty-percent of their salary that they get to keep might buy them a little extra meat or a warm coat. In Wilson, D.C. the political class live lavish lifestyles, but it’s a small price for foreign entities to pay to keep the population under control. There are rich folks in France wearing expensive shoes manufactured in Ohio. Carolina has factories turning out clothing worn around the world sold by foreign companies that outsource to the U.S. International executives come here to play golf on courses maintained by those who could never afford to play there. The rest of the world is sucking the last drops of blood out of the carcass that used to be the United States of America.”

“We became a third-world country a long time ago,” Virginia admits.

“Lady, we are a fourth-world country. Yet, we are still a great value to those in power. There are forces at work that have taken decades to get to this position. Globalists are not going to let you interfere with their plan for world domination. They are already preparing to crush you and

any others who will not fall in line. Last century socialists killed hundreds of millions of innocent human beings in their quest for power. Are you so naïve as to believe that they will remain silent and passive as you attempt to wrest the crown jewel of their empire from them?"

"Do you know of their plans?" Virginia asks.

"I know of some—not all. Which is why I needed you to come here. I preempted their strike on STUS headquarters by turning you folks in. There is a belief that STUS is hiding you. For the moment that is no longer the case. But it won't last. The conquerors can taste victory. I don't know the timing but they will hit STUS headquarters and take over all operations. If that happens you lose your edge and whatever tactics you've planned to employ will no longer be available. Your . . ." Seth pauses to reflect his dissatisfaction in facial expression and voice, "revolution will be over before it begins."

"Have you discussed this with STUS?" I ask.

"Are you not STUS?"

"Yes."

"Then what are we talking about, right now?"

"So, STUS headquarters have no idea that they are a target," I conclude.

"Exactly."

I turn to Virginia and state, "We need to warn David."

"Already done. No response, yet."

"Mr. Underwood," I begin, "I'm not sure what you are trying to tell us or what you are proposing."

"Let me spell it out for you in terms you can understand," he replies in a rather snide tone. "I and my associates, call us the Culper Ring, do not wish to see the globalists succeed. If you have any hope of returning even a portion of the United States to independence it will only be achieved with our assistance."

"My ass!" Walter barks.

"Is on the line and you don't even realize it," Seth responds.

"Go on, Mr. Underwood," I interject to calm the situation.

Seth explains, "The moment you start to revolt, the United Nations will declare war on the United States and a foreign peacekeeping force will invade and take control of the country. President Sandra Holmes will immediately capitulate and the U.N. Economic Zone approach will result."

"So, if we do nothing, we end up part of the global government and if we take action, we end up a part of the global government sooner,"

I summarize.

“Unless . . .” Seth starts but doesn’t finish.

“Unless, what?”

Strangely, he changes the subject, “Thirty years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting a true patriot. By that time, they were a rare breed. He was thirty-five years old and working for his father’s firm. It took a little time for us to get to know each other or to trust—if you can say that—each other. I was thirty-one and,” Seth looks in Virginia’s direction, “a spook working for the government. He, of course, had no idea. We both lived in Wilson at the time so you know we were not destitute. In fact, I was on assignment. Our meeting each other was not a coincidence. It was my job to get in this man’s head, find out what he knew, what he felt, and what degree of loyalty he possessed. Standard intelligence gathering given that his father’s company had sensitive government contracts and as you might imagine the political leaders were paranoid. They suspected everybody even each other. On a regular basis dead bodies showed up in the strangest places at the oddest times and were all declared suicides. I did my job and gained this man’s confidence. What I didn’t realize was he was getting into my head. I can’t explain, but he had a manner and style and strength that left the impression that he was an honest individual revealing true facts.”

Seth surprises the hell out of me when he looks at me and says as an aside, “Much like you.”

He returns to his story, “Before long he was teaching me things about early America that I never learned in school. It wasn’t so much him trying to educate me as it was his reflecting on how wise and extraordinary the founding fathers actually were. Without question he admired them. For my part, I found my self-centered values expanding to encompass the human race and then folding back to an individual level. Liberty is the force that drives a single person to strive for more, to learn more, to seek to go beyond perceived limits, to imagine, and to live. What exactly was it the founding fathers wanted? Simple. Freedom for every individual to pursue happiness. When the yoke of government holds one back and ties them down unable to follow their natural spirit and need to soar, they have unfulfilled lives and eventually either fight or wither and die. I discovered that the state is not the source of human happiness it is the guard of the cattle pens keeping them in line until they die. It caused me to question my values and conclude that I had been a useful idiot.”

I see something in Seth Underwood that I remember seeing in

David Trufire—passion.

Seth Underwood continues, “One day I met this man’s father. He was very impressive. I could see how his son became as confident, just, and insightful as he was. The older man was cautious in sharing his philosophy or view of the world. Unlike his son, he was not as forthcoming with admiration of the original United States of America. Oh, it was there, he just didn’t openly express it. As a matter-of-fact I fully understood that. His company had extensive dealings with the government, therefore, he wasn’t going to say anything negative about that institution. In fact, I believe he knew what I was doing—investigating for the government.”

“The man who I became friends with was named James Eastwood. His father was named Johnathan. And—here’s the kicker—his grandfather was Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood, co-founder of Strategic Technology Universal Solutions STUS. Colonel Eastwood had died in 2036 at the age of 86. That was the same year the Individual Identification And Data Chip (IIDC) was introduced. The other co-founder was Demarcus Shepherd. He was 82 at the time—semi-retired. His 61-year-old daughter Michelle was the CEO of STUS. I never met either of them. Demarcus lived to be 100, died in 2063. He outlived his daughter who died at 72 in 2056. It was that year that David Trufire took the helm of the organization. He was 35.”

Seth stops and looks at each of us, then says, “Back to James, who I became friends with. Based on statements that he made, I could have designated him a security risk, as well as possible subversive. I didn’t. He was an honorable man with noble ideas. My time with him washed some of the dirt from my hands. He dearly loved original America and dreamed of a day when its citizens were once again truly free. In time, I shared that dream. Unfortunately, he became a victim of the plague that swept across the country from 2047 to 2052. He was 40-years-old and had daughter who was eleven. I haven’t had any dealings with STUS from that time until now. What I did do is develop a network of like-minded operatives who could go into action when the inevitable revolution came. Apparently, that is now.” Seth speaks to a ghost in the room, “James, my friend, I pledged to continue the quest and will see this through until my last breath.”

There is a distant clap of thunder. OK, now I’m spooked.

Seth looks toward the window and concludes, “There’s a storm on the horizon.”



Herbert Hoover
President: 1929 - 1933

“A good plan executed today is better than a perfect plan executed at some indefinite point in the future.”

—George Patton Jr.

Chapter 31 | THE GENERAL

Dee and I are preparing for my computer-generated interview with James Madison, fourth President of the United States and “Father of the Constitution.” At 5-foot-4 and 100-pounds he was not an impressive character physically, however, he was the consummate statesman. I find it interesting that he was an introvert who tried to blend into the background, yet participated in the framing of the *Virginia Constitution* in 1776, served in the Continental Congress, was a leader in the Virginia Assembly, a major influence on the *United States Constitution*, and ultimately President of the United States. James Madison was a sensitive man who did not seek fame. He studied history and government and was well versed in law. An erudite professorial character, he often suffered from anxiety attacks. If nothing else, it shows that a small unassuming, perhaps physically weak man, can have a powerful impact on a nation—and the world.

“George, don’t forget to ask him about his wife Dolley Madison. She really defined the role of ‘First Lady.’ As a matter-of-fact, she filled in as hostess at the White House when Thomas Jefferson was President because he was a widower. She worked with the architect and selected the furnishings for the newly constructed White House, organized parties, entertained visiting ladies, and offered a different perspective to the President. Dolley was quite the opposite of James Madison. She was outgoing, gregarious, poised, and well-liked. Her very presence increased Madison’s popularity. When her husband was President the War of 1812 with Great Britain was fought. In 1814, when the British were preparing to invade Washington, Dolley Madison gathered silver and other White House valuables to be taken to a safer location for protection. Among the priceless items she saved were original drafts of the *Declaration of*

Independence and the Constitution, as well as a large Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington.”

“You’ve been reading,” I observe.

“There’s more.”

“I’m sure.”

“Dolley actually had a pretty tough life. When a yellow fever epidemic broke out in Philadelphia in 1793, she lost her husband, son, mother-in-law, and father-in-law. She had to take care of her surviving son without monetary support due to coverture law which did not allow married women to own property and had to rely on her brother-in-law who acted as executor who withheld funds. After she married James, she was so respected in Washington circles that she is the only first lady to have an honorary seat on the floor of Congress. In fact, she was invited to and did send the first private telegram by an American.”

“You’re kidding. Right? That’s a joke?”

“An experimental telegraph line had been strung between Wilson, uh Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. On May 24, 1844 inventor Samuel F. B. Morse sent a test message from the Supreme Court room in the U.S. Capitol to his associate, machinist and inventor Alfred Vail, located at the Mt. Clare shops of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It was a distance of around 40 miles. His message was, ‘What hath God wrought?’ That line, taken from the Bible, Numbers 23:23, which was suggested by Annie Ellsworth, the young daughter of a good friend of Morse.”

“So, she wasn’t the first,” I conclude.

Dee smirks and explains, “It was the first private message sent to a specific person, rather than a test of the equipment. There were several observers in the room for the test. When it proved the telegraph worked, they discussed who should send the historic first message. One suggested President Tyler should have that honor. That was immediately denied as he was not well-liked. Congressman John Wethered recommended Dolley Madison, widow of the late President. Agreement was unanimous. They knew that she was widely respected so giving her the honor of the first telegram when the line was officially open wouldn’t cause any controversy.”

“Dolley Madison was summoned and upon arrival she asked, ‘What is it you wish me to do, gentlemen?’ They explained that they wanted her to send a message to an individual in Baltimore and get a reply in a few minutes. Through her amazement she said, ‘Could that be?’ Ultimately, she chose Mary Wethered, wife of Congressman Wethered and daughter of Philip E. Thomas the first president and proprietor of the

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The telegram read, 'Message from Mrs. Madison. She sends her love to Mrs. Wethered.'

"How far we have come from those days," I comment.

My sister smiles and adds, "The message was received and a written copy was produced to be delivered to Mrs. Wethered. Unfortunately, they didn't consider that part of the process so no reply was received in a few minutes. In fact, because the telegram was delivered to Mary Wethered almost a week later, she replied by mail. She wrote, 'I can hardly express to thee how much I feel indebted for thy kind remembrance which reached me by telegraph this afternoon, I immediately went to the depot to return a response but found the apartment closed and was informed that the instrument was about to undergo some alteration and would not be in operation until next week I therefore avail of the mail to assure thee that I feel very grateful for this additional evidence of thy friendship.' I guess every technical advance has its bugs to work out."

"It makes me wonder about how technology has taken over our lives," I think out loud. "While inventors look at it as providing greater freedom and improved lives, in many ways, it reduces our liberty by either making us dependent on a device or offers others avenues to obtain more information about us or to control our actions." I hold up my thumb, "The Individual Identification And Data Chip we all have in our thumb allows us to go on the Globalnet, confirm identification, make purchases, vote, and more. However, it also allows the government to track our activities, deny us whatever they choose, locate us, and ultimately keep us on their leash."

"If the new revolution is won, would you recommend elimination of the IIDC?" Dee asks.

"I hadn't given it much thought, but yes, I would want privacy returned to citizens."

"That might not be possible," Virginia says standing at the door.

I look in her direction and ask, "You like the IIDC?"

"I like the concept, not the bastardization."

"How so?"

"The chip in your thumb allows you to identify who you are. It opens doors, provides access to technology, protects your identity, provides medical staff with your history, and can be a useful tool. It can also be abused by those in power," Virginia states.

"It shouldn't alert the government as to what websites you visit—I can tell you that much," I think back to how this all began.

"However, it can help locate a lost or abducted child," Virginia responds. She sits for a moment and adds, "In fact, it's not the chip that is at fault with tracking your . . ." Virginia peers at me, "illegal web browsing. That is the fault of the government web servers. Your chip should simply be a way for you to sign on and access the Globalnet. After that there should be privacy."

Dee observes, "It's going to be a delicate balance."

Virginia says, "I came to tell you we have a meeting with Seth."

We all meet in the dining room at a large oak table that seats eight. A large antique chandelier hangs above it with all sixteen candle-size lights aglow. Heavy wooden chairs await. Along one wall a large matching oak cabinet stands proudly. A lower, sort of out-of-place, long white high-gloss lacquered sideboard is positioned along the wall where the door is located. Opposite it, heavy opaque maroon drapes cover what must be a window. In front of the drapes at the head of the table Seth sits waiting for us. We sit, two on each side of him.

"There are times when it is best to be prudent and move cautiously. This is not one of them. My sources tell me there is increased activity in the capital and movement of troops."

"Before we continue," Virginia interrupts, "I need to know how you came to be here, established yourself as a loyalist, and were in the perfect position to welcome us when our location was secret."

"A fair question," Seth replies unaffected. "It's not as strange as it might seem."

"Try me."

"When you became fugitives, David Trufire contacted me and informed me that we needed to implement our 'Shell Game Program,'" he raised his chin as he looked for a reaction. Failing to get one, he explained, "In the world of political intrigue the smaller the number of players who know the real facts the safer the situation. In essence, the cave house was a stopping off point. Too many individuals knew you were there. That was by design. A while back we made the strategic decision to purchase the cave house while simultaneously establishing this house as a beyond reproach loyalist stronghold. The goal was to eliminate the potential for any individual to intentionally or unintentionally reveal the location of someone we sequestered in the cave house." Seth smiles, "By arranging for you four to make your way here on your own there are no witnesses as to your whereabouts."

"Couldn't you simply have told us to come here without all the drama," I ask.

Seth turns toward me and states, “Two reasons—first we don’t have time for a lengthy debate,” he looks at Virginia, “which was a distinct possibility.” He pauses.

After a too-long moment of silence Virginia inquires, “And, second?”

“By me informing on you I gain substantial credibility with the government. They trust me. This sets in motion a sharing of information which might lead me to possible characters at STUS and other organizations who pose security risks.”

“I don’t appreciate being kept in the dark and used as a pawn,” Virginia expresses her displeasure.

“I assure you this was necessary and will be the last time.”

“I hope so.”

With that a man enters the dining room. He is in his fifties with dark hair greying on the sides, clean shaven, physically fit, exhibiting a confident manner, and wearing a military uniform. He is a General in the United States Security Forces.

Upon seeing the man enter, Virginia spits at Seth, “You son-of-a-bitch!”

Seth shows no emotion.

We can’t escape as there are no other doors to the room. My first thought is the window behind those draperies, but there are obviously other soldiers present outside. I’m not even sure there is a window. It is a perfect trap.

In an instant Virginia is holding a 9mm pistol in her hand with it aimed at the new arrival.

“Relax,” the General says, “I’m not here to arrest you. Put that thing away.”

“Not until I know why you are here and what are your intentions.”

“Revolution,” is his simple reply.

“For or against?” I ask.

The General laughs. With the wave of his hand he dismisses Virginia’s continuing threat and sits at the table at the opposite end facing Seth. “My name is Vance Doolittle. Yes, I am a descendant of Jimmy Doolittle.”

“Who?” Dee asks.

“That’s sad,” the General laments as Virginia puts away her firearm and sits. He looks at my sister and asks, “How much do you know about World War Two?”

“Not much. They only teach it as an outline.”

“It was a time when wars were fought by men on a battlefield, not with remote control vehicles or through economic blackmail. The world was on fire. Germany, Italy, and Japan had formed an evil axis bent on world conquest and domination. Europe, Great Britain, Northern Africa, Russia, and many other nations were involved. The United States stayed neutral hoping the conflict would neither reach our shores nor draw us in. That all changed December 7, 1941 when Japanese planes off of aircraft carriers attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. It was a crippling blow and dragged America into the war.”

As simple as his tale is the General makes it compelling and absorbing. I want to hear more and I do.

“We had two theaters of operation, Europe and the Pacific. In the Pacific, Japan had expanded its empire considerably. They controlled a vast portion of the islands in the Pacific Ocean. This helped protect their homeland from attack—or so they thought. My ancestor, Colonel James Harold “Jimmy” Doolittle, was a test pilot in the Army Air Corps when America entered the war. A little over a month after Pearl Harbor he was summoned by General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold who asked him to devise a way to bomb the Japanese mainland. It was considered essential to boost morale of the American public, as well as an unqualified warning to the Japanese. If the raid was successful, they would have to reallocate vital defensive forces that were needed elsewhere. The resulting plan called for sixteen Army B-25 bombers to be rigged to carry double fuel capacity by removing the tail guns and belly guns and storing fuel in those spaces. This, of course, left them vulnerable to fighter attack. The converted planes were then to be loaded onto the aircraft carrier USS Hornet. Because they were too large to be lowered below deck on the elevators, they were lashed down on the end of the flight deck. This created a very short runway for takeoff. All the planes were flown by volunteers who signed on for a ‘dangerous secret mission’ and given special short takeoff training. Until they were enroute they had no idea as to their target.”

“The original plan called for bombing five cities in Japan and then proceeding on to China into areas controlled by Chinese Nationalists. Unfortunately, when they were 600 miles from Japan a small fishing boat was spotted and destroyed. Jimmy Doolittle feared that the small craft may have alerted Japanese authorities of the presence of an American aircraft carrier so close to the mainland. As a result, he ordered the raid to proceed immediately. Given the extra distance they would have to fly they had just enough fuel to make the safe landing zone in China. On

April 18, 1942 they executed Doolittle's plan a day early with all sixteen bombers successfully taking off from the Hornet. They encountered anti-aircraft fire and some faced enemy fighter planes, yet all bombed their targets. After the raid, they flew toward China but all ran out of fuel. Some crash-landed while other crews bailed out. Most received local help to reach Nationalist China lines. One bomber landed in Vladivostok and was captured by the Russians. The crew escaped a year later. In the end, three crewmembers died, eight were captured by the Japanese, and the rest came home. The attack forced the Japanese to move four fighter groups from the front lines to the mainland for defense. Sadly, after Doolittle's raid Japanese soldiers killed 250,000 Chinese civilians who were suspected of aiding the American airmen."

I can't help but think about how brave these men must have been. It also is frightening to hear how brutal war was back then.

"My ancestor Jimmy Doolittle retired as a lieutenant general and was later promoted to four-star general in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan. He died at the age of 96."

It seems a lot of our ancestors did a great number of admirable things. They must have been another breed of human being—driven, undaunted by challenge, high energy, moral, honorable, and visionaries that appear fearless. My only hope is that socialism hasn't drained the last drops of that unshakable American spirit from the people. I picture my father who confessed to me the disappointment in his life. With that I look at General Doolittle and say, "My father wanted to be a pilot."

By the tone of my voice he understands my meaning and nods. He then adds, "The essence of America—that which really unites us—is not ethnicity, or nationality, or religion—it is an idea—and what an idea it is: that you can come from humble circumstances and do great things. That is a quote from Condoleezza Rice the 66th United States Secretary of State. It was before the liberal politicians corrupted the government, bankrupted the nation, and sold out with the Reorganization. The leadership, today, do not want citizens to know about America's impressive history or greatness. They understand that without a history there is no national identity, or pride, or trust, or faith, or hope only blank obedient minds."

"Why are you here, General," Virginia asks once more.

"There are many elements in a conflict. For your revolution to work you will need the cooperation of the military and police. I can deliver an adequate number of strategically placed operatives who can maintain a reasonable degree of order. In addition," he looks at Virginia,

“as you have been told the government plans to bring in foreign troops and perhaps the United Nations will declare war on the United States.”

Walter speaks up, “Goddamn United Nations, we should have kicked their asses out of the country decades ago. Not a single thing they have ever done has been in the best interest of America. The way we remained a member no matter what is like some masochist saying hit me. And, we paid more than anyone else for the pleasure of being continuously condemned and vilified. What kind of idiots do that?”

General Doolittle picks up where he left off, “Strategically, these other nations cannot send troops if they are engaged in their own conflicts.”

“And, you plan on lighting the fuse that ignites regional wars,” Virginia observes.

“There are some situations where a simple nudge would get things started. Others will have to be more dramatic.”

“We set the world on fire to achieve our independence,” Virginia concludes.

“People will die,” I state.

“Make no doubt about it—there will be bloodshed,” the General answers. “The question must be asked will it be abroad or on our own soil.”

“I dare say it will be both,” Virginia replies.

General Doolittle looks in her direction and nods.

Dee sits quietly observing the discussion. I’ve come to realize that my empty-headed sister is a wise and thoughtful individual for someone her age. Finally, she asks, “Is it worth it?”

Silence engulfs the room.

Each of us hear those four words echoing in our minds. The choice is clear. Do nothing and become a part of a global government or rebel. We know what life would be like in a United Nations Economic Zone. Most definitely, it will be worse than what we have, at present. The price would be freedom. From cradle to grave we will be told what we can and cannot do. Like prisoners in some internment camp we will receive just enough nourishment to keep us alive. Mindless entertainment will camouflage our suffering. Propaganda will convince many that this is best for them. Life will be a flavorless existence. Our days will be endless hours of waiting—waiting to die.

I am compelled to answer my sister, “You are not unlike the birds, deer, rabbits, and fish in the pond who go about their lives as they so choose. Their lives and actions are theirs and theirs alone. If you capture

one and cage it you deny it its freedom. This is an unnatural state. It is also not a preferred state. All living things seek freedom. Only man tries to subordinate others and force his will upon them. And, only man can refuse to relinquish his God-given right to live as he so chooses. It appears that it is a never-ending battle, but one that must be fought. You have a finite number of breaths while you are on this planet. It is your opportunity to inhale all that life has to offer. There is no replay or do-over so use your gift wisely. To simply exist and waste a life is the saddest thing imaginable. Fight for your freedom, protect it, cherish it, and make it count. Is it worth it? Yes.”

“Voltaire said, man is free at the moment he wishes to be,” Virginia adds.

Seth Underwood returns to the original subject, “From our sources we have determined that troops have been committed from China, Russia, Germany, Turkey, and Great Britain.”

General Doolittle follows, “Shortly, there will be some serious border disputes between China and Russia that will require allocation of troops. Germany is going to occupy Alsace, or so it will seem. Given enough provocation France will fortify its border and Germany will respond in kind. Turkey is the easiest as Syrian rebels will flood across the border. Somehow, they will have been given the weaponry and impression that no other nation will interfere. I see internal conflict in Great Britain as its growing Muslim population appear to be executing numerous terrorist attacks throughout the nation in an attempt to overthrow the government. Troops will be needed to restore order. If we keep the world’s militaries busy, they might just neglect the peaceful United States.” After a pause the General adds, “If any foreign troops are sent to the United States, we have adequate resources to prevent their boots from touching our ground.”

Now, that sounds menacing, but at the same time reassuring. Foreign nations and companies have a lot of investment in the United States. They will not relinquish it without a fight. Then it hits me. I turn to Dee and say, “We need *The Capitalist* to reassure foreign companies that they are welcome in America after the revolution. Can that be done?”

Dee smiles. “I was thinking the same thing. The next episode will address it, Falcon.”

“Falcon?” Virginia asks with that smirk, which by the way, I’m beginning to like.

More time is spent with General Doolittle and Seth Underwood

as we coordinate our plans. Virginia and I do not reveal our key weapon of turning off the money-supply. There is still need for an abundance of caution. We break for the day and agree to continue tomorrow.

GEORGE: Dawn, are you available?

DAWN: That depends on what you have in mind.

GEORGE: LOL. If I went there this would be a short conversation.

DAWN: True.

GEORGE: You probably already know we had a guest, today.

DAWN: This time, I am in the dark.

GEORGE: Do you know a General Doolittle?

DAWN: No.

GEORGE: Then you can't vouch for him?

DAWN: I can't.

GEORGE: He is offering military and law-enforcement assistance here and abroad.

DAWN: What is your impression of his sincerity?

GEORGE: Based on the belief that the United Nations is preparing to bring foreign troops into America to put down any rebellion, he might be needed if he is to be trusted.

DAWN: Do you trust him?

GEORGE: I'm not sure.

DAWN: Did you ask him, "Profit or loss?"

GEORGE: No. Besides, Seth knew the correct answers and he set up the meeting.

DAWN: I see.

GEORGE: The General's strategic recommendations seem logical. Harsh, but maybe necessary.

DAWN: You realize, the decision is yours.

GEORGE: I also realize that my decision will cost countless lives and impact on the future of mankind—no pressure there.

DAWN: You're up to the task.

GEORGE: I may have been given the authority to direct this endeavor, but no one gave me the wisdom to make all correct decisions. I now know how George Washington must have felt as he had to give orders when he didn't have complete confidence in the outcome. I can tell you, it's not a pleasant feeling.

DAWN: When I met you, I saw a great deal of wisdom in your eyes. I would follow you into battle. In reality, that is what I am doing. We don't expect you to be perfect. George Washington, most definitely, wasn't. However, he was unyielding and loyal.

GEORGE: When did we meet!? Where?

DAWN: That is not important.

GEORGE: It is! I have to know. Tell me or I'll quit.

DAWN: You won't quit.

GEORGE: OK, that was an empty threat. Now, come clean.

DAWN: My answer would drive you bats.

GEORGE: The woman at the bridge in Austin where the bats
were.

DAWN: Good night, George.



Franklin D Roosevelt

President: 1933 - 1945

***“Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor;
it must be demanded by the oppressed.”***

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Chapter 32 | THE SHADOW

Falcon enters a dimly lit back room. Inside there are three men who remain in shadows. A music bed creates a mysterious and suspenseful feeling. Slowly he makes his way to a table with an old-fashioned metal shaded desk lamp. When his face becomes visible, he says, “I understand that you would like to make an investment in one of our enterprises.”

The man in shadows to his left replies, “That is correct.”

“There are many opportunities available at present in numerous towns and villages.”

The second man who is hidden in front of Falcon speaks, “My government is concerned about the risk.”

“As they should be,” Falcon admits. “There is risk, I won’t deny that. The areas where we have reintroduced capitalism are thriving. That cannot go on indefinitely without being noticed by the United States federal government. On a positive note those in control in Wilson have neglected most of the country for so long they may not notice for an extended period of time. They’re too busy pilfering the treasury and filling their own pockets.”

“How much?” the man in front asks.

“How much of what?”

“How much do we pay you for the opportunity?”

“Nothing.”

“I do not understand.”

“I’m not trying to make money off of this enterprise. If you invest in an American company in one of our free trade zones you will share in the profits. However, remember all investments come with a risk that the business will not make a profit or it might take a long time. I’m

pleased to say that those possibilities are very rare. I am here to determine your interests and level of investment. Once I know that I will show you a number of organizations that might fit your desires. If you select one, I will make arrangements for a meeting. After that it is up to the principals involved."

"That has not been our experience with the United States government," the third man in shadows states.

"What has been your experience?"

"A large fee is required, followed by an agreement to, uh, return a generous portion of profits to the leader who arranged and approves the venture. We always ask how much first as some, uh, arrangements have been beyond our capacity."

The first man speaks once more, "It is expensive doing business in the United States."

Falcon replies, "You will find it is far easier and less expensive in the new free trade zones. Of course, if you reveal this fact to the federal government you will, in essence, be destroying your own opportunities."

The man in front of Falcon steps out of the shadows and walks toward the table, "You interest me. I don't know why, but I feel that I may trust you. In the world, today, trust is a rare thing. It may also be a dangerous thing. I would like to think that honorable men still exist, even if only in shadows."

"The citizens who have become a free-market capitalist underground are, for the most part, honest hard-working sincere individuals. However, as you may realize, there is always the potential for a bad seed."

A second man appears in the light. "America lost its value as a large market a long time ago. With the present government it did become a source of cheap labor. Many corporations take advantage of this and have some of their products manufactured here for sale in other more prosperous world markets. We see potential for America to once again be a fruitful marketplace—but not as a United Nations Economic Zone. There is talk of a revolution." He looks at Falcon to see if his remark draws a reaction.

"The revolution has begun," Falcon replies casually. "These villages and towns I spoke of that have chosen to reject the present socialistic laws have already proven how quickly liberty improves lives. They are thriving and growing. Before long more and more localities will join until it becomes an unstoppable force. The federal government does not have enough military or police to reverse what will take place."

"And, those international organizations who already operate in the United States, what becomes of them?" The third man steps from his shadowy refuge.

"Initially, nothing. They continue to operate freely only without the added expense of paying a corrupt politician or unjustified government fees. Over time, as the United States grows economically it will become a new market for domestic and imported goods. Of course, the demand for labor will cause salaries to rise." Falcon becomes serious as his voice reflects just enough of a threat, "Any foreign entity that attempts to inhibit the natural flow of freedom in this nation will pay a tremendous price. The seeds that have been planted will grow and flourish. Those wise enough to become involved early on will enjoy rewards beyond their imagination."

The Capitalist continues showing industry reawakening in towns and small cities. Instead of frightened defeated faces as were shown in the first episode, bright energetic visages fill the screen. Smiles dissolve to show machinery, farms, shops, and more. Every once in a while, Falcon is shown working with groups of people or conversing with another entrepreneur. The episode ends in a wood-paneled office where two persons with drawn faces are meeting.

"It appears that this economic rebellion runs far deeper than we realized," a middle-aged man with effeminate qualities laments.

"Are you telling me this has been going on under our noses and nobody blew the whistle?" President Sandra Holmes asks.

"There were rumors but no proof."

President Holmes throws a tablet across the room, "How much proof do you want?"

The man looks at the broken device and replies, "When we saw an anomaly, we sent investigators to determine what was going on. Nothing unusual was reported. We even sent the military to one village because of suspicious activity. The report indicated that there was nothing to be concerned about. They even provided video of the destruction of a few illegal enterprises."

"What about tracking spending patterns?"

"That's the strange thing. There was no increased spending. In fact, transactions went down."

"And, that didn't raise a red flag?"

"Our analysts . . ."

"Get out!"

The camera zooms in to a close-up of President Sandra Holmes'

face. Defeat is a painful thing.

I observe, “Dee, if nothing else, you are one creative storyteller. You’re also going to piss off President Holmes.”

“I hope so.”

“It’s perfect.”

“Now, you have to do your part with James Madison for the ending.”

“Follow that? Thanks a lot.”

In a half hour I am sitting in front of a green screen waiting for the arrival of President James Madison. From what I’ve read about him, I am both impressed and a little intimidated. He was a scholar, joint author of the *Federalist Papers* along with Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, and a true statesman. This was demonstrated in a note opened after his death in 1836 where he stated, “The advice nearest to my heart and deepest in my convictions is that the Union of the States be cherished and perpetuated.”

A short, somewhat frail appearing, man enters and sits opposite me.

“Mr. President, thank you for joining me,” I state and he nods. This is definitely going to be a tough interview. “Let me begin by saying it is an honor to meet the father of the *Constitution*.”

“Sir, the *Constitution* is not the off-spring of a single brain, but the work of many heads and many hands.” There is a stern and formal manner to him.

“True. However, you did have a significant impact on the eventual structure of our government.”

“I did propose a strong executive, bicameral legislature, and independent judiciary.”

“And, the *Bill of Rights*.”

“An elective despotism was not the government we fought for; but one in which the powers of government should be so divided and balanced among the several bodies of magistracy as that no one could transcend their legal limits without being effectually checked and restrained by the others,” Madison states with a grand gesture. In a more professorial tone he explains, “The first ten amendments sought to limit the role of the central government. They are not rights dispensed to the people. Quite the contrary, they are restraints on the power of the government. *Virginia’s Declaration of Rights*, drafted by George Mason, served as a model.”

“Given where the nation is today, the *Constitution* fell short of

protecting the rights of the people,” I point out.

“If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself.”

“Unfortunately, those who were in the government ignored the *Constitution*.”

“The essence of Government is power; and power, lodged as it must be in human hands, will ever be liable to abuse.” After a pause, James Madison adds, “To suppose that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without any virtue in the people, is a chimerical idea, if there be sufficient virtue and intelligence in the community, it will be exercised in the selection of these men. So that we do not depend on their virtue, or put confidence in our rulers, but in the people who are to choose them.”

“From what I have read there was a breakdown in society prior to the United States being hijacked by unscrupulous politicians.” President Madison stares at me showing great interest. “First the family was effectively destroyed. Immorality became the norm. Then, the educational system failed to instill a basic understanding of the miracle of our form of government. The government took more and more from productive citizens and gave it to unproductive while also spending far more than it took in. Crooked government leaders lined their own pockets and created a bloated, ineffective, wasteful government entity filled with sycophants, miscreants, thieves, fools, and more.” With the hope of not repeating the error I ask, “Is there anything in the *Constitution* that you might have added or changed to prevent what happened?”

“You pointed out the fact that elected officials ignored the articles of the *Constitution* which would indicate that no additional amendments would have precluded the illegal and immoral breach of faith. The best service that can be rendered to a Country, next to that of giving it liberty, is in diffusing the mental improvement equally essential to the preservation, and the enjoyment of the blessing.”

“It saddens me to think of how the colonists fought and died to establish freedom, only to have it stolen by unscrupulous monsters who gave nothing. In the end, what was achieved?”

“They accomplished a revolution which has no parallel in the annals of human society. They reared the fabrics of governments which

have no model on the face of the globe. They formed the design of a great Confederacy, which it is incumbent on their successors to improve and perpetuate.” President Madison looks at me with tired sad eyes, “I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.”

I ask with a slight tone of desperation, “Can such a miracle be repeated?”

“It has been said that all Government is an evil. It would be more proper to say that the necessity of any Government is a misfortune. This necessity however exists; and the problem to be solved is, not what form of Government is perfect, but which of the forms is least imperfect.” Madison informs me, “You have a mighty endeavor before you. As was our charge it is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the revolution. Do not wrongly select to place all your faith in man.”

“I must ask you about your wife Dolley who had such an impact on Washington and the government.”

The first smile offered by President Madison reveals the depth of his affection, “A finer lady has never been born. My Dolley recast James Madison whereby affording me of greater welcome in Washington circles and I might add to the electorate. Her boundless energy and overwhelming charm brought admiration from all in the room. I, the fortunate husband, benefited both publicly and privately.”

“How did you meet?”

“As I recall, it was May of 1794. I, a Congressman from Virginia, was introduced to this young widow by Senator Aaron Burr. She was quite a bit younger than me, outgoing, vivacious, intelligent, and kind. An unlikely couple, we found pleasure in each other’s company. I proposed August of that year and we were married September 15, 1794. As I was not a Quaker, sadly Dolley was expelled from the Society of Friends for marrying outside her faith.”

The interview goes on and I gain insight as to life in the capital in the early years of a new nation. Also, I learn a number of facts about the *Constitution*. It is a relatively short document containing 7 articles and 27 amendments. Three Latin phrases appear in the text; pro tempore, ex post facto, and habeas corpus. Remarkably, the word “democracy” is nowhere mentioned in the *Constitution*. President Madison explains that we are a representative republic, or at least we were before the

cretins took over. Interestingly, the original version of the *Constitution* did not set forth requirement for the right to vote. As a result, at the outset of the Union only male property owners could vote. The oldest person to sign the *Constitution* was Benjamin Franklin who was 81 years old. The youngest was Jonathan Dayton of New Jersey who was 26 years old. Rhode Island was the only colony to not send delegates to the Constitutional Convention and was the last state to ratify the *Constitution* on May 29, 1790. Madison also pointed out that he and George Washington were the only Presidents to sign the document. On the humorous side James Madison told of a lengthy discussion as to the title of the position of President. One suggestion was “His Highness the President of the United States of America and Protector of their Liberties.” In spite of his stiff façade, I find I genuinely like the fourth President of the United States. I hope those who view the video feel likewise.

After the interview, I can’t help but be impressed by how erudite and focused President Madison was on fashioning the best possible form of government to protect individual liberty. Although the experiment ultimately failed due to corruption and forces from within, the original *Constitution* still provides a basic foundation upon which future governments may be built. I come to the conclusion that government didn’t fail the people—the people failed the government. They ignored government encroachments, rather than vehemently protesting and using the power of the vote to change direction. Greed allowed segments of the population to be bought and economically enslaved. I know my mother was a teacher, however, it is clear that the educational system was hijacked and used to indoctrinate children while teachers failed their students by becoming pawns of socialist strategists. Was having a job worth selling out a nation? Slick con-men played to people’s emotions and sense of guilt to convince them that moral values were evil. Rather than stand strong, citizens withdrew, hid, or professed support of the basest of human behaviors in an effort to not be shamed. The shame is that they didn’t have the courage to stand up for their convictions. The media treated the population like mushrooms—keep them in the dark and feed them manure. These are the most despicable because they knew what they were doing. What is clear is the undeniable fact that a tyrannical government could only grow within the United States of America if the people allowed it. Sadly, they got what they deserved.

Virginia joins us in the den where we had set up. “I watched on the monitor. Quite impressive. I wish I could shake the little guy’s hand.”

“Will my hand suffice?” I ask.

After an abbreviated glance and turn she walks over to a chair and sits. "What is your opinion of General Doolittle's proposal?"

"People being injured or killed makes me uncomfortable," I point out.

"In World War Two it is estimated that, as a direct result of the war, between 50 and 56 million died. It is almost impossible to envision. We've become accustomed to wars being waged remotely with minimal casualties."

"I don't believe that will be the case with our rebellion," Dee observes.

"If there was a less drastic alternative to General Doolittle's regional conflicts, I would definitely give them fair consideration. Unfortunately, at the moment I don't have any," I admit.

"No doubt we are going to get our hands dirty," Virginia concludes. "We have to look past the pain and consider the objective. Also, keep in mind, if foreign troops are deployed on United States soil they won't have any qualms about the carnage in their wake."

"Good point," I reply. "I guess the question is do we let the General have a free hand as to tactics?" After a moments thought, I add, "And, when the dust settles, can we rein him in."

"I reviewed his record," Virginia states. "He has had an honorable career and has never provided any cause for questioning his loyalty."

"Loyalty to a socialist state," I interject.

"True. However, he hasn't done anything that could be considered detrimental to any U.S. citizen."

"Do you believe he is apolitical?"

"Quite the contrary. I believe he has been operating below the radar his entire career waiting, planning, and preparing for this day."

"You like him."

"I trust him."

"And, I trust your judgment," I offer. After a pause I ask, "What about Seth?"

"He's a shadow dweller. As such, there is no way to completely know what he has done or will do. We can only take him at his word." Virginia holds up her phone and nods. I know what she wants and text her.

GEORGE: What do you have in mind?

VIRGINIA: He probably has this whole place wired. Only share critical thoughts using this secured method.

GEORGE: Are you certain he can't intercept our messages?

VIRGINIA: Yes

GEORGE: What are your concerns about Seth?

VIRGINIA: He has all the right answers, history with STUS, and supports our cause 100%.

GEORGE: That's a concern?

VIRGINIA: By all appearances, he is beyond reproach—it's perfect. Maybe, too perfect.

GEORGE: The best spies are those you bring into your inner circle.

VIRGINIA: Good, you get it.

GEORGE: Then we give him enough to be useful, but not enough to be a danger.

VIRGINIA: Well said.

The six of us meet in the dining room to discuss next steps. If you think we are running this revolution by the seat of our pants you are absolutely correct. In an odd sort of way, it reflects what happened during the original revolution. There wasn't any coordinated strategic plan that was being followed to the letter. Many tactics were reactionary. Apparently, the goal was to wear down the British troops and make holding onto the colonies too difficult, too expensive, or both. Fortunately, military demands elsewhere were also a drain on the British empire.

In our case we have the power to stop all commerce which will essentially freeze the nation. It doesn't mean that military or law-enforcement capabilities would be immediately eliminated. Of course, we can't share this information with our host or visiting general. This leads to a very awkward discussion.

I state, "General Doolittle, we concur with your suggestion that foreign military forces be kept occupied with other situations that draw on their resources. Can you put that strategy into motion?"

"Immediately after leaving here the world is going to become a more dangerous place," he replies. Then he asks the question I hoped he wouldn't, "What are your plans to initiate the rebellion?"

Maybe, it's my imagination but Seth seems to have become more alert. I explain, "We have a number of directions that we are evaluating. Our hope is that if we can put enough pressure on the federal leadership to step down that a bloodless coup could be achieved."

The larger-than-me man looks directly at me and orders, "Don't ever lie to me, again. If you don't wish to share information or have reason not to trust me—tell me." He wasn't angry, but was very firm and

commanding.

In truth, shutting down the economic engine is designed to put pressure on the leadership, therefore, is not a lie. I guess stating that we are evaluating a number of strategies could be considered less than truthful. Without wishing to go into it, or protesting, I simply nod.

“All I ask is that you give me twenty-four-hour notice before taking action so that I can prepare our embedded allies across the nation,” General Doolittle says in an unemotional tone.

“We will do that.”

The rest of the meeting is uneventful. Later Dee and I watch the newest episode of *The Capitalist*. It immediately receives over a million views. The people are watching. I look at my sister and observe, “President James Monroe cast a wide shadow over a nation that chose darkness. And you Darsey, which is Irish for dark one, Clymer are giving them the gift of enlightenment.”



Harry S Truman
President: 1945 - 1953

“We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.”

—Plato

Chapter 33 | THE LIGHT

It’s been a few days since General Doolittle left and I just saw on the news that a number of events have occurred along the expansive Russia/China border causing both nations to deploy additional troops in an escalating standoff. At the same time, it is rumored that Germany is going to occupy Alsace. The German government vehemently denied any such plan. Yet, the movement of French troops to the region has precipitated a counter move by Germany. And, Great Britain has experienced numerous terrorist attacks causing them to increase security forces. The only nation of those mentioned in our meeting as potential providers of troops for incursion into the United States that has not had any unusual events is Turkey. We’ll wait and see. More at eleven.

I can see that General Doolittle has been busy since leaving. When he left, he warned, “Don’t linger. When the shit hits the fan that is the time to act. Hesitate and you might lose any advantage that I provide.”

It seems the General started the revolution without us.

David Trufire’s face appears on the monitor as we begin a conference call. “In seven days, the lights go out so-to-speak. You have that much time to organize, make demands, and prepare the public without telling them exactly what is going to happen. In addition to shutting down the economy, we are preparing to control most communications. Of course, we don’t wish to interfere with any interaction that could put lives at risk or endanger anyone. For that reason, telephone systems will not be affected. And, as the military have backup landlines to compensate for lost satellite capability they will be able to continue to operate. That is both a good and a bad thing. Good in that it maintains the chain-of-command reducing the potential for chaos and anarchy. However, the bad part will be if the federal government attempts to strike back at

whatever targets they believe are rebels. Let's hope that General Doolittle has adequate upper echelon allies."

I confirm, "It is my understanding that we will control entertainment, news, and general programming channels on GOV-POV satellite, but not all Globalnet content."

"Correct. However, we must always keep in mind that we do not know everything the government has at its disposal. They could have a hidden satellite network—just as we do. Or, weapons that can cause great damage and loss of life. Once the rats are cornered there is no telling what they are capable of doing. One thing is for sure—they will not go quietly into the night."

"It sounds like you expect military action," I state.

"Without a doubt."

"What do you suspect will be their target?"

"Unknown. However, STUS headquarters will be high on their priority list."

"You have the ear of the President, what have you heard?"

"Very little. They believe this rebellion is small and more of a public relations campaign than a real bona fide revolution. There has been increased effort to take over the Social Compensation and Keep facilities which indicates their concern. What they are unaware of is the facilities they are familiar with are bogus and have nothing to do with our operations. A great deception that will buy us valuable time. Because they need to control the operations, they can't risk damaging the facilities. It will require quite a bit of ingenuity to gain access. And, when they eventually do enter and try to take control of the computer systems—Suicide Queen."

"All zeros," I say.

"Precisely."

David Trufire surprises us when he states, "I have been summoned to Wilson. They will order me to turn over all materials necessary to control STUS and our operations. I will refuse and be arrested. Ultimately, when the lights go out there will be a quick show trial and quicker execution for treason."

"Don't go," I suggest.

"They have operatives waiting downstairs, on the roof, in the john, and who knows where else. The only reason they are not in my office is they don't want to alarm me which might cause me to initiate a shutdown. There is no way that I can avoid going to Wilson, D.C."

"Maybe, we can provide some type of diversion to allow you to

escape,” I suggest. It also strikes me as odd that Virginia has not spoken a word. She is security and a “problem solver” yet remains silent.

“George,” David Trufire’s voice pulls me back to reality, “Focus. We each have our roles to play in this noble endeavor. Saving me is not the objective. Saving the United States of America is—STUS. You have seven days to make this happen. In the scheme of things that is but a blink of an eye. Regardless of what happens to me, Prophet will act as programmed. There is not adequate time to get sidetracked. Virginia knows this. The wheels are in motion and nothing will stop them. Freedom is that bright shiny object ahead. It’s up to you to get them to take you to the light.”

The screen goes blank. We sit silently for a brief moment. I study the faces of those at the table. Walter Tize’s eyes remain fixed on the blank screen. His appearance is that of someone who just saw a friend for the last time. Darsey is looking down at the table deep in thought. Her creative mind is fast at work. Seth Underwood has no expression while he stares straight ahead. From his position he is able to observe all of us. I wonder to whom he is paying most attention. Virginia is looking at me. Waiting. How far we have come together. How far we still have to go. It strikes me that sitting at this small table in the Ozark Mountains of Clinton five individuals are about to attempt to change the direction of the nation and the world and as a result mankind, peoplekind, whatever. I stand and order, “Let’s get started.”

We decide to announce our intentions to the general public and government simultaneously with the presentation of Dee’s *New Declaration of Independence*. After reading the document, I make an extemporaneous statement, “The founding of the original United States of America was nothing short of a miracle. For the first time in history it was ordained that the government would serve the people instead of the people answering to the government. Every one of you watching have a right to live your life as you so desire as long as it doesn’t interfere with the rights of others. It’s called freedom. What you have now is false-freedom, as long as the government controls every facet of your life. They tell you that you have security because the government gives you a monthly stipend.” I show footage of the opulence we secretly filmed in Wilson. “You work and slave to support their outrageous lifestyle. In return, they give you just enough to sustain you so that you can keep going. Now, these same traitors are giving our nation to a foreign-run entity that is going to make your lives even worse. If there ever was a time to stand-up and fight—this is it. My hope would be that every

citizen stand up and support the New Revolution, but history shows that about one third of the people will fear taking a stand or outright support the status quo, one third will remain detached from the whole situation, and only one third will carry the fight to the enemy. It is to this group of patriots to whom I speak. There are forces in play that will, with your help, restore the government that was for the people. My ancestor signed the original *Declaration of Independence* and the original *Constitution for the United States of America*. It was for this reason that I was chosen to lead this charge. I reluctantly accepted. My reluctance was based on fear—not fear for myself—fear of failure. I do not wish to fail you.”

I pause as I come to a conclusion and then say, “The state is going to do everything possible to convince you that I have evil intentions, that I am a liar, that I work for a foreign government, that I have a dark past, and that I cannot be trusted. There is nothing that I can do to convince those who are naïve enough to believe fabricated stories and manufactured evidence that is condemning. I have seen, firsthand, how easy it is to create untrue scenarios. Consider the program, *The Capitalist*, that looks real but is computer generated. Don’t get me wrong, the story and message of a better America is right on target and accurately offers a glimpse of hope for a better future for all of us. I simply wish to warn you that the state will produce and present their own realistic proof of how self-serving, cruel, and evil George Clymer is and has been.” As I speak it hits me that maybe one reason I was chosen is because I don’t have a very long history. If I was older, the state could manufacture photographs and videos of me involved in a plethora of hideous things. Character assassination is just too easy and too powerful. This, indeed, will be another facet of the war. Virginia was correct when she said, “The perception war has begun.” I am about to get hit with a truckload of mud and manure. I continue, “You will be told so many lies about me that I probably will end up not liking myself. However, I will promise you this; I will do my best to withstand the onslaught and stay strong and focused on the objective—our God-given right to liberty. So, now as the spokesperson for the revolution I can only ask that you trust us. A better brighter future for all of us is possible. Join us and stay tuned for further updates and instructions.”

Privately, we inform President Holmes that she, the Vice-President, and her cabinet are to immediately resign and publicly turn over the reins of the government to a transition tribunal. Her response is immediate.

HOLMES: Ridiculous! We will not entertain such foolishness

from a few disgruntled, misguided, criminals with no legal standing.

GEORGE: Without going into detail, failure to comply will result in significant harm to you and those who remain with you.

HOLMES: Empty threats. Give yourselves up and we might be lenient.

GEORGE: As you may be able to tell by our ability to block government programming and insert our own, we have technical advantages that will make us a formidable foe. Do not assume that we do not have even more at our disposal.

HOLMES: You do not have the resources to take down the United States government. Or, for that matter, to take on the world.

GEORGE: The world will watch and wait. You will hunt a phantom. We will initiate overwhelming tactics. And, you will lose.

HOLMES: Nonsense! This conversation is over.

That went as expected.

"We need to prepare the people for the inevitable," Dee says.

"Without telling them how we will win, we should give them a step-by-step approach to welcoming and prospering from the new government," Virginia agrees.

"We have to tell people to prepare, but how do we tell them what to prepare for when that is confidential? If we say your IMUs will be worthless that would reveal our intention," I state.

"They can't prepare," Walter chimes in. "When IMUs moo no more, it has to be a total surprise. Besides, it's human nature. They won't pay attention until the pie hits them in the face. At that point, we have to give them a step-by-step plan to both survive and prosper. And, it has to be idiot-proof." He turns to me and adds, "You can understand that."

"We have to make a blanket statement to all foreign governments," Virginia advises, "warning them not to interfere. When the means of exchange in the United States is interrupted it will impact on foreign economies. They have their own forms of personal identification chips that will not be affected. Let's hope our actions cause them to panic and pay attention to their own vulnerability."

Walter adds, "Any foreign soldiers on U.S. soil will be dealt with severely and absolutely."

"Of course, we don't know if we can back up that threat," Virginia cautions.

"I don't believe the General was blowing smoke."

We continue making plans for our mini-revolution. I call it that

because we have fewer participants than George Washington. However, what we do have is an ultra-powerful computer system, clandestine satellite network, control of the economic engine, and an unknown number of supporters. That, my friends, is a formidable force.

When we break, I contact Dawn.

GEORGE: We decided that you should select the nine members of the transition tribunal.

DAWN: I appreciate the vote of confidence and accept the challenge.

GEORGE: Of course, you should be one of the members.

DAWN: I'm more of a back-room influence.

GEORGE: You earned your spot. Besides, we need real thinkers who are familiar with early American history and who cherish liberty—you.

DAWN: On one condition.

GEORGE: Why is there always a condition?

DAWN: Lol. Haven't you learned by now not to question why?

GEORGE: OK, what is the condition?

DAWN: You, Virginia, and Walter also serve.

GEORGE: Which would mean I get to meet you a second time.

DAWN: You have to fight and win a war first.

GEORGE: Details.

DAWN: LMAO

Outside. Yes, I have on my thumb glove. Give me some credit. I stand in the field behind the house and gaze at the mountains that surround us. There is a part of me that sees the upcoming conflict comparable to climbing those mountains. A daunting task with no guarantee of success.

Virginia joins me. While looking at the same mountain range she informs me, "The United Nations has called for an emergency session of the General Assembly to address the crisis in America."

"And, so it begins."

"We upset their plans for global domination. They cannot allow that. President Sandra Holmes is correct about one thing. It is us against the entire world."

"With a few exceptions."

"Yes, those few nations that refused to join an economic zone will not be against us. The question is how much will they be for us?" Virginia ponders.

"What do you believe the United Nation will do?" I inquire.

"Declare war on the United States and demand immediate unconditional surrender."

"Within seven days?"

"Unknown, however, if they operate as they have in the past it will be considerably longer than seven days. But we can't count on that."

"I believe things are going to begin to happen quickly. In spite of President Holmes response, those in power will not wait for us to act. They are a lot of things, but not fools. Our *Declaration of Independence* and ultimatum reveals that we are ready to initiate whatever it is that we plan to do. The smart move is to preempt our action with one overwhelming decisive action of their own. The UN will demand surrender in a matter of days—if not hours. July 4, 2076 is no longer the turnover date."

"UN peacekeeping forces are being mustered as we speak. General Doolittle's efforts have most likely diminished the number of troops available, but the UN will pull in forces from other areas. The shooting war is about to begin."

"We don't have any forces," I point out.

"Fewer targets for them to shoot at," Virginia deadpans.

"STUS."

"Primary target number one."

I wonder, "How many United States forces will be mobilized, do you think?"

"That is a critical question. No doubt, martial law will be declared and all forces mobilized."

"Will they fire on their own people?"

Virginia replies, "Will the people fire back. Remember, the government was unable to confiscate firearms. Through taxation they made ammunition relatively unaffordable but a huge black market developed so there is definitely an armed citizenry."

"The other question is whose side are they on?"

"I'm an optimist," Virginia states, "I like to believe that most Americans, for whatever reasons, do not want the United Nations and foreign governments to run their lives. Most will support the revolution."

"We need a symbol."

"What kind of symbol?"

"Something to unite all the fragments of society together into one unstoppable movement." I search for an appropriate symbol. Then it becomes clear. How I didn't see it sooner I don't know, but here it is, "A flag."

"Rally round the flag, boys."

“Exactly. Before the Reorganization every effort was made to degrade the stars and stripes. It wasn’t so much the actual flag but what it stood for. They wanted to remove citizen’s identity, take away any pride they had in their nation, demoralize the people, and then silently take over. After the Reorganization the government changed the flag of the United States. I understand why, now.”

“The old American flag?”

“That won’t work because the states have been changed and renamed and the number is different.” A large bird floats in the breeze high above us. Its wingspan is impressive. The word freedom comes to mind as well as a vision. “Betsy Ross, the original thirteen-stars in a circle flag. The symbol of the first revolution is a perfect symbol for the second.”

“I like it.”

“We need to get that out as soon as possible. Unite those who hunger for liberty. Give them a banner under which to declare their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

“Wait, let me get a soapbox,” Virginia smiles. I do love that smile.

Walter and Dee agree with our flag idea. We decide to introduce our symbol of rebellion with a number of short announcements. Virginia surprises me by actually making a Betsy Ross flag out of materials she finds in the house. I make a snide remark about her being able to sew. That needle impaled in my leg is going to leave a scar.

It was decided that I would continue to be the spokesperson. The first announcement is sixty seconds long. I stand in front of a green screen which allows for video to be shown behind me. “Between 1775 and 1781 our ancestors fought and died for an idea,” I begin. Behind me are battle scenes of the Revolutionary War from early Hollywood movies that have been made illegal but were saved by STUS. “That incredible idea was individual liberty. Throughout the entire history of mankind some ruler or government exercised authority over the people. Their rights were what those in power decided—much like it is today. The original Founding Fathers were a rare breed and saw the world differently. They believed that you have God-given rights that should not be taken away by tyrants, conquerors, or governments. It was a radical departure from how things had been historically. Freedom! Freedom to live as you wish, to pursue that which interests you, to build a future for yourself and your family, to prosper, and to not fear the government that is meant to serve and protect you. They fought for it three hundred years ago and founded a government like none that had ever been conceived. That government

was stolen from you before you were born.” The scene behind me dissolves to reveal a Betsy Ross flag waving in the wind. “Join the revolution and win back what is rightfully yours.” Fade to black.

The second announcement is also a sixty second spot. Once again in front of a green screen, this time the Civil War is fought behind me. “Some believe the Civil War was fought to free the slaves in the south. That is partially true. It was also precipitated for economic reasons and in some people’s opinions to protect state’s rights. In the end the result was recognition of the fact that all people must be free if the great experiment was to work. Individual liberty is for everyone. Unfortunately, southern Democrats did not give up easily. They wrote “Jim Crow” laws to inhibit the rights of freed men, did all they could to keep them from being able to vote with poll taxes and literacy tests, and refused to seat the first black Congressman elected from Louisiana. When these efforts failed, they founded the Ku Klux Klan to murder and intimidate new American citizens. Finally, they introduced segregation to keep them from having equal rights. For example, a 1958 Alabama law stated that ‘It shall be unlawful for white and colored persons to play together in any game of cards, dice, dominoes, checkers, pool, billiards, softball, basketball, football, golf, track, and at swimming pools or in any athletic conference.’ President John F. Kennedy in June 1963 proposed comprehensive civil rights legislation saying, ‘the United States will not be fully free until all of its citizens are free.’ After a 75-day filibuster in the Senate by southern Democrats the 1964 Civil Rights Act passed.” The Betsy Ross flag appears behind me. “Government was used to suppress the God-given rights of a segment of the population. It should not have taken legislation to give them what they rightfully already had—freedom. Join our revolution before global government takes away your natural rights forever.” Fade to black.

Dee stares at me as she shuts down the camera. I raise my hands as if to say, “What did I do wrong?” She smiles and enthusiastically answers the unasked question, “You are the right choice. You get it. No, you see it. Without even realizing it, you have the same fire that burned within our forefathers. Call it what you will, but the ‘love of freedom’ DNA survived generations of Clymers to reemerge in you.”

The two messages are delivered to the American people on various networks, including the GOV-POV free government channel. The response is instantaneous. Online chats take off. Groups are formed. There are reports of citizens marching in the streets carrying Betsy Ross flags. Your guess is as good as mine as to where they got them so quickly.

I guess you can chalk it up to nothing is impossible when you unleash the American spirit. We are jubilant as we realize that we have started a movement.

Virginia finishes reading a message on her tablet. She has a serious countenance as she reports, “David Trufire was arrested as he left STUS headquarters. His whereabouts are unknown. Military and law enforcement personnel have taken over the building. The blue helmets have arrived.”

We sit in silence.

“When you can’t make them see the light, make them feel the heat,” Virginia offers, “That was a statement made by President Ronald Reagan.”

Walter provides an eye-opening perspective, “In the early part of this century we wouldn’t have been able to reach the people with our message. The media hid the truth from its audience. They supported big socialist government, therefore, kept the people in the dark as to what was really happening. The internet allowed those who sought the truth to find bits and pieces, but even that was repressed by news and social networks. A majority of people were spoon-fed government propaganda. Those in opposition were silenced through censorship, character assassination, legal maneuvers, legislation, and finally violence. Drop-by-drop the lifeblood of freedom was drained by a cabal of monsters with an unquenchable thirst for power. Common folks had no place in their elite world. In fact, they were considered a nuisance who could not die off quickly enough. Thank God for the founders of STUS. Nine magnificent people saw the storm coming, as well as a possible means of fighting back—technology. Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood (1950–2036) retired military officer, Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd (1963–2063) law enforcement officer, Asayo Nakahara (1968–2056) an incredible lady who by all measurements was a genius who laid the groundwork for our technological advantage, Hector Santiago (1955–2023) a mechanic that knew no bounds and could build anything, Hans Keller (1962–2041) a designer with vision, Erin Slattery (1959–2054) a Medical Doctor, naturopath, and mother, Angelina Granelli (1974–2064) artist and futurist, Benson Whittingham (1957–2029) the financial wizard who kept us afloat and gave his life for STUS, and Neha Crying Wolf (1978–) the only founder who is still with us. She was a naturalist who kept the others grounded for we are all of nature. Without their brilliance and sacrifice we would not be on the threshold of a bright new future. They are the light.”



Dwight D Eisenhower
President: 1953 - 1961

“They know not the depth of the well of patriotism, faith, and love of God on which they trespass. Once tapped, its waters will flow long and wide.”

— Tom Glendinning

Chapter 34 | THE WELL

“Do we have any further information on David Trufire?” I ask Seth.

“Negative. He’s in a black hole,” Seth replies. He then adds, “By the way, Syrian rebels have begun flooding across the border with Turkey. Heavy fighting is reported.”

“The world is blowing up,” Walter observes.

Seth simply looks at Walter, but makes no comment.

“What have you heard about the United Nations and their plans?” I ask Seth.

“The General Assembly is meeting. Accusations, demands, recommendations, vitriol all coming from nations who have something to lose, if we succeed. No decisions have been made. A proclamation of war is being debated.” Seth smiles, “Typical bureaucrats, they’ll spin their wheels arguing over where a comma should be placed. That works in our favor.” He pauses, then adds as an aside, “Oh, unconfirmed, it seems there was an explosion in Bristol, England on a ship being loaded with materials and supplies for troops that are expected to be sent to America. Extensive damage. That craft isn’t going anywhere any time soon. Not in seven days—that’s for sure.”

“On a brighter note we are getting millions of views of *The Capitalist* and our little announcements,” Dee says as she enters the room.

Seth leaves.

Dee watches him leave and comments, “I don’t think he likes me.”

“Don’t take it personally, I’m not sure he likes any of us,” I reply. “He supports the revolution. I guess that is enough—for now.”

Dee returns to the original subject, “Local rebel groups are showing up with videos on Yu-Vu.com. *The Capitalist* has received so much mail that I can’t possibly read it all. It’s both wonderful and frightening, because it’s getting out of control. We can’t have unsupervised rebel groups causing trouble everywhere.”

I respond, “Without question, people are sheep. Therefore, we have to be sheep dogs.” I bark.

Dee laughs. “What do you have in mind?”

“They seek leadership and will follow whomever they trust. Let’s test the waters and do an experiment.”

Dee stares at me.

Now, I know I said let’s do an experiment as though I have something in mind. I don’t. My thinking is that we call for some kind of action or protest, throw it out there, and see what kind of participation we get. I explain this to Dee. We sit and stare at each other. Valuable seconds dissolve to become the past. Finally, I ask, “Where did the phrase ‘let freedom ring’ come from?”

Dee punches keys on her tablet and finds the answer. “According to this it is the last line of the first verse of Samuel Francis Smith’s poem *My Country ‘Tis of Thee*. The song is sung to the tune of *God Save The Queen* which is the *British National Anthem*.”

My country tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my fathers died!
Land of the Pilgrim’s pride!
From every mountain side,
Let freedom ring!

“Ring, that’s the key,” I conclude.

Dee stares at me.

“We have fewer than seven days. So, let’s initiate something that is easy to accomplish. We invite all citizens who want freedom and liberty not U.N. tyranny to ring a bell—any kind of bell—at a designated time tomorrow in support of the revolution. Maybe, just maybe, word will spread and citizens all across the country will join the movement. Even those who are unaware of what is taking place will be compelled to ask why all the bells are ringing and learn the truth.”

“I like it,” Dee exclaims.

In less than an hour I'm standing in front of the green screen making a plea, "America wake up! That moment in history has arrived. You either fight for your freedom and the future of your family or surrender your rights in perpetuity. America has declared its independence from the socialist global evil that is on the brink of world conquest. You are America. This is your nation and your home. Beware, the blue helmets are coming! And, they are coming for you. Stand with us. Stand with your neighbors. Stand shoulder to shoulder and refuse to yield. Show the world the true American spirit and love of liberty. Tomorrow, at 2 p.m. ring a bell—any bell—let the world hear the resounding sound of a nation's rebirth." The sounds of different bells can be heard behind me as a Betsy Ross flag waves. The image dissolves to a single famous bell and silence as I continue, "On July 8, 1776 the Liberty Bell that hung in the tower of Independence Hall tolled summoning the citizens of Philadelphia to hear the first public reading of the *Declaration of Independence* by Colonel John Nixon. On that bell is the inscription: 'Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof,' from Leviticus 25:10. For decades before the Reorganization, every Fourth of July, at 2 p.m., children who were descendants of *Declaration of Independence* signatories symbolically tapped the Liberty Bell 13 times while bells across the nation rang 13 times in honor of the patriots from the original 13 states. An honor my sister and I have not had. It was stolen from us before we were born. Of greater importance are the basic human rights you have been denied that were stolen before you were born. Tomorrow, at 2 p.m., let freedom ring." Fade to black.

As we finish up, Virginia enters the room and informs us, "President Holmes has declared Martial Law." She reads from her tablet, "All travel is restricted, no group congregations permitted, they've shut down most satellite channels with the exception of GOV-POV and the government news channels, and set an eight o'clock curfew. Anyone displaying a Betsy Ross flag will be arrested. Any person caught with a firearm will be arrested. Any anti-government display or statement will lead to arrest. They are cracking down."

"What about the Globalnet?" I ask.

"It would be too disruptive to shut down that government-provided service which is needed for the Social Compensation Program and Individual Identification And Data Chip usage. Of course, we know both systems do not depend on the Globalnet. Finally, they have blocked all social networks until further notice." Virginia looks up and concludes, "There will be more as they attempt to suppress our message."

"We just finished a call-to-action message," Dee expresses concern.

"Let Prophet put it out there. It will go on government satellite networks and Globalnet networks," Virginia replies. "Then it will be shared."

"I wonder if anyone will see it or do anything," Dee states.

Virginia watches our bell message and nods, "I like it. We need to get the people involved and part of the rebellion. That way, when the lights go out, they will be less upset and more hopeful."

Seth reenters the room. His unemotional statement is, "The Cuban government has committed to sending troops to America."

"Do we know how many or when?" I inquire.

"No."

"Is General Doolittle aware of this development?" Virginia asks.

"Unknown." Seth walks out.

"It appears the shooting war is about to begin," Virginia surmises.

"And, we have no control over what happens next," I add.

"Neither did the Continental Congress," Virginia points out. "They received reports from General Washington, but didn't direct him or provide strategic input. He was lucky they provided anything."

"I see your point," I admit. I turn to Dee and order, "Get our bell video out as quickly as possible."

Dee smiles, salutes, and replies, "Aye, aye sir."

When Dee leaves Virginia observes, "You have her well-trained."

"Don't let it fool you, I have more control over the weather than I do over any of you."

"Leadership doesn't have to be demonstrated."

"I don't know. Sometimes I feel like the only leading I do is being in front pushed by all of you. I'm not sure if you all are urging me on or using me as a human shield."

"I'd go with the shield analogy," Virginia recommends as she leaves the room.

Alone, I stare at the green screen. Through it I see a world in turmoil. Where the picture painted by President Sandra Holmes was one of the people in United Nations economic zones living in peace and harmony what is coming is bloodshed, hardship, division, and death. Why couldn't the United Nations promote individual freedom and bring about the greatest peace ever known? It just seems such a waste. What Holmes and the U.N. are proposing is the opposite of freedom. Can they not see that? Why are there always those who seek power over others?

In the lime green color, I see a crowd of people aimlessly milling about. They bump into each other, turn, move in circles, stand completely still, and otherwise continue their directionless dance. Then one lone figure drifts from the masses and seems to step up to a higher plane. He waves his arms and the people all turn to face him. There appears to be a semblance of order. When he points to his right, they all turn in that direction. Then to his left and they turn. A leader is born. He brings order to strife. No longer is there any bumping or useless moves—only harmony. They are as one. Does that mean freedom is chaos? Is this the perfect world of the statist? Turn puppets turn.

I watch as another figure emerges from the ranks and steps up. He points to the crowd's right. Immediately, the first ruler points to the crowd's left. Confused the masses freeze in place. A third figure appears. This new arrival points behind the crowd. Not knowing what to do they all spin in place. The three ersatz leaders fight with each other for control. Then it happens. Another figure leaves the mass of confusion but doesn't join the combative leaders. He goes off in another direction. Another leaves and goes in his chosen direction. Again and again, entities leave and follow their own path. Finally, just like a camera going to a wider angle the vision expands as individuals freed from the confining space of the herd go off in their chosen direction. The area of the original congregation becomes smaller and smaller by comparison to the wide expanse of new possibilities. Freedom may well be chaos, but out of chaos comes growth.

Now, I understand the mindset of the statist. Orderliness is interpreted as peacefulness. When all actions are controlled there is no conflict. This might work for a while for those at the top. However, they mistakenly overlook the fact that human beings have an innate need for freedom. They are driven by curiosity, pleasure, greed, ambition, and various other desires. Invisible cages will not hold the human spirit.

I receive a message on my tablet.

ANNABELLE: Mr. Clymer, my name is Annabelle Irban Na Tyn.

My first reaction is AINT—where's the apostrophe? Of course, I keep that strange thought to myself as I read on.

ANNABELLE: I am Undersecretary of Homeland Security. In my capacity as undersecretary I often negotiate settlements with those entities that believe they have been mistreated by the government. You and your cohorts have expressed concern and disagreement with the upcoming United Nations merger. While this will be a positive thing

for the American people and the world, you do not support that position. We would like to help you feel better about the pending event. After all, it is far better to negotiate than to fight and things are getting out-of-hand and dangerous. The United Nations Governance Committee has agreed to offer you, Virginia Morris, and Walter Tize forty-seven million IMUs each to settle any grievances you may have.

OK, I have to admit that I expected them to offer immunity if we go away quietly. By offering a veritable fortune they not only want us to go away immediately, they want us gone permanently. That last thought causes me to wonder how can a corpse spend forty-seven million IMUs?

GEORGE: That is a generous offer, but I fear we might not live long enough to enjoy such wealth.

ANNABELLE: You misjudge us. We aren't organized crime. We only want everyone to be happy. Your actions are causing undue unrest across America.

My mind won't stop messing with me by wondering how do you undo unrest—rest?

GEORGE: Our actions are meant to save the sovereignty of the United States of America.

ANNABELLE: We understand your point-of-view, however, it is regressive and will prevent the American people from enjoying an improved lifestyle in a global community.

GEORGE: It was President Ronald Reagan who said, "There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: as government expands, liberty contracts."

ANNABELLE: Reagan was a radical whose ideas have been proven wrong time and again.

GEORGE: President Reagan.

ANNABELLE: Of course, President Reagan. That was a long time ago. Today, governments take care of their people. You have enjoyed a free education, food on the table, healthcare, a roof over your head, and peace of mind all because of the government.

GEORGE: I also have not been allowed to visit certain websites, cannot buy a car without permission, have my income determined by politicians, cannot research history, are tracked through my IIDC, have no voice in government, not allowed to own a firearm, do not have freedom of speech, must accept limitations established by those who live opulent lifestyles. Does any of this ring a bell?

Shh, don't reveal the plan.

ANNABELLE: Certain sacrifices are shared and regulations enforced in order to equalize wealth and opportunity.

GEORGE: With the exception of those in Wilson.

ANNABELLE: You also may become an exception with this settlement. Think of the possibilities. You can live a life of luxury anywhere in the world. Don't let this opportunity slip through your fingers.

GEORGE: And, what about the American people?

ANNABELLE: As I said they will enjoy better lives in a global society.

GEORGE: Will they have liberty? Will they be free?

ANNABELLE: The world will be free of conflict.

GEORGE: However, individualism will be lost.

ANNABELLE: You can't stop progress. You can only stop yourself. Accept this offer and enjoy your individual freedom.

GEORGE: Of course, the only price is the future of an entire population. I ain't buying it.

Sorry, I had to do it. I'm sure she has heard the play on her name before.

ANNABELLE: You may regret this decision as you and your friends are presently wanted for treason. That can go away if you settle.

GEORGE: I believe we have a better chance for a higher quality of life after we win.

ANNABELLE: The chance of that is very remote. Our offer is a sure thing. I will feel remiss if I can't convince you to accept this generous offer.

GEORGE: I decline.

ANNABELLE: I really don't understand.

GEORGE: I know and that is part of the problem.

ANNABELLE: Take care of yourself, George.

The conversation ends abruptly. I have to confess that I can't help but wonder how all that money would have changed our lives. They certainly chose a high enough amount to tempt even the most dedicated rebel. If they had thrown in a plastic whistle I might have caved. It was that close. What if I had insisted that we be allowed to join the elite ruling class. Someone once said, "Everyone has a price." That may be sadly true. The founding fathers had a price that was far beyond what King George could provide. Their price was a vision. I pray that enough of that DNA made it through the years to me.

With the golden offer a day behind, I watch the news channels

with interest. At 2 p.m. Dee sneaks up behind me and rings a small silver bell she found on a shelf. “Let freedom ring,” I declare.

On the news channel they are discussing the remarkable recovery from drug abuse of some pop singer. The hosts gush and praise this brave young woman. I change the channel. This news broadcast is covering a new global threat—Earth’s weight imbalance. It seems too much material has been moved from one hemisphere to another which scientists believe will cause greater rotational wobble. This will trigger more earthquakes of greater severity. The United Nations wants to impose a Weight Offset Rotation Stabilization Tariff (WORST) on any business transporting goods from one hemisphere to another. I’m amazed at how ridiculous this is until I hear a college professor seeking massive funds to study the effect of—are you ready for this—human migration on the wobble crisis. In a matter of two minutes it went from a study to a tariff to a crisis. I change the channel. This news broadcast is explaining why beef has to be rationed, once more, due to the decline in farms. I change the channel.

“No one rang a bell,” Dee declares with obvious disappointment.

I go to the Globalnet and bring up a British news channel. On the screen are thousands of people filling Times Square in New York. Bells—all types and sizes—are heard filling the air with a song of freedom. The announcer provides her observation, “This wild demonstration has been going on for over ten minutes with no sign of ending.” The picture behind her changes to Los Angeles. “In cities all across America bells are ringing in support of the illegitimate revolution led by this man.” My face appears. Damn they are showing my bad side. “This Svengali-like character has fired up the uneducated population with unrealistic promises and pipe dreams.” Video of other cities appear behind the little b . . . beautiful young commentator. “Authorities fear that when this many unruly crowds act out violence is inevitable.” The scene changes to an unnamed city where a gang of thugs wearing black ski masks attempt to attack a smaller group of individuals ringing bells. They use clubs and bottles and bricks on the unsuspecting bell-ringers. “Here is an example of the reaction to the provocative actions of the illegal BRs.”

I change the channel to a Japanese news program. With the translator turned on we can read subtitles of what is being said. Two commentators are discussing what is taking place in America. On a screen behind them is video of a protest in Atlanta where large crowds are ringing bells.

"What a smart way for the people's voices to be heard," the first commentator observes.

"Yes, it eliminates the shouting so common in these types of demonstrations," commentator two states.

"It appears opposition to the United Nations plans are far greater than believed."

"What was thought to be an easy transition may not be so."

"The leader of the revolution, George Clymer-san, said in his message, 'let freedom ring.'"

"It is so. Many Americans heard the message and are answering."

Commentator one, "Americans are unpredictable. For so long they have remained asleep. Now they awaken."

Commentator two, "I read in history book of how strong and successful was America. It must have been a glorious time."

"Excuse please, I am being told that a demonstration has developed in Tokyo in support of our American friends."

Behind the two men on the screen a video appears that shows large crowds of Japanese ringing bells and carrying Betsy Ross flags. This couldn't have been planned because no one knew of our experiment. The flags must have been printed in the past hour.

"Don't tell me no one rang a bell," I say to Dee.

"Isn't it beautiful?"

I switch to a Texas channel and a different kind of bell is heard.

"What is that?" Dee asks.

Before I can answer the video zooms in on a church. We have old churches in America but for the most part they have been abandoned and fallen to disrepair. In 2035 when Christianity was declared a terrorist organization and churches were taxed out of existence the entire religion went underground. More than a thousand religious leaders who resisted were tried and imprisoned for acts of sedition in denying indisputable scientific fact that God does not exist.

"Those are the most beautiful bells I've ever heard," Dee observes.

I return to American news channels to see if they have finally covered any of the events. What I see is a government spokesperson stating that because things have progressed much quicker and smoother than anticipated that the transition date to a UN economic zone has been moved up. On another channel they are talking about a new healthier bra design. Next channel is discussing computer-based healthcare. Due to the doctor shortage, nurses using computer

diagnostic programs will provide pharmaceutical therapies to patients in government clinics. It's called Digital Evaluation And Treatment Healthcare (DEATH). I can only shake my head.

We spend the next few hours gathering as much footage of the demonstrations as we can. Unlike the complete blackout of coverage by the government media, foreign media and individual videos provide a clear indication that this well is deep—very deep. More citizens than we ever dreamed possible saw our message, shared it, and made the decision to become active participants in our movement. My friends, there is hope. I wonder what Annabelle Irban Na Tyn is thinking right now.

Seth enters the room and announces, "Three Cuban cargo planes carrying 750 troops left Havana at 1120 hundred hours this morning. They were bound for Miami International Airport, however, never arrived. Wreckage has been spotted in the Atlantic Ocean." He shows no emotion as he indicates, "There are claims of two black fighter jets being seen in the vicinity, but it can't be confirmed."

Maybe I'm a wimp, but I can't help but wonder about those 750 soldiers and three flight crews who died.

Seth reads my mind as he says, again without emotion, "Put away your abacus and quit counting. This is only the beginning. When the rats start to feel the heat there is nothing that they will not do to defend their positions. In time, you won't believe what they will try."

"I'm sure those lost aircraft will not be mentioned on the news," I state.

"They never existed," Seth replies. "One more thing. Never forget that you are target number one. Every resource they have is in play with the singular goal of taking out one George Clymer."

Now, that's a comforting thought. It also causes me to make another decision. I say, "I've got to get out of here."

"There's no place to run," Seth points out. "This is the safest place for you."

"No. You miss my point," I inform him. "I can't hide in a safe place and direct others to risk their lives." I pause to muster the courage to make the next statement, "I have to be seen. I have to join those courageous people who defied the government and rang their bells. If I'm not standing with them, I'm no leader. The media hide in their ivory towers and condemn and judge and incite violence. Yet, they personally risk nothing. It is my duty to risk my life along with those who seek liberty."

“Great,” Virginia says from the doorway as she enters. “My job is to protect you and you want to stand on the frontline and yell, ‘Take your best shot.’”

“You are relieved of that duty,” I command.

“Oh, shut-up! We’re in this together. I just want to know what idiots elected you leader.”

Dee raises her hand. She then says, “I’m going with you.”

“You can’t” I reply.

“Why not? I’m as committed to the revolution as you.”

“That’s why. I need you to continue to communicate with the people. Produce the next episode of *The Capitalist*, create a news program to deliver real facts, and do whatever your creative mind comes up with to keep the bells of freedom ringing.”



John F Kennedy
President: 1961 - 1963

***“The road to success is always under construction . . .
there are lots of potholes but no traffic jams.”***

— Dan Pena

Chapter 35 | THE HOLE

The scene opens to reveal a hand holding a small silver bell. All is silent. The audience waits knowing that bell is going to be rung. They are wrong. Instead of shaking the bell, the hand moves slowly aside to reveal a church steeple. From inside the structure dulcet tones emerge. Beautiful, melodic, and inspiring music fills the air of the village that was shown in the first episode of *The Capitalist*.

“Let freedom ring,” Falcon states as the camera goes to a wider angle to reveal him on the right.

The camera slowly goes to a wider angle to reveal a minister on the left who faces Falcon. “May God bless this church, this village, and your endeavor.”

“By the very fact that this house of worship has been restored and will once again serve the community, I feel as though I have been blessed,” Falcon responds.

“Yes. Indeed, life has returned to our village. May it spread across the land.”

The two men turn and walk toward the church as its bells continue to proclaim a new day of promise and plenty. When they reach the front steps of the church a black official government law enforcement vehicle drives into the scene and stops. Three large imposing men leave the SUV and approach Falcon and the minister.

“The public practice of Christianity if forbidden,” the officer in the lead states with authority.

“Rome couldn’t stop the spreading of the word,” The minister replies.

The government official walks directly up to the minister and states, “I’m not Roman . . . Catholic that is.” The man smiles and greets

the minister, "Congratulations pastor. The townsfolk did a magnificent job. Too bad I have to blow everything up. At least those are my orders. Any village under my jurisdiction that exhibits the slightest anti-government sentiment are to be severely punished. This includes arrest, confiscation of property, and destruction of public buildings. Those characters in Wilson are mad—I don't mean angry—I mean insane." He looks around to reveal newly painted houses, automobiles in driveways, new home construction, well-kept lawns and gardens, children playing, and more. Then he asks his two partners, "You see anything that might be considered anti-government here?"

The two other officers laugh.

The non-Roman Catholic official addresses Falcon, "There is a village that is dying. Good people facing bad times. Someone contacted the government to plead for improved services and more food. The response they received was reduction of services and six-month suspension of all Social Compensation Program payments to all residents. Essentially, they will be starved out."

Falcon listens but does not comment.

The minister interjects, "We will make a request for donations to help those in need. I'm certain our citizens will be quick to help having been in that same situation not long ago."

Now Falcon speaks, "I will go to the village and determine if they need charity or opportunity. Whichever is best, they will not starve. We are Americans."

Dissolve to a long line of adults in shabby clothes on a dirt road. Before them is an old weathered wooden shed with a single open window. From that perch an old woman is dispensing what might be considered watery soup and a single hard biscuit to each individual. After a few moments, she sadly announces that there isn't any more and closes the window. Those who were not lucky enough to receive the soup shuffle off in different directions.

Pan to Falcon and three law enforcement officers. They observe the soup line from atop a hill. After viewing the grim scene below, Falcon turns and looks in the opposite direction. Before him is a gorgeous tranquil lake with pristine deep emerald water. A long grass-covered shoreline in need of mowing leads up to the water. Behind it an enchanting white birch forest creates a picturesque and magic refuge from a tumultuous world.

Falcon remarks to the lead officer, "People would pay to come here and vacation."

"Whenever I visit here, I always take a long walk down that path and along the lake. It calms and soothes me. Funny how just touching nature once in a while is so refreshing."

"Watch it, people will think you're getting soft," one of the other officers warns.

The lead officer addresses Falcon, "Are you going to seek investors to make this a vacation destination?"

"No. I'm going to meet with the town leaders and tell them of the potential of this area. It will be up to them to decide if that is what they want."

"If they choose that direction, here are three investors."

"We better get that food down to the people and meet with their leaders."

The next scene is inside an ancient meeting hall that should be condemned. Four women and three men sit at a long table and listen to Falcon as he describes an opportunity for the town.

The woman in the center who is mayor states, "The government will not allow it."

Falcon looks at her and orders, "Inhale slowly."

At first confused, she complies.

"If the government, far away enjoying champagne and caviar, decides that they own the air and you may only inhale once a minute would you obey that law?"

"That's ridiculous."

"So is slowly starving an entire community." Falcon inhales deeply. "Ah, that air is what sustains life and is free. No government has the right to take that freedom or any freedom that is naturally yours. This village can survive, and grow, and prosper without remaining on the government leash."

One of the other council members warns, "They will send troops to punish us. I've seen stories on the news."

"You are already being punished. They won't send troops to a village that is on the verge of extinction." Falcon turns to the three government officers, "Isn't that so?"

"I regret to inform you that the status reports on this area will be bleak. No troops and no aid will be forthcoming."

Another council member laments, "There isn't enough time to bring your plan to fruition."

Falcon looks at the man and orders, "Inhale slowly."

"I saw that trick," he spits.

Falcon smiles, "This is a different trick."

The man looks at his cohorts, shrugs, and inhales.

"Now, hold your breath until I tell you to exhale."

The man obeys.

"Time is a relative thing. A single minute seems to be too little time to accomplish anything. However, to someone in need of air," he indicates the council member struggling to hold his breath, "it can seem an eternity. OK, breathe." The self-confident visitor explains, "The question concerning time should be is it time to get up off your knees, take action, and become independent, as well as self-sufficient?"

A female council member protests, "We don't have the means to implement such an idea."

"I can arrange for you to receive ample materials and funding to get this project underway."

"A loan? We could never service the debt."

"No. Investment. There are those who would fund this project for a percentage of the profits."

"Thieves!" a man sitting on the far right declares. "They would own everything and we would be working for them. We would go from one form of slavery to another to make someone else richer. Thieves!"

"Is this true?" the mayor asks.

"It could be," Falcon replies, "If you make a poorly constructed deal."

"Unfortunately, we are not in a very strong position."

"Far stronger than you realize. Together, we will fashion a contract that is in the town's favor. No outside entities combined will be allowed to own more than forty percent, those citizens who work on the project will be paid a small salary while earning shares through sweat equity." Falcon smiles, "The more you sweat—the more you own." He walks over to the man who complained and states, "There will be a fair buyout clause that will allow the citizens to purchase more equity while giving investors adequate return, given their risk. Once all this is put in writing, it is up to investors to decide whether-or-not they are interested. However, consider the fact that, at present, in America there are very few good investment opportunities."

Falcon goes on to explain how other villages are using shadow currency to work together and remain under the government radar.

All eyes turn to the law enforcement officers. The lead official states, "I'm not aware of any such activity in my district." His two team members laugh.

Dissolve to construction of a hotel on a hilltop overlooking an enchanted lake. Fade to black.

A picture of the Liberty Bell appears with the message overlaid, “Let freedom ring. Join the revolution to reclaim American liberty.” The bell tolls.

I look at Dee and state enthusiastically, “You’ve done it again—little sister.”

“Thanks, Falcon.”

I look skyward as if to say, “Why me?”

Virginia enters the room carrying her tablet. “All arrangements have been made. An SUV will arrive this afternoon. All four of us are leaving.”

“I get to go with you,” Dee exclaims.

“Pack all your things, we’re not coming back here.”

A white vehicle arrives at two o’clock. Virginia greets the driver in a manner that indicates that they know each other. We load our gear and climb aboard. With our thumb gloves on there is little risk of any satellite identifying us and alerting the authorities. Seth wishes us well and tells us he will keep us informed of any occurrences that might affect our efforts.

Upon leaving, the driver turns south on Highway 21. It requires an immediate right to remain on 21. We then wind our way on mountain roads until we enter a small hamlet named Kingston. There, we turn left onto Highway 74 and do more winding through the mountains. Eventually, we make a left turn onto a dirt road and after half a mile stop at a small building with the name “Ozark Skies Airpark” on the wall. It is then I recognize Pop and his white single-engine airplane with red and black swirls. Pop stands next to his Pilatus PC-12 NG wearing a leather jacket and brown fedora. His long gray ponytail hangs down his back. When he sees me he makes a small saluting motion.

“Pop, it’s good to see you. Well, maybe that’s an overstatement seeing as I am about to risk life and limb once more.”

“Relax, we have this nice long flat runway,” he indicates a long stretch of grass.

“What’s our destination?”

“Wouldn’t you like to know?”

“I kind of would.”

Pop looks around suspiciously and warns, “Shhh. The hills have ears.”

“So, you’re keeping it a secret?”

"I would—if I knew our destination." He points over his shoulder, "The copilot has it in a coded message. We get the password when in the air."

"We have a copilot?"

"Of sorts." Pop turns to the others in our group and requests, "Everyone on the aircraft we have some distance to cover."

Virginia leads the way followed by Darsey. When Dee enters the plane she screams, "Daddy!" Walter and I look at each other and climb aboard. There in the copilot seat sits my father.

"Dad, when did you learn to fly?"

A rare grin crosses his face as he replies, "On our way here."

I shake my head and say, "I never thought I'd see this."

"Neither did I," my father admits. There is joy in his eyes. A man who was trapped in a single-dimensional life following the rules long ago accepted his station. Now, sitting in a single-engine airplane, he spread his wings, literally, and soared beyond his dreams. I know the grin on my face makes me look like a fool, but I just don't care. Pop closes the door behind me and orders everyone to sit and fasten their seat belts.

Pop asks my father, "Do you have your kneeboard?"

"On and ready, sir." On my father's right leg is strapped a tablet. They go through a pre-flight checklist and start the engine. Pop has my father doing most of the procedures. He is training my old man.

When the aircraft is ready to go Pop tells my father, "You can open the file with the destination."

My father punches a few buttons and reads the message, "Proceed to Little River Landing Strip in central Louisiana coordinates 31°34'45.48"N and 92°53'52.53"W Elevation 98 feet. A vehicle will be there for use by Virginia Morris and George Clymer. The remaining party will fly to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport where you will be met by STUS personnel. Pop sets the navigation system and the plane begins to taxi to the end of the, uh, grass strip.

I look around the cabin and note that Virginia is busy on her tablet, Walter is asleep, and Dee looks panic stricken. I offer some encouragement by telling her, "Don't worry, Pop is an excellent pilot."

"Right," is her response. We hit a rut in the grass.

At the end of the runway we turn and face the breeze. The engine revs, plane shudders, and abruptly lurches forward. In moments, we are in the air looking down at the Ozark Mountains.

"You're going to like Texas," I tell Dee.

"I'm looking forward to it."

Virginia looks up from her tablet, “I suggest we go southeast to Alexandria, Louisiana.”

“I think we should stick to small towns where there is less media and fewer law enforcement,” I argue.

“Disagree.”

“Why?”

“In a small town there are fewer law enforcement officers. There are also fewer citizens and in most cases the police know every one of them. We would stand out like a sore thumb. In addition, there are fewer crimes being committed which leaves the police with lots of time to be exposed to our faces on government announcements and observe any strangers in town. In a mid-size city, the authorities are busy handling issues, they can’t possibly know every citizen, most likely are understaffed, and we can better blend in.”

“That’s all you have?”

Virginia’s stare just burned my retinas, “The question is, what are you planning on doing when we get there?”

“Ring a bell,” Dee interjects.

“I want to meet with people. Hear from them. Tell their stories. Show America and the rest of the world how life in America really is. We need to get people fired-up and enthusiastic about the revolution. They have to welcome freedom or they won’t know how to use it. It’s simple, we can turn off the lights, but if the masses don’t support us when the lights go back on—all is lost.” I turn to Dee, “That’s where you come in. We will send you video of our interactions. You will need to edit and distribute them.”

“What if they are against the revolution?” Dee asks.

“Then tell that as well. Put the whole story out there. If citizens are content being ruled by their government it might just be that liberty is too frightening for them. What if the great American experiment in individual freedom failed because human beings naturally are sheep and need to be led. What if initiative, motivation, ambition, curiosity, and drive exist in only a small minority of homo sapiens? Are we trying to force an unwelcome lifestyle on the masses? It used to be said that prisoners who serve long sentences become institutionalized. They become accustomed to following the rules and regulations. A routine allows them to not have to think or risk being wrong. They have an odd type of security. The food may suck, but it’s there at mealtime. They do not have to take action or make decisions to insure they receive their next meal. Are we opening the gates to a societal prison and thrusting

the occupants out into an intimidating and frightful world for which they are unprepared?"

"It sounds like you are talking about children who do not wish to grow up," Virginia comments.

"In this 'take care of me' society who takes care of the inmates?" Dee asks.

"Those who are born leaders," I reply.

"But they don't take care of the people," Virginia points out. "They take care of themselves and leave the scraps for the people. Look at what we have now. The ruling class live like royalty in Wilson. Average Americans simply survive on what the leaders provide. Survive—not flourish and prosper. If the people gain too much power they become a threat."

"America is a huge zoo without bars," Dee observes.

"Worse it's a holding pen and the more that expire the better," Walter chimes in as he awakens. He looks at me and asks, "You having doubts?"

"Not doubts—concern as to whether or not the people will welcome what we offer them."

"At first—no. Then as they realize they are able to make their own decisions, do what they want to do, go where they please, visit any website, and attain whatever lifestyle they are capable of reaching, what we offer will be embraced. Those who sit on their asses and do nothing have only themselves to blame for their hunger and discomfort."

"That's rather cold," Dee observes.

Walter turns toward her and states, "Young lady, it was the obsessive focusing on those who were drains on society that bankrupted the nation and opened the door to a tyrannical socialist government that only succeeded in pushing the entire population into that sewer. They didn't pull the poor up. It dragged the prosperous down." He smiles and adds, "Your compassion is what they exploited in the early part of this century to convince naïve over-emotional citizens to give up more and more freedoms in order to help the unfortunate. Unfortunately, pun intended, it didn't help anybody and hurt everybody. Only the chosen ones in government came out ahead." Next, he turns to me, "Focus on the task at hand. Give the damn people their freedom and let prosperity take care of itself."

I realize Walter is correct about one thing; all the empty promises made by socialists never helped anybody. At least if you're free you can choose to pursue your dreams or not do anything and live a nightmare.

Pop, at least I hope it is pop—not my pop—lands the aircraft on a long grass runway. We taxi to the end and stop. Parked over near a row of trees is a minivan. “That appears to be our ride,” Virginia announces.

I stand in the cabin door and thank Pop as well as tell my father how glad I am that he has been able to fulfill part of his dream. His comment is, “I only wish your mother could have been with us.” That, of course, creates images in my mind of her in a filthy prison.

Dee stands and hugs me. I’m getting used to it. She tells me to be careful which, of course, I plan to do. Besides, I have Virginia to watch my back as I will watch hers, ahem.”

Walter shoots me a bird and says, “Hold this for me. Stay the course and get it done. A nation is counting on you.” His smile seems out-of-place but is well-appreciated.

Once we are off, the plane turns and taxis to the far end of the runway or rungrass. Virginia and I watch it take off, bank to the left, and head west. The nation of Texas is less than an hour away for Walter, my father, and Dee.

The van is well provisioned with water and food and sleeping bags. It appears we will be calling it home for a while. Virginia offers to drive and we head southeast toward Alexandria, Louisiana to determine the mood of the people.

It’s late afternoon when we reach Alexandria on Highway 49, which by the way passes Alexandria International Airport. We couldn’t utilize that facility because too many regulations would have prevented Pop from flying to Texas. Not to mention, Walter, Virginia, and I would have been arrested. We also pass a boarded-up McDonalds restaurant. From what I’ve been told unaffordable minimum wage legislation, excessive FDA regulations, OSHA requirements, and food rationing put that large chain out of business in the United States. Elsewhere in the world they are thriving.

We enter the city on a rutted, in-need-of-repair, cement road. There is very little traffic and no pedestrians. Ahead is a tall tower that resembles the Eiffel Tower which must have been a broadcast antenna at some time. Beneath it is a homeless resource center. A block up on the left is an odd brick building with tall narrow windows and the name Pan American Engineers. We pass a number of strip malls but most of the stores are empty. Then I spot it—a barber shop. We pull in and find two black men waiting for their turn. Another black man is in the chair getting a haircut by the fourth black man in the shop. When we enter all four look at us with obvious curiosity.

I walk up to one of the men waiting and introduce myself, "My name is George Clymer."

"I know who you are," he responds sounding somewhat insulted that I assumed he wasn't well enough informed.

"Then you know we are wanted by the government."

"Stuff the government," he spits. "They don't do nothin' but keep people down."

The other waiting man speaks, "Yeah, and now they cut back on our benefits that wasn't enough to begin with."

"Say that again," the first man says. He then tilts his head as he looks at Virginia and asks, "What are you folks doing in this part of town?"

"We're fighting to restore freedom to America and want to know what you think about what we are doing."

"What kind of freedom?" the barber asks.

"Individual freedom to do what you want without government interference," I attempt.

"What about government assistance?" the second waiting man asks.

"If the government would allow businesses to operate without strangling regulations and heavy taxation more jobs would be available and you wouldn't need government assistance."

"Then I get no deposit." He thinks for a moment, then offers, "I don't like it."

"So, you prefer what you have now to being free to get a job and make more?" I conclude.

"I prefer eatin' to starvin'."

The first waiting man thinks out loud, "There's a hole in it." He rubs his chin, "Businesses don't just sprout up and hire people. Even those that already exist have to have more business before they add people. And, people don't just wake up one morning with skills to fill jobs. There's a livin-on money hole. You gotta fill that gap."

The barber adds, "That's a big mother of a hole."

I see their point. In fact, Dee pointed out that you can't take away people's food money and expect them to instantly find a job. I offer a solution, "What if your government stipend continued for one year which would allow you to train and seek employment?"

"Can I get a loan? I want to open a barber shop," waiting man one jokes.

"You couldn't cut a lawn without messing it up," the barber

barks.

"I don't see no works of art coming out of your chair."

"Just wait until you get in it."

I can't help but smile at the banter. "Do you support the rebellion against the United Nations economic zone world government?" I try.

"It don't really matter. Those in charge don't care about people like us. No, it don't really matter."

"But it has to matter," I insist with a raised voice which gets their attention. "If the government got out of the way you could do anything you want. Get a job or open a business. You get to keep what you earn. You can spend it, save it, or invest it. If you work hard, are innovative, or get lucky you can have a far better lifestyle than the government allows you now."

Waiting man two asks, "What happens if I get sick?"

"You go to the doctor."

"Who pays for it?"

"You do."

"What if I can't afford it?"

"You will have health insurance."

"But, now it's free."

"Have you been to the clinic any time?" waiting man one asks his friend.

"No."

"I've been waiting eight months for a hernia operation. My wife needs treatment for her heart but can't get an appointment. Free healthcare is free because there isn't any."

We spend more time hearing about the needs of these men and their opinions about our efforts. It ends with the barber saying, "You do your revolution and make us free. It can't be any worse than it is now." He pulls the sheet from the customer whose hair he was cutting to reveal the uniform and badge of an Alexandria police officer.



Lyndon B Johnson
President: 1963 - 1969

“The everyday kindness of the back roads more than makes up for the acts of greed in the headlines.”

— Charles Kuralt

Chapter 36 | THE TOUR

“Put your hands up, turn, and face the wall. You’re under arrest.”

That’s what I expected the police officer in the Alexandria barber shop to say. Instead, he smiled and said, “You be safe out there, hear?” He then stood and escorted us to the door. Outside he confessed, “I listened to your discussion in there and decided if even half of what you want to do gets done it would still be an improvement on what we have. None of us want the U.N. muddying up our lives.”

Now, three days later Virginia and I have traveled through the South, up to New England, and out to the Midwest. We spoke with a significant number of American citizens in all walks of life and have gathered a lot of video. I must admit that this trip has opened my eyes. People have such a diverse range of opinions and suggestions, not to mention degrees of emotion. I’ll try to give you the key points so as to not bore you to tears.

A group of women we met outside a USmart store think that freedom would be nice if it can be given out slowly to not upset people. They also feel the government should always offer safety nets for those who cannot make it on their own. It made me think of the workhouses in eighteenth century England. Were they government safety nets? Now, I don’t want to sound heartless or like Walter, but as long as you “take care” of people you remove the incentive for them to make the necessary effort to take care of themselves. However, one thing becomes clear, the transition will be complex, difficult, and at times painful.

One surprise we had was when we met an old man with a grey beard just walking along a road. We stopped and offered him food and water and ultimately ended up sitting under a tree chatting. His clothes were tattered and dirty but looked as though they were quite expensive

when new. It turned out that he was a college professor in the early 2020s and fully supported socialism. “I told my students that cold big business and a corrupt government were the reasons for their plight and the only solution was to embrace socialism that was welcoming to all, kind to less fortunate, punished the evil greedy ones in power, was more fair, and would protect them from life’s misfortunes.” He shook his head as if recalling those days and regretting what he had done. I was wrong. When the Reorganization occurred in 2024 he was among those who cheered and supported the “logical and welcome” change. In his mind, the time had come for social change for the good of the people—even if it had to come at the draining of wealth and equal suffering of all. Every step toward a global government and equal society was necessary for the evolution of mankind. Anger welled-up when he blamed unseen right-wing forces for creating high tech learning environments that eliminated the need for enlightened instructors such as himself. In 2028, he was retired at the age of 43 from a highly lucrative job with boundless benefits and put on a meager pension. Still he championed socialism and globalism as the best future for humanity. “Dark state capitalists perverted the government.” When he realized who we were he informed us that he hoped we would die in a flaming car crash worthy of the devil. I accidentally stepped on his tablet so that he couldn’t contact the authorities to report us. The man had quite an extensive, erudite, and profane vocabulary, I must admit.

In a suburban area we came upon a large building surrounded by high barbed wire topped fences. The sign read Beltz Fabrik, no admittance. There was a small mill town nearby so we decided to wait in the shadows. After an hour a whistle signaled the end of the workday. We watched as men and women shuffled out of the building, went through a security check, and proceeded through the main gate. Through caution we didn’t want to approach a crowd, therefore, waited until a lone middle-aged man broke from the herd and walked down a road that was crumbling blacktop and dirt. Virginia approached him.

“Not here,” he said as he looked around and moved into an alley. We followed. As he didn’t know we would be intercepting him we didn’t believe there was any potential for an ambush. Our guide was a man in his fifties, gaunt, with thinning hair, wearing a blue baseball cap upon which was the logo of Beltz Fabrik. He made his way down a flight of broken stone stairs and into a basement. There in the damp chill of the room he turned and asked, “Are you from the union?”

Virginia answered, “No. Do you not recognize us?”

"Should I?"

"We are leaders of the revolution," I told him.

"What revolution?"

"The revolution to bring freedom back to America and keep the United Nations from creating a global government," I state.

"Sounds dangerous."

I wondered if he was putting us on.

"It is. We are wanted by the government," Virginia replied. "Have you not seen us on the news?"

"Our television monitor broke a few years ago and we can't afford a new one."

"What about on your phone? Don't you get news alerts?"

"The battery is dead."

"So, you have no idea what is happening in the world?" I asked incredulously.

"All I know is that I have to be at that gate at seven and I leave at six."

Virginia asked, "What do they manufacture in that plant?"

"All kinds of leather goods. I work on a line that makes leather bomber jackets. Very nice and very expensive. From what I've heard they are sold in Texas, Europe, and the far east."

"Why did you ask if we are from the union?" I inquired.

"Because there have been rumors that a union is trying to organize the workers." He looked around as though just saying that was dangerous. "This is a strict German company. Anyone even talking to a union representative will be fired. I've seen two employees ushered out of the building. I can't survive on my SCP payments alone. I need this job. If I get fired or they close this plant, I'll be living on the street."

"Watch this," Virginia ordered as she handed him her tablet. She had brought up the first episode of *The Capitalist* for our subject to watch. He stared at the small screen and nodded a few times as he identified with the poor village. When Falcon arrived and made his offer the man became intrigued and watched intently. After the program he looked up and said, "I wish that Mr. Falcon . . ."

"Just Falcon," I corrected him and smiled.

"Right. I wish he would come here and help us better ourselves."

"He is coming here, in a manner of speaking. If we succeed with the rebellion, there will be major changes to America's economic system which includes freedom to do what you wish without government interference, opportunities to build better lives, and elimination of the

income tax,” I explained.

“You do that and I won’t need SCP payments.” He sat silently for a moment then asked, “How do you plan on rebelling?”

“That I can’t tell you. But, I will tell you this, things are going to take place that will alarm people. We need folks like you to reassure others that it will make things so much better for everyone.”

“Put your thumb here,” Virginia ordered. By this time, he was onboard and obeyed Virginia. She then told him, “I transferred money to your account. Buy a monitor and get a battery for your phone. Stay informed and help your co-workers to understand that what is happening is a good thing.”

“I don’t know how to thank you. But—why me?”

“You broke from the herd,” was all I said.

Outside of one of the larger cities we came upon a homeless tent village. It was just awful. Everything was filthy, garbage piled up, human waste on the street, needles, and what looked like human beings lying here and there. Some were passed out and for all I know some were dead. A young woman, about my age, was sitting on a pile of boxes. Her eyes were red with very small pupils and she didn’t blink. She stared straight ahead as if watching something off in the distance. We approached her.

“Are you alright?” Virginia asked.

In a soft, almost incoherent voice she answered, “I’m holding on to a strand of hair. I’m holding on but my grip is slipping. Down. It’s not time to go back down. Damn. Not time. Too soon. The beast will return. I fed the beast. Not time. It’s not fair. They promised.”

“Who promised?”

The girl stared at Virginia as if she had asked if the sun rises in the east. “Everyone knows who. Everyone knows who promised.” She stated what to her was the obvious, “You know. The guardian angels—they promised.”

“Guardian Angels? Your suppliers?” Virginia inquired. “What did they promise?”

“Endless snowfall, if I fed the beast.” She winced, as though making that statement brought pain. “I fed the beast. I did. I fed the beast.” Slowly and with obvious pain the young woman raised her left arm to reveal her hand with a dirty rag wrapped around it. Lost in the fog of a drug induced psychogenic stupor combined with intense pain, she blurted out, “It ate my thumb.”

At that moment a group of shadowy figures appeared from behind a tent. Virginia immediately picked up on the movement and

grabbed my arm. “We’ve got to go. There are no answers here.”

It was a race to get back to our minivan that we parked outside of the homeless tent encampment. Fortunately, we had enough of a lead to make our escape without further incident.

In the safety of our vehicle leaving the threat behind, I observed, “They cut off her thumb?”

“If they kept it body temperature the IIDC chip would continue to function. They could milk her Social Compensation Program funds indefinitely.”

“And, what about the girl?”

“Ultimately, she will die as they will no longer provide her fix.”

“Those bastards promised to keep feeding her addiction in exchange for her thumb without any intention of doing so.”

“Don’t ever forget what you saw,” Virginia said. “When you question whether or not to pull that trigger, remember that girl, see the world for what it is, and never forget evil is ugly.”

That part of our tour left its mark. I often speak eloquently about freedom and opportunity and hope. It is an idealistic view. But now I see more clearly what the role of government must be. Yes, it should protect individual liberty to live as you choose. However, on the other side of that scale government, by design, must define those actions which encroach on the rights of others and severely punish those who take such actions. Therein lies the challenge. The obvious example is that no individual has the right to take another’s property without permission or compensation. That’s theft. But, what about those instances where two parties claim rightful ownership? And, if it comes to a physical confrontation, who is at fault? Government, through laws, is an instrument by which we solve such issues. And yet, having such power led to the socialist tyrannical government we have today. They define being overweight as a crime, reading history as a crime, speaking out against an out-of-control government as a crime, visiting the wrong website as a crime, and whatever else interferes with those in power being able to stay in power. How do you keep that beast from becoming uncontrollable? I see a poor soul, with a bloody hand, sitting on a pile of boxes, waiting for her guardian angel. Only the angel she is destined to meet is not the one she expects.

You have to forgive me; I am starting to feel the pressure of attempting to address all the ills of man and government without the wisdom such an endeavor demands. It does cause me to admire the vision of our founding fathers all the more. I was taught in school these

were wealthy, racist, evil, businessmen only looking out for themselves. If that were so, they could have created a government that reflected the British Empire or Europe and placed themselves in positions as nobles overseeing the serfs. They did the opposite. In spite of tremendous effort by representatives of slave-owning colonies these courageous men laid the foundation for a government essentially owned by the people. From what I've read, I believe they knew that eventually it would be a government of all the people. I also believe that same mindset that somehow justified slavery lived on to inhibit the rights of those who were eventually freed and ultimately perverted the government to enslave an entire population. What kind of arrogance is required to believe that you alone should decide how people should live, think, and dream?

Our next stop was in a northeastern city where the original revolution began. I had visions of men wearing three-corner hats carrying muskets and declaring "give me liberty or give me death." That was not exactly what we found. In a main square we came upon a park where hung in effigy were two individuals—Virginia Morris and George Clymer. We definitely were not in friendly territory.

After passing through quickly I pondered, "I wonder how long we have been hanging there?"

"Why don't you get out and ask someone?" was Virginia's deadpan response.

I didn't.

We drove down a side street and came upon a woman pushing a baby carriage. Virginia pulled over and got out of the vehicle. After a moment she waved for me to join them.

"This is Madeline. She is willing to talk with us even though she doesn't support our cause."

"Thank you," I stated as she stared at me with a look of someone who is smelling ripe garbage. Hey, that could be a name of a modern rock group—very apropos. Ah, but I digress. Mom looked at me and said, "With all the progress that has been made why do you want to fight the inevitable?"

I attempted to maintain my composure and replied, "Because people are not free to live their lives as they wish."

"People are free as long as they remain within the bounds of the law. Why is that so hard to understand?"

"The government decides how much income I am allowed to have, where I must live, if I am allowed to buy a car, what I can read. That's not freedom."

"I receive a salary from the government that allows me to eat and have shelter. Without that, me and my baby would be on the street. Don't you care about people's lives?"

I counter, "You receive a salary for doing what?"

Silence. Then a response, "As a citizen, I am entitled to a fair living wage."

"And, when the United Nations takes over and changes the rules what will you do then?"

"Most likely enjoy an even a better salary as a citizen of the world."

"You really believe that?"

"I believe that for there to be world peace it must be under one government. When you have umpty-ump governments all looking out for themselves there is bound to be conflict. People die in wars. I guess you don't care about those poor wretches."

"I care about every citizen of the United States of America many of whom are living in such poverty that they may not survive."

"As the president has stated when we enter the global community things will be even better."

"Do you really believe her?"

"Sandra Holmes is a goddess. She has spent her life taking care of the American people. Through tireless efforts she has brought us into the future that will provide peace and tranquility."

"Are you aware of how Sandra Holmes and those in government are living in Wilson?"

"They deserve some rewards. After all they have sacrificed so much for us."

"I'm sorry you feel that way. After the revolution I hope you see that it will bring prosperity back to America and her citizens."

"You know what I wish?" she asked.

I was almost afraid to ask, but plunged in, "What?"

She focused her eyes as she spat, "I wish the real things were hanging from that tree in the square."

Virginia handed the woman back her phone from which she had removed the battery. She informed the sweet lady that the battery would be left on the sidewalk a few blocks up. It would take time for the woman to retrieve and replace the battery before calling the authorities. We were able to disappear into the countryside.

A day later we arrived at New Mecca. For you history buffs, this state is comprised of what had once been Michigan and Wisconsin before

the Reorganization. We had taken Route 90 along the Lake Erie shoreline. Northwest of Toledo we headed north on Route 23 to the state border. It was a two-lane highway in ill-repair. At the border was a checkpoint with armed guards wearing long white robes and carrying AK-47 rifles. Virginia slowed to a stop.

A bearded man walked over to her side of the minivan and wrinkled his nose as if he smelled something vile. "You are not welcome here," he snarled. At the same time a second man approached my side and pointed his weapon at me.

"Why are we not welcome?" Virginia asked innocently which I could tell was a ruse.

"Sharia is practiced here. Infidels are an abomination and unwelcome. Your brazen immodesty betrays you. It is obligatory that women wear hijab or al-khimar. And, you may not drive a vehicle. Your presence would pollute New Mecca." The friendly welcomer stepped back and waving the muzzle of his AK-47 indicated what he wished as he said, "Turn around and leave."

"I see tyranny comes in all forms," Virginia stated as she turned the minivan around. Then she did something that surprised me. She casually got out of the vehicle and walked over to the man who had told us to leave. He gazed at her over his raised chin. When she reached him, in the blink of an eye, she disarmed him and drove the butt of the AK-47 into his solar plexus. He sagged to his knees. Virginia pointed the weapon at the other man and ordered, "Drop it, now." He obeyed. Now, in total control, Virginia walked over and retrieved the other AK-47. She dropped the magazine out of the rifle, cleared the chamber, and tossed it into the bushes. With the weapon poised on the two medieval throwbacks she stated, "Whatever backward belief system allows you to justify the enslavement of women will one day come back and bite you in the ass." She got back in the driver's seat and began driving. When about twenty yards from the angry men she tossed the AK-47 out the window. It broke into pieces. "Oops."

We talked with many people and came to the conclusion that only half of them were aware of the rebellion and out of those approximately 40% were supportive. Walter would smile as it could be projected that one-third of Americans are in favor of the revolution. It is the same as with the original revolution.

What left the greatest impression on me was a family we met on a farm. Their teenage children were laboring in the field working on an irrigation system. When we approached, they both looked at us and

smiled. The boy, who appeared older, walked toward us and asked, “Is it really you?”

I responded, “When I woke up this morning, I was me.”

“This is so exciting. I mean, you’re a part of history and you’re here. Here with us. I don’t believe it.”

“We’ve been traveling around the country finding out what people really think about our rebellion.”

“You’ve got to do it—make America great again.”

“I can see that you support our cause.”

“Support it? Our whole family are praying for it.”

The girl joined us and added, “That program, *The Capitalist*, is it true?”

“It’s not real, but the idea is true. Every citizen has the right to live their life free from government interference. What you and your family grow on this farm you should have a right to sell for the highest price the market will allow. In addition, the government shouldn’t be allowed to take what you’ve earned. That’s what we are fighting for.”

They led us to a well-maintained farmhouse where we met their parents and grandfather. We were warmly welcomed and invited to dinner.

Joseph Doolan, the teens’ father, explained, “If there is one truth about socialism, it is that farmers eat well.” He passed a bowl filled with potatoes. “The government monitors what we grow, how many eggs are produced, milk, livestock, and more. They arrange for shipment and we are given a salary through the SCP system. Of course, officials are busy, incompetent, and corrupt. The figures are never correct. We also have lots of ways to hold back more than enough for ourselves. For those things we don’t produce, we barter for them with other farms and businesses.”

Now, unfortunately most of you will never experience the taste of true farm-fresh food. It is amazing!

Olivia, the mother, added, “We work very hard to maintain this farm. In a way, we are both blessed and stressed. There is food on the table, the government makes sure we have electricity and water because they need what we produce. As a result, we live better than most. Yet, a sword dangles over our heads as we never forget if we don’t deliver, the government would take the farm and we would be left with nothing.”

Granddad barks, “They’ll not take this land without a fight.”

“Now, dad,” Olivia cautioned.

Joseph said, “This rebellion of yours, do you believe it will be

successful?”

I reply, “We have every reason to believe that in a short period of time we will know.”

“So, there are plans. It’s not just bluster, like that of so many past rebellions?”

“It is real and serious and imminent.”

“I predict, if the U.N. takes over, foreign troops will seize this farm and take over operations.”

“Not without shedding a lot of blood,” Grandpa interjects.

“The days of small farms are coming to an end. We survive because we are off the beaten path and still a value. Global corporations will systematically gobble-up every useful patch of ground when the United States no longer exists.”

“Mr. Doolan, things are going to happen that might make you uncomfortable. Maybe, even instill fear. Trust our actions and our motives. In just . . .”

“George,” Virginia stopped me.

I looked at her, nodded, and then finished, “She’s right, I can’t reveal anything at this time.”

The son, David, asked, “Do you need volunteers to fight?”

“We need you to keep this farm productive. If we succeed and make America free again it is imperative that economic engines across this nation fire up and drive us all to prosperity. Our revolution is two-fold. First, remove the shackles of a corrupt government. Then, unbridle the entrepreneurial spirit of the American people. When the bootheel is removed from the throat of the populace great things will happen.”

Grandpa stated, “By God, you do get fired up. What I seen on the telly is not an act. Something tells me you have an ace in your pocket. You don’t have to show me, but you plan to show the world. Good! Shake them monkeys out of the trees. That horse shit they been selling stinks. I hope I live long enough to see the freedom-steeling thieves knocked off their perches.”

Joseph said, “As you can see dad gets fired-up too.”

Then their daughter Rebecca, who is Dee’s age, asked, “Did your ancestor really sign the original *Declaration of Independence*?”

“Yes, and so did Virginia’s.”

“That’s important.”

“Why?”

“Children are a heritage from the Lord a reward from Him. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children born in one’s youth.

Blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with them. Psalm 127: 3-5."

"So, I am an arrow?"

"You both are. Your ancestors were men of courage and wisdom and vision. The spirit of the father and the father's father lives on in the children. It's your destiny."

Well, there you have it. Our tour gave us many insights. So many diverse opinions make it clear that a single message will not produce the desired impact on the population as a whole.

GEORGE: This revolution is getting more and more complex.

DAWN: You knew it would.

GEORGE: No, I didn't.

DAWN: Have it your way.

GEORGE: My way? I don't even know what my way is, anymore.

DAWN: Well, you better figure it out quickly. The clock is ticking.

GEORGE: Dee and I are working on an announcement for the day before the lights go out.

DAWN: I'm looking forward to it.

GEORGE: Have you selected a transition team?

DAWN: I have.

GEORGE: Will you tell me who they are?

DAWN: When the time comes.

GEORGE: I order you to tell me, now.

DAWN: Oh George, when has that ever worked?

GEORGE: There's always a first time.

DAWN: Lol. The government is about to make a special announcement. TTYL.



Richard M Nixon
President: 1969 - 1974

***“All war is a symptom of man’s failure
as a thinking animal.”***

— John Steinbeck

Chapter 37 | THE WAR

Virginia and I arrive at our final destination—Boardman Aerial Airport. It is 2 nautical miles southwest of Henderson, Nebraska. After traveling on long flat roads for miles we drive through Henderson, a town that boasts a population of approximately 1,500 residents. This is rural America. There is an ocean of farms stretching out as far as one can see. The town is quite picturesque with modest houses on large parcels of well-maintained land. Streets are clean and a few pickup trucks can be seen parked in various locations. We leave this quiet town on 93A South, a two-lane road. After a short distance Virginia turns onto a dirt road that bisects the endless farms. There is something very peaceful about the surroundings far from the turmoil elsewhere that is tearing the nation apart. We go over a slight rise and on our left is a dirt driveway that goes between two houses to the airport facility.

Boardman is privately owned and home to six single engine airplanes. On this day there is a seventh aircraft—Pop’s Pilatus PC-12 NG. There isn’t any sign of Pop, but I’m sure he is around. We enter the hanger and find three men, in addition to Pop and my father, watching a monitor. I look at the screen and see a familiar face. It is the woman who was pushing a carriage in that New England town. She has a black eye and bandages on her forehead.

“It was then that he shoved me to the ground and punched me as he tried to pull off my blouse. I could hear my baby crying and pleaded with him to let me go to her. He ignored me. I feared for my life as this sex-crazed animal grabbed at me. Finally, I was able to bring my knee up and push him off of me.”

I watch in horror as she tells of her ordeal. When did this happen? It had to be after we talked with her.

"I was able to get to my baby and screamed for help. It was then that he casually climbed back into the minivan and his accomplice drove off."

The interviewer asks, "Why didn't you immediately call the police?"

"They took the battery out of my phone. I found it later a few blocks away where they had thrown it."

"And, you are certain of the identity of the attacker?"

"Positive. It was that traitor George Clymer."

I was just punched in the stomach. I'm accused of an assault that I didn't do and have no means of defending myself. I made no threatening motions or statements. Why would she be so dishonest? I get my answer.

"When they drove away, did they say anything?"

"Yes. He yelled make America white again and, I can't say the word, blank all socialists and liberals and perverts."

Holy cow! She got in sexual predator, anti-women, racism, homophobia, and violence all in one sentence. I wonder why she didn't accuse me of pulling a gun on her.

The interviewer continues, "You say you feared for your life. Did he show you any kind of weapon?"

"He didn't show it but I could feel the butt of a gun in his pocket. When I broke free, I really expected him to pull it out and shoot me and my baby."

I spoke too soon.

The interviewer turns to the camera and makes a statement, "There you have it, a perfect example of the type of vicious, cowardly, demented animals that are rebelling against the progress and promise of a brighter and safer future as we join the world community. These people have no moral authority to lead our nation. They will stop at nothing to mislead you. They should be locked-up to keep them away from innocent citizens. Don't fall for their lies and false guarantees of freedom. They are using you by trying to turn you against the government and your own beautiful future."

I look at Virginia who isn't showing any reaction. Then I glance at my father and feel embarrassed. Not because I'm guilty, but because he has no way of knowing that I am not guilty. This was a tactic for which I was unprepared.

Then Pop speaks, "When you can't defeat the message—kill the messenger."

I reply, “I guess I shouldn’t be surprised. If they would let people starve, live on the streets, suffer from untreated illness, and die why wouldn’t they stoop to false accusations.”

Virginia walks over to where I’m standing and she says, “You should have shot her.”

“What!?”

“I taught you how to handle a gun, you hit the target—sometimes—she was close-up so you couldn’t miss—maybe. You should have shot her.”

“Red, uh Virginia, nothing happened. You were there.”

“I could have run her down with the minivan,” Virginia ponders.

“What are you talking about? Why aren’t you taking this seriously?”

“All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when we are able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must appear inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when far away, we must make him believe we are near. —Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*. They are attempting to put us on the defensive on a personal level to distract us from a far more important global issue. Our war is with the tyrants in Wilson and manipulators at the United Nations. What they expect is for us to waste valuable time trying to convince the American people we are innocent. If we did that and succeeded, what have we gained?”

“I see your point. But, if people are convinced that I am a sexual predator, won’t my credibility be damaged, therefore, they won’t believe me or support our effort?”

“Liberals have been running every kind of degenerate known for office and the people ignore their crimes because they find them charming, or glib, or are offered more free stuff. They have no shame, but count on their opposition to get tangled in feelings of guilt—real or imagined—and shamed into capitulation. There was a President, early in this century, who never won an election without making false accusations about his opponents. Voters believed him because he was very persuasive. His opponents spent valuable time trying to defend their reputations.”

“So, what do you propose we do?”

“Just what we planned, make a pre—what did you call it—Econoclysmic Day statement. Make light of the charges. Joke about it. Only a callous insensitive boar would joke about such an attack,” she pauses for effect, “or someone who knows it never happened.” Virginia

holds up her phone, “Then we show this.” I forgot she recorded all of our interactions, including the one with that fine honest lovely mother, uh, well I won’t say any more.

Pop interrupts our conversation, “We’re all fueled up. If you felons would kindly board the aircraft, the senior Mr. Clymer would like to make his first takeoff attempt.”

This day just keeps getting better and better.

I listen as Pop gives my father final instructions. “This is a good solid asphalt runway that is 2,940 feet long and 24 feet wide. That gives you plenty of time to lift off and if you drift a little it won’t matter. Set your altimeter at 1,720 feet elevation. We’re taking off at thirty-five degrees so we’ll be headed northeast. Make a slow turn to the right and head almost due south at one-eighty-five degrees. We don’t have a flight plan and if we stay low enough will go unnoticed. If, when we approach Texas airspace, we have any company up there, I’ll take over.”

My father is in heaven. I only hope we all don’t end up there.

Later, in the STUS offices in Austin, Texas Dee, Walter, Virginia, and I discuss what needs to be included in our message to the American people. Yes, we got there. It is decided that both Virginia and I should deliver the statement. We are discussing it when a government announcement comes on the news channel.

“Presidential Address: Citizens of the United States, I come to you today to deliver terrible news. Rebel forces, under the direction of George Clymer, have attacked government facilities in the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. With the use of two massive truck bombs, one outside the courthouse and the other outside of STUS headquarters, they caused extensive damage and ignited fires. At present, the death toll is two-hundred-sixty-seven and close to one-thousand injured. Sadly, these figures are expected to rise. No warning was given, therefore, both facilities were occupied by hard-working innocent civilians who will not be going home to their families tonight. In an ironic twist, Dorothy Clymer, the mother of the rebel leader was in the courthouse at the time of the attack. She died at the scene. This monster who wants honest citizens to follow him killed his own mother. Do not give in to these murderous thugs—resist.” She raises her right arm with a clenched fist. “Resist those who would destroy our dream of world peace. We will bring them to justice. I promise you that.”

My first thought is that I have to comfort Dee. She is sitting in stunned silence. I walk over and put my arm around her shoulders. She places her hand on mine. I say softly, “She was the only one of us who

was truly innocent. Whatever you do, do not blame yourself. If anyone is guilty it's me."

With wet eyes, yet no tears, Dee looks up at me and says, "I don't blame myself and I don't blame you. I don't even blame the revolution. In an odd way, I blame mom for not escaping when she could. How could she have been so naïve?"

"She never wished to get involved with politics." As those words leave my mouth, I can't help but remember what Dawn once wrote, "Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you! —Pericles (430 B.C.). I add, "She believed that by staying out of the political arena she would be immune to attack. Remain invisible and remain safe. Unfortunately, I brought a terrible light into our home. For that I am sorry. As to everything else that I have done I have no regrets."

Dee and I hug. No comment.

I find my father in the break room sitting at a small table with his head in his hands. He hears me approach and looks up. For a brief moment we simply stare at each other. In silence we share an unbearable pain. Then he speaks, "George, I tried to convince your mother to come with me when we had the opportunity to leave. If I had only been more persuasive, she would be sitting at this table right now." He gazes at an empty chair, "Maybe, I should have been more forceful. Maybe, I should have been a better husband and physically dragged her with me. At least she would be alive and able to hate me. I'm sorry that I failed to protect your mother."

That was totally unexpected. My father, who blamed me for practically everything in the past, now doesn't seem to blame me at all. He is shouldering guilt that I cannot fully comprehend. I want to comfort him, but I don't know how. When I entered the room, I was prepared to apologize for causing so much pain. Now, I'm unprepared to take away his pain. I put my hand on his shoulder and say softly, "Dee and I need you now more than ever."

My father looks up and nods.

I find Virginia and Walter in an office looking at her tablet. When I enter, she looks up and says, "George, I'm sorry. It seems these people will stop at nothing. If you need some time . . ."

"No! When this thing is over and three-hundred-million people are set free, I'll have plenty of time to grieve and feel guilt."

"Son," Walter starts, which throws me off, "I've watched you with a critical eye. You're young, irreverent, inexperienced, irritating, and

headstrong. But, you're the right man for the job." A wry smile punctuates his comment. However, Walter wasn't finished. He asks, "Have you ever heard of Audie Murphy?"

I shake my head.

"Of course not, that was pre-Reorganization history. Audie Leon Murphy was born June 20, 1925 the son of poor Texas sharecroppers. During World War II, at the age of seventeen, he lied about his age and presented a falsified birth certificate in order to join the army. He was small and thin and not very muscular so he took a lot of ribbing from fellow soldiers. That was until he fought in nine major campaigns in Europe, was wounded three times, and ended up the most decorated soldier of World War II. He was a recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. In addition, he received a battlefield commission to second lieutenant. War in those days was brutal, face-to-face, and disorganized at times requiring unique individuals to take on leadership roles for which they might not have been trained or assigned. Audie Murphy, a teenager, in the worst of conditions led men older than he to victory. It was reported that he killed over 240 enemy soldiers and wounded many others. While those candy-asses who call themselves leaders today would condemn him for killing so many, they just killed more innocent civilians than that in Charlotte for public relations reasons."

"You believe the government blew up those buildings as a stunt?"

"We aren't positive," Virginia answers. "We are trying to get more facts. Everything points that way. One fact we do know is no group associated with our effort was involved."

"They killed all those people and my mother to sway public opinion," I think out loud. "How heartless can these people be?"

Walter answers, "They let millions suffer and die over decades to support their hedonistic lifestyle. Just because they aren't killed overtly or en masse doesn't mean they weren't victims of government policies. The depth of their depravity would astound you. I am sorry about your mother. I also stand by my statement that you might be young, but are the right man for this endeavor."

I appreciate Walter Tize's comments and support. Yet, there are so many doubts in my mind, I have to turn to a familiar contact.

DAWN: I am so sorry to hear about your mother.

GEORGE: Thank you. I guess that I'm still numb about it.

DAWN: Completely understandable.

GEORGE: I'm struggling with two levels of guilt. One for being the catalyst that caused my mother's murder. And, two for finding myself

focused on the rebellion when I should be mourning.

DAWN: It takes a tremendous amount of inner strength to remain a leader when personal loss is involved.

GEORGE: In two days our rebellion lightning strikes, so I don't have the luxury of time to get my head straightened out.

DAWN: Your assessment is correct. Your role is essential. Your pain and guilt have to wait.

GEORGE: Agreed. But, somehow I feel like an insensitive lout.

DAWN: Quite the opposite. You are putting the needs of a nation ahead of your own.

GEORGE: I don't have any choice.

The conversation ends and Virginia and I are in front of the camera. We are about to make a statement about the upcoming event. An attempt at scripting quickly turned into a list of subjects to address extemporaneously.

"For those who may not know me, my name is George Clymer. Beside me is Virginia Morris. We are the faces of the rebellion. It is clear that socialism has effectively destroyed the United States of America. A vast majority of you are living near or below poverty levels while the elite chosen class in Wilson and in state governments are living lavish opulent lifestyles. That alone is reason to fight back. However, with the announcement of a pending surrender of American sovereignty to a global government run by the United Nations a revolution to save the United States is imperative—now."

Virginia takes over, "Tomorrow the true rebellion will begin. Events will take place that will confuse and alarm you. Please, remain open-minded and optimistic. Every effort has been made to make a transition back to a constitutional republic of the people and for the people with the least amount of hardship. That doesn't mean that there won't be some suffering as you adjust to a new government. This will be minimized."

My turn, "The government is desperate to stay in power. They don't understand that such an option no longer exists. A transition will take place. You have been told a lot of lies about Virginia and me and our organization. It is their effort to disparage our message of individual liberty. Don't fall for it. Join us and become a part of the new dawn of opportunity."

Virginia adds, "They accused George of a sexual attack. I was there and he did nothing. He was polite and listened to the accuser's point-of-view. We both support freedom of speech. When we left she

was fine. What the lying government didn't realize is that I videotaped the conversation. She shows the entire conversation right up to Madeline's final words, "You know what I wish? I wish the real things were hanging from that tree." Virginia then declares, "We also had nothing to do with the Charlotte bombings. The current administration ruthlessly killed hundreds of people, including George's mother, to convince you that we are bloodthirsty and cruel. Only evil people would do such a thing."

In conclusion I state, "We are all Americans—let's keep it that way. Let freedom ring."

A video of the Liberty Bell tolling follows.

Once the new message airs, I contact President Sandra Holmes.

GEORGE: President Holmes it is time to resign.

HOLMES: No, you murderer rapist it is time for you to surrender to the authorities.

GEORGE: Events are going to happen that will remove you from office. It will go a lot better if you and your administration turn over the reins of government peacefully.

HOLMES: I do not respond to empty threats.

GEORGE: You can leave office and continue living a comfortable life in Europe. If you refuse, by tomorrow that option will no longer be available.

HOLMES: The Secret Service are quite good at protecting people. They also are quite adept at apprehending those who threaten public officials.

GEORGE: They cannot protect you.

HOLMES: Stop playing your silly games and accept the future.

GEORGE: I could say the same. Please, don't ignore this opportunity. In spite of everything, I would like this to go smoothly with the least upheaval.

HOLMES: Contact me tomorrow evening when I'm still in office. Better yet come and see me. We'll all be waiting.

GEORGE: Remember, I tried. Let freedom ring.

E-Day arrives. Econoclysmic Day is executed in silence. There are no bombs, gunshots, sirens, or trumpets to announce the shutdown of the entire Social Compensation Program operation. Commerce in America stops in stages until nothing is taking place. Prophet did her job. I go on the air live on every channel and station available. "Americans, do not be alarmed. We have disabled the Social Compensation Program to transition to a new currency and federal government. If you listen carefully and follow instructions these changes should have only

moderate impact on your day-to-day life. International Monetary Units will no longer be accepted anywhere in the United States of America. The new currency will be expressed in dollars. At present, there aren't any dollars in circulation. This is by design. Over the next few days any IMUs that you have in the system will be converted to dollars on a one-to-one basis. You lose nothing. In fact, you gain as the individual income tax has been abolished. What you earn—you keep."

"If you operate a business your cash reserves will be shown in dollars and you can immediately begin commercial operations accepting dollars. International businesses will have to convert IMUs to dollars if operating in the United States. The process has already been developed and is available for use."

"The federal government has been shut down in terms of financial capability. All federal funds in the treasury have been confiscated. As a result, all federal contracts have been cancelled. That is part of the pain that unfortunately is necessary. New projects and contracts will be developed after the transition is complete. All federal employees and elected officials are now terminated. Go home. Military personnel remain instated and will be compensated. It is our hope that the joint chiefs of staff will maintain discipline and ensure that the sovereignty of the United States is protected. You will act as a tribunal with that objective in mind."

"I requested ex-President Sandra Holmes' resignation, but she has refused. As she no longer has the power of the purse, she will now become a private citizen. If she resists and chooses to use military force to stop our rebellion it will prove fruitless as she has no idea what to attack. Furthermore, the economy has been converted and is no longer under control of those in Wilson."

"America will become a representative republic once more. The federal government will be responsible for those interstate and international services that protect us and bind us together. States will have a greater voice in their own affairs, as well as in the federal government. We will not let the federal government become too large to control which previously led to the tyranny we have all endured. We will provide more on states in the weeks ahead."

"Our economy will be a free-market system with limited regulation. This will produce a rapidly growing economy that offers greater opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and prosperity. We know these great things will take time and you need to put food on your table tonight. For a period of one year all citizens, with the exception of

ex-government employees and elected officials, will continue to receive dollar payments equal to 110% of what you had been receiving in the Social Compensation Program before recent reductions. There is a catch. This is a zero-interest loan to get you through the transition. It will have to be paid back. Therefore, the quicker you find employment and become self-sufficient the lower the amount that must be repaid. For those who cannot work there will be programs to help. This may sound cruel but these welfare programs will not provide a level of lifestyle that is so comfortable that people don't care to leave. That very thing is what led our nation into strangling socialism."

"Government employees and elected officials will receive the lowest payment level in addition to their cash reserves being confiscated. This is not punishment. Due to their contacts and business acumen we expect them to find jobs quickly."

"There will be more as we announce a transitional government team to lead the nation until fair and honest elections can be held. And, a new *Constitution* is written. People of America let freedom ring!"

Once I'm off I receive a message.

HOLMES: You son-of-a-bitch!

GEORGE: I tried as hard as I could to warn you.

HOLMES: You won't get away with this.

GEORGE: We already have. The control of all cash flow in the nation essentially provides the power to govern.

HOLMES: The international community will not stand for it.

GEORGE: Virginia, you remember her, has spoken with numerous world leaders and they have agreed to not interfere. Perhaps they realize we might have other technological powers that would put them at risk. Not sure how they got that idea.

HOLMES: You arrogant ass. I still have the media and will turn the people against you.

GEORGE: You've been in government long enough to know that the people will not act against their own interests. They are still receiving compensation and have visions of a bright future filled with promise. Do you honestly believe they will turn their backs on that?

HOLMES: You'll bankrupt the nation without income taxes.

GEORGE: On the contrary, the amount of funds from the treasury and all of the accounts of greedy politicians more than covers the total cost for one year. A staggering sum I might add has been squirreled away by you benevolent leaders.

HOLMES: The Keep? It's untraceable.

GEORGE: Transactions are non-traceable, available funds not so much. But, you don't have to be concerned, all government official funds have been seized.

HOLMES: Instead of tearing everything down, why don't you join us? Become a part of our society. Once we join the world government you could have power and riches beyond your imagination.

GEORGE: As George Washington told Colonel Lewis Nicola of Pennsylvania when he suggested that Washington take control and make himself king, "If I am not deceived in myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes were more disagreeable."

There is a long gap in the conversation. Then a question.

HOLMES: If I formally resign, can I have my finances reinstated?

GEORGE: That would be impossible. However, I will check to see if there is any way that a one-time payment could be made as a gesture of good will.

HOLMES: What about the Keep?

GEORGE: From what I've been told, all government personnel who voluntarily resign will have full access to the services of the Keep. Their transactions will remain confidential and non-trackable. Credit limits will apply.

HOLMES: Get back to me with a decision on payment.

The conversation abruptly ends.

Virginia enters the room looking at her tablet. "I've just been informed that demonstrations have popped up all across the country."



Gerald Ford

President: 1974 - 1977

“If you look at all forms of collectivism, be it communism or fascism, people are reduced to animals.”

— Jack Larson

Chapter 38 | THE FARM

“Without question, it is essential that we govern from within the United States or else we will be seen as a government in exile,” Walter states. “That’s not a good thing and will leave us vulnerable.”

Something tells me I’ll be seeing Pop once again—really soon. I wonder if he will have his co-pilot with him.

Virginia comments, “Security is a primary concern. Even though eliminating us does not give them control of Prophet or the economy, it would be a powerful propaganda tool, as well as open the door for the government to claim the rebellion had been put down. They could promise the people anything and resort to old technology to deliver it.”

I point out, “If the international community backs the previous government with unlimited IMUs that would cause a problem.”

“Chaos and civil war might be the result,” Virginia says.

“We have to expect some opposition from the United Nations, foreign governments, and ousted politicians. Not to mention citizens who remain loyal to the socialist government. The fact that they don’t have funds doesn’t preclude them from operating on credit and offering future influence. There is also the potential for a corrupt foreign entity to attempt to fill the void through force—economic or military,” I declare, adding, “We better work mighty fast.”

Walter details a message he received from Dawn, “We are to immediately proceed to Wildcat Creek Farm in South Carolina. There we will participate in the first session of the New Continental Congress of the United States.” As an aside he comments, “Don’t look at me. I don’t make up these names.” He continues, “All members are expected to be there by tomorrow.”

“Where’s Pop?” I ask.

“Not this time,” Virginia states. “We are going by corporate jet and will be met at the airport.”

“Is that safe?”

“General Doolittle assures me he has mustered sufficient troops and equipment to provide escort and protect the farm.”

“What is Wildcat Creek Farm?” I ask.

“Have you ever heard of patent land?” Walter asks.

“No.”

“I’ll explain. A land patent is a land grant made patent.”

Blank stare.

“It is made possible when a sovereign government’s Chief Executive—king, President, emperor, or other monarch—signs a land grant from that government and seals that grant by making it patent which means permanent, forever, and irreversible. The term ‘land’ when used in relation to ‘land patent’ actually means ‘dominion’ which can’t lawfully be seized for debt or taxes. There are many cases where, before the Reorganization, the United States Supreme Court supported the fact that land patent certifies absolute and supreme title to land. There are no cases where the courts ever ruled against a properly obtained land patent. The land patent specifically grants the described land to the party named on the patent and to their heirs and their assigns forever.”

Walter smiles at my continued blank stare. I hear what he is saying and get the main idea, but remain a little foggy.

“Land, in this case, is not defined as the Earth’s surface. It extends to the center of the Earth and the heavens above. It also is not confined to solids, but may encompass within its bounds such things as gases, and liquids. Ultimately, land is simply an area of three-dimensional space whose position is defined by natural or imaginary points located by reference to the earth’s surface. However, land is not the contents of the space such as buildings, cattle, and other moveable objects. Someone may lay claim to a vehicle on your patent land and have legal rights to it. The land remains immutable.”

I can see that.

“Ownership of land is misunderstood. People think they own their land because they paid for it and they have a Warranty Deed—however, that is not enough to establish land ownership. The founding fathers and their neighbors originally received their land grants, Allodial Title, from the King of England, and were recognized as an independent people, each possessing their individual sovereign right to self-government. They chose to exercise their sovereign rights to form a Constitutional

Republic. In doing so, through the *United States Constitution*, they granted a very limited portion of their respective sovereign authority to the government, so that it could exercise a collective sovereignty from the people to carry out its assigned responsibilities. This was also true with individual states.

I interpret out loud what I understand, "So, landowners were sovereign as it applies to their land. Taken to the extreme, there were countless little kingdoms ruled by owners with absolute power. Yet, they were wise enough to realize the only way for these individual entities to successfully operate together was as a unified nation of laws. Which would require the surrender of some of their absolute power to a clearly defined government in which they have a significant voice."

"Correct."

"In the long run when the wheelbarrow started down that slope it picked up speed as it gobbled up all of their sovereign power."

"Sadly, the founding fathers miscalculated by assuming men of honor would serve the nation."

"It's like owning a big house and allowing a stranger to live in one room out of kindness. Next thing you know they are utilizing numerous rooms and eventually take over the whole house and throw you out. You wonder how it happened and have no power to stop it. You're out in the cold."

"In truth, the people never granted state or federal governments full sovereignty. That would require that each of the land-owning people knowingly, willingly and voluntarily giving up their land ownership. The result would be a monarchy, or in the case of the United Nations an oligarchy, with complete control over them. A critical point as the fools who took over the government with the Reorganization never seized private land ownership outright. They were too busy lining their pockets."

"Then most people still own their property?" I ask.

"People think they own their land because they purchase 'real estate' and once they pay the mortgage by contract, they receive a warranty deed. However, a warranty deed is considered a 'color of title' by the courts. Color of title can mean 'that which in appearance is title, but which in reality is no title.' If brought into question, a warranty deed cannot stand against a land patent. The Land Patent is permanent and cannot be changed by the government after its issuance. 'Where the United States has parted with title by a patent legally issued and upon surveys made by itself and approved by the proper department, the title

so granted cannot be impaired by any subsequent survey made by the government for its own purposes.’ That is the legal position.”

“So, this Wildcat Creek Farm is patent land?”

“It was originally given to the owners through a grant by King George III in 1763. Over two-hundred-fifty acres have remained in the family through the centuries and was patented in 1998. On the property are two houses and a barn. The barn has been converted into a meeting space with offices on the second level. It will act as the seat of government until Wilson is relinquished and renamed Washington, D.C.”

“We must remember that we won the first round and have a strong position, but this is also the most dangerous time. There will be those so full of rage and hate that they won’t understand the ramifications of harming us or any of the transition team. Without our direction, Prophet might cease to operate the payment system or the Keep. It is imperative that we move with caution,” Virginia warns.

Our STUS corporate jet lands at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport at noon. The pilot taxis to a remote part of the airport where two large SUVs and two military vehicles wait. There appear to be sufficient military personnel to provide safe passage to the farm. Even though, I can’t help but look around to see if there are any threats. None are obvious.

Then one soldier announces loudly, “Boogey, Sierra, Echo approximately 3 point zero feet.”

Almost immediately, another soldier shoulders an odd-looking rifle and fires. A small rocket emerges so fast it seems invisible except for a slight vapor streak. The object of concern grows nearer and suddenly explodes. The little missile did its job.

I ask the soldier, “What was it?”

“Drone, sir.”

OK, this was a dangerous situation that should bring forth certain concerns and emotions. Instead, I’m struck by his response. I’ve never been called sir, before. Don’t know that I deserve or earned it. How odd that I could have been killed by an incoming drone and I’m thinking about being called sir. This young man, who by the way is noticeably older than me, reflected a steady unshakable poise, fired quickly, and saved our lives. I should be calling him sir.

An officer orders, “Please, board the vehicles so that we can get moving.” They split us up so that Walter and Virginia are in the first SUV while Dee and I are in the second.

“Well brother, here’s another fine mess you’ve gotten us into,”

Dee states.

I laugh, "Where did that come from?"

"It was a line spoken by Oliver Hardy in an old, old black and white movie named *Sons of The Desert*. I watched it last night when I couldn't sleep."

"How did you . . ." I say, "Let me see your tablet." There it is Suicide Queen. Dee has an STUS, you can go anywhere, tablet. I should have known."

"It was really funny. The two husbands want to go to a convention in Chicago, but their wives don't want them to go. Oh, their lodge is called Son's of The Desert. Then the bigger guy fakes an illness and his friend brings in a doctor, who is actually a veterinarian, to tell the wives he needs rest without them and suggests a cruise to Honolulu. The wives agree. So, off they go to Chicago. When they are on the way home the ship they were supposed to be on sinks. Their wives fear they drowned. To console themselves they go to a movie. In those days, movie theaters used to show newsreels and the wives see their husbands acting like fools at the Chicago convention. At the same time the big guy reads in the newspaper about the ship sinking and knows they are in trouble. They hide in the attic but eventually get arrested as burglars. Once they are home with their wives Stan, the skinny guy, confesses and is forgiven. Oliver, the fat guy, lies and gets everything in the kitchen thrown at him. In the end the big guy blames the little guy. Hence the statement, 'Well, here's another nice mess you've gotten me into.' It's really hilarious."

"When was that movie made?" I ask with a smile.

"1933, over 140 years ago," Dee answers, then adds solemnly, "America lost its sense-of-humor along the way."

Our motorcade—if you can call it that—moves away from the airport along ill-maintained roads. The SUV is comfortable but every once-in-a-while it hits a veritable cavern and bounces.

Dee asks, "What is going to happen next?"

"A good question. I guess we will have to wait until the first session of the New Continental Congress to determine where we are and what we need to do during the transformation." I think for a moment and add, "It would surely go more smoothly if the present administration formally resigns and turns the government over to the rebellion."

"That's not going to happen."

"What makes you say that?"

"Because, they still don't think they lost."

We arrive at the gate to Wildcat Creek Farm where armed guards

check the vehicles for whatever they check for. After a few moments we drive up the path to the future. At the main house I'm amazed at the number of soldiers that are present. General Doolittle did a lot. Sorry, I couldn't help myself. It must have been one of those ruts that rattled my brain.

An hour later, after placing my things in my room and freshening up, Walter, Virginia, and I are standing outside the meeting room. Walter and I are wearing dark suits which were waiting in our rooms and Virginia is wearing a business dress. She has legs! The door opens and we enter. Seated at the large round table is a woman. She has long blond hair, deep blue eyes, and appears to be in her thirties. She's wearing a robin's-egg blue silk blouse with what I suppose is a black skirt that is hidden by the table. I recognize the gold bracelet on her right wrist from our brief encounter at the bridge with the bats in Austin, Texas. In front of her a name plate indicates she is Dawn Eastwood. Eastwood? I know that I've heard that name before. When she sees me she smiles, but doesn't speak.

On Dawn's right sits an old woman who appears in very good health. Her high cheekbones and braided grey hair give the appearance of being a Native American. Her name plate confirms that fact—Neha Crying Wolf. That name I recognize as the last living member of the founders of STUS. When I come to this conclusion, I also have another revelation—Dawn Eastwood must be the great granddaughter of STUS founder Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood. To Dawn's left sits an older black gentleman with thin grey hair and old-fashioned glasses. His demeanor is that of someone who is accustomed to being in a leadership position. The name Dr. Henry L. Rice confirms my opinion. To his left is a young Asian man in his late twenties. He is busy on his tablet. His name is Soo Bon-Hwa. To the right of Neha Crying Wolf is another female of Hispanic descent. Her name is Alessandra Ramos-Ortega. Including us, that is eight of the nine members of the New Continental Congress. One chair remains empty with no name on the table.

We all sit and Dawn addresses the group, "I would like to welcome you and appreciate your agreeing to participate in this extremely important endeavor. Our final member is on the way and should arrive at any time. While we wait, I'd like each of us to introduce ourselves. I'll begin. My name is Dawn Eastwood. My great grandfather was Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood one of the founders of STUS. He died before I was born at the age of 86. His son—my grandfather—died when I was six-years-old and my father died during the six-year plague

between 2047 and 2053 when I was eleven. Even though I didn't know these men all that well, I studied their writing, speeches, and other videos. They posthumously instilled in me a love for our nation that drove me to study its history. Not the fabricated history of the statists, but the factual history that one has to dig for in archives and dusty attics. As I gained a clearer picture of the philosophy and the intent of the founding fathers, I witnessed a transcendental vision of the role of government. Rather than rule the people, they saw government as a tool of the people used to protect their rights rather than define them. I also found idealism, kindness, altruism, strength, and nobility among a majority of the people. Unfortunately, I also discovered evidence of the slow infringement of people's rights by a group of characters I defined as ardent authoritarians who sought personal gain at the expense of individual liberty. It was difficult to determine what personality trait would cause them to see the world from such a perverse perspective. Where we see freedom as enriching, they see it as allowing man's basest instincts to come to the surface. Freedom of speech is seen as a means of spreading hate. When we celebrate success, they view it as a reflection of one group taking advantage of another. We see the individual as sovereign, they see people as property of the state. It is impossible for us to understand how they think that way as it is equally impossible for them to see our side. The only positive factor is that they are a very small minority. My great grandfather, grandfather, and father dreamed of a day when the United States of America is once-more that shining city upon a hill. That phrase came from John Winthrop who wrote it to describe the America he imagined. He journeyed here on what we'd call a little wooden boat looking for a home that would be free. I have spent my life working in the shadows to facilitate what we are embarking upon today.

Neha Crying Wolf speaks next in a soft but stronger voice than one would expect from a 98-year-old woman. "It was my honor to help plant the seeds of a future America that is destined to eclipse the past. At the time, we were all aware that the fruit of our labors would not be our reward. Yet, we knew in nature, the tree you plant lives long after you no longer enjoy its shade. Now, in this room we hold new seeds. Let us choose wisely so that future generations will be nourished by the harvest."

Dr. Henry L. Rice stands. He has the appearance of a well-bred gentleman of means who is confident and somewhat serious. Slowly, he looks at each person sitting at the table. The impression is that he wishes to remember the faces of those who are about to write history. When

he speaks his voice is deep, intonation clear, and impassioned. “Outside that door—people are dying. From lack of food, shelter, and opportunity. When I became Chancellor of Texas A&M University, I had to walk a fine line between pre-Reorganization traditional conservative education and federally ordained indoctrination. Students were being taught to serve the state. A state that in no way returns the favor. America once was called the great melting pot. Allow me to quote Israel Zangwill from his play *The Melting Pot* first staged in 1908 depicting the life of a Russian Jewish immigrant family, the Quixanos.”

“Miss Revendal asked—and I want to explain to her what America means to me.... When I am writing my American symphony, it seems like thunder crashing through a forest full of bird songs.... America is God’s Crucible, the great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups, with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries. But you won’t be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God you’ve come to—these are the fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.... the real American has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible, I tell you—he will be the fusion of all races, perhaps the coming superman. Ah, what a glorious Finale for my symphony—if I can only write it.”

“The fires of God. That is what we are holding in our hands in this room at this moment—the fires of God. We must create an American identity that is embraced by all, understood by all, valued by all, and lived by all. Ancient Roman citizens knew what it was to be Roman. Do Americans know what it is to be American? Early twenty-first century identity politics spilled the great American melting pot into the dirt separating its ingredients. Satan attempted to extinguish the fire of God through the acts of evil men. Thunder crashing through a forest full of bird songs seems a dramatic metaphor. Yet, it speaks of power—a power we yield today. Let us pray that our finite minds can serve an infinite power.”

Alessandra Ramos-Ortega quips, "You expect me to follow that?"

"My apologies," Dr. Rice offers. His stern countenance allows a friendly smile to briefly escape.

"In my courtroom, I often throw out cases on technicalities. It is the only way to prevent an injustice. The present judicial system is designed to promote fear among citizens in order to keep them from wandering outside strict government guidelines. A man is brought before me for questioning a government ordinance charged with sedition. The penalty can be as severe as twenty-years in a work camp. I question the District Attorney and ask if there is a recording of his statement. He offers a transcript, but admits the original recording was on a private citizen's phone and they erased it. The case is thrown out and justice is served. Every day I have to dole out injustice in order to remain in my position to help as many people as I can. At this time in history, America has less freedom than feudal England. This has got to change."

The youngest member of the group, with the exception of me of course, Soo Bon-Hwa introduces himself, "Prophet sends her best wishes and commitment to assisting your cause. In a manner-of-speaking I am her liaison." He turns toward Dr. Rice and states, "Prophet is the lightning that will cause your thunder." Soo Bon-Hwa smiles, "I exist on a different plane. Hyper-computational design requires complete immersion into digital hypothetical transmutations devoid of external interference. You could say I am both one dimensional and non-dimensional at the same time. I regret that I will be of little assistance in the realm of philosophical, geopolitical, or even interpersonal thinking. My role, as I see it, will be to bring the technological element into perspective integrating human intelligence with advanced intelligence."

Wow, I think human intelligence just got second billing.

Walter is about to speak when the final member of the group enters the room. There before my very eyes is David Trufire! I grin. I've got to stop doing that it makes me look like a goofball. Upon seeing me he states, "The story of my arrest and execution has been greatly exaggerated."

Before he sits, David continues, "You all know me. I've been the face of STUS. As such, out of necessity, I had an extensive profile with past and present administrations. Obviously, we needed them to focus their attention elsewhere while our plans were being developed and brought to fruition. My arrest was real. Fortunately, the arresting officer was Detective Andy Muller." He glances at me and asks, "You do remember Detective Muller?" I nod and keep myself from grinning.

David continues, “Muller feigned a tough interrogation and ultimately recommended that I be brought to a high-security facility. I never reached there having been shot trying to escape. The two officers responsible brought me here. They need a place to remain out-of-sight.” David looks around the table, “We have a great deal to do. The war is far from over. Government troops found and entered one of our faux computer facilities. Suicide Queen left them literally with zero.” Soo Bon-Hwa snickers. Computer humor, it’s a developed taste. “We have millions of allies and supporters throughout the nation. The challenge will be identifying those who oppose us or are deep state loyalists. All is going well so let’s start Saving The United States.”

Now, Walter gets to speak, “Damn. I don’t have any colorful stories or great insights. I’m an analyst. I digest and interpret facts, make projections, and apologize when I get it wrong. At present, I have a team gathering input on the reaction to events by the United States population. Preliminary results indicate three things. First, a good number of citizens have taken a wait and see position. They are still receiving their Social Compensation Program payments therefore their lives have not changed dramatically. Next, there is a growing group of supporters becoming more outspoken about freedom and liberty and opportunity. A good sign is the high percentage of law enforcement officers and military who are supporting a peaceful and orderly transition of power. The third trend, and most likely the most important, are the number of cities where socialist supporters are protesting. They include San Francisco, Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, Boston, and as would be expected Wilson. Strategically, we need to convert rather than confront these groups. What was it Joan Crawford said, ‘buckle up it’s going to be a bumpy ride.’”

Virginia raises her arm and makes her statement, “Virginia Morris—security.”

That’s it?

I’m up. “I became involved with this movement after discovering a printed history book and being exposed to real American history—not the dribble the government peddles.” I look at Dr. Price whose stare makes me uncomfortable. He is a highly educated man and is listening to my every word. Therefore, my inner brain warns every word better be pithy, intelligent, and grammatically correct. I continue, “If you raise a wild animal in captivity, most likely they don’t realize it’s captivity. That is their normal. Generations of Americans have been raised in this new normal called socialism. Just like the serfs of medieval Europe, they

believe this is how it must be. That is why the government has tried so hard to eradicate pre-Reorganization American history or to rewrite it. There is a coming awareness that will dramatically change America. Just like that wild animal must discover the forest or the jungle, Americans must hear that thunder, see infinite possibilities, and taste freedom—many for the first time. Was it Divine intervention that gave the founders of STUS the idea of slowly taking control of the instruments of the economy?” I glance at Neha Crying Wolf who was there. “Can we replicate the miracle that was created three-hundred years ago, or should we? Will we learn from history what to do and what not to do?” This time my attention is on Dawn. She conspired to bring me into this rebellion, acted as a confidante, manipulated my life, and drove me crazy. “We have a great burden of responsibility to bear. In this room the future of America and in turn mankind will be shaped. I often wondered what the founding fathers felt and thought. Now, I know.”



Jimmy Carter
President: 1977 - 1981

“Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.”

— Sigmund Freud

Chapter 39 | THE RESISTANCE

“My fellow Americans I come to you today to ask you to stand up for our democracy. You, the people, have a right to the leaders you elected—not some conquering interlopers who you cannot trust. Don’t be deceived. Don’t surrender. Resist! Resist with all your power. Refuse their worthless dollars. Interfere every way possible with their illegal government operations. Protest everywhere. Tear down all that is around you. Together we can rebuild a magnificent nation once these deplorable pretenders are expelled. Bring the fight to any who support this illegitimate group of unholy devils. Force any who deem to accept them to flee. Chase them through the streets and crush them. Never accept this abomination. America is your country take it back and return it to the leaders who have taken care of you and your families, who have protected you, and who love you. Under duress, I am forced to resign, but I do so for you kind citizens. Until I return to my rightful position, keep hope alive.”

“So much for any kind of financial deal with her,” Walter spits at the monitor. Not literally. A little dignity here.

Virginia observes, “She did state that she will resign. Of course, that is after she called for violent revolt.”

“This is interesting,” Dee says as she looks at her tablet.

We all gather around her and watch. A small group of resisters wearing black hoodies and ski masks are shown on the screen attempting to surround two people ringing bells. At first, the couple appear frightened. Ten against two are not good odds. In addition, the two are middle-aged and the ten are young and aggressive. One of the young punks grabs a bell from the female. However, before a single tone can ring out a crowd of more than sixty citizens surround the resisters. With

nowhere to go and heavily outnumbered the punks raise their arms as if to surrender. One tries to break through the throng but is tripped. In a unique twist, the larger group does not physically attack the hooligans. Instead, they pull off their ski masks and hoodies to reveal the terrified faces of cowards. Dee laughs when she sees what happens next. The erstwhile marauders are sent packing in their underwear.

We surf other sources and find similar situations where resistance fizzles out. As I search, I am constantly hearing bells. The entire nation must be bathed in melodic tones. Let freedom ring is music to my ears and an opera to be written by the people, for the people. Let me say this now. If I sound like an idealist—I am. Haven't you been paying attention? Deep within me I believe there are more good people than bad ones. The fact is that we all start out with a blank slate. What we are taught and experience shapes us. That doesn't mean that there isn't some basic "self" that makes us unique. Some are born with artistic talent, others music, math, language, athletic acumen, empathy, and more. Still, with proper direction, in my opinion, every human being has the potential to be worthwhile. I guess my father and mother did something right. The thought of my mother slaps reality back into my mind. I still will have to mourn later.

I receive a message.

HOLMES: Mr. Clymer, we must discuss terms.

GEORGE: Your speech shut that door.

HOLMES: Harsh, but necessary. That speech was for the international community. If they believe I am stirring up resistance they will delay any actions they might be considering. I did it as a favor to you.

GEORGE: I find that hard to believe.

HOLMES: Think about it. What did I gain?

GEORGE: A last attempt to stay in office.

HOLMES: As they say, that ship has sailed.

GEORGE: Then why not announce a peaceful orderly transfer of power?

HOLMES: Because it isn't. It was a rebellion. A magnificently planned and executed single stroke that obviously was in the making for years. I can call for resistance, but little will happen. The American people have been neutered and trained to obey. They will go where you point them. You are their bellwether. Ring your bell and lead. Beware, the world is watching.

GEORGE: What action might the international community take?

HOLMES: Wait and see.

GEORGE: It appears that you know something that you won't share with us.

HOLMES: I know a great deal. I've also been told a great deal by foreign leaders. The path ahead is filled with peril. Watch where you tread.

GEORGE: You are not making a case for negotiating for appealing terms.

HOLMES: Quite the contrary. I have information of value. I also still wield a great deal of power. My negotiating position is far stronger than you realize. You are a novice in this arena. There is a great deal that I could teach you. That is with a highly generous offer.

GEORGE: I will bring it to the New Continental Congress.

HOLMES: Catchy name.

The conversation ends.

I relate what was discussed with President—that is ex-President—Sandra Holmes at the next New Continental Congress meeting. Everyone agrees that she is posturing in order to get a better deal. They also agree that we would benefit from some cooperation on her part even if only of public relations value. David Trufire and Alessandra Ramos-Ortega agree to put together a package to offer.

San Francisco's mayor organizes a massive march in protest and as a symbol of resistance. A crowd of over two-thousand dressed in the most outrageous garb march through downtown. We decide to cover the event as though it was the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. Of course, that parade ceased before I was born. With the parade behind us on a green screen, Virginia and I do commentary.

Virginia begins, "We haven't seen so many people marching in the streets in a very long time."

"The old government would never have put up with this," I point out. "In the New America we welcome free speech, even if it is descent."

"They are colorful, I'll give them that."

"When they realize how much greater freedom they have, I hope they put their creativity to work in a manner that brings them financial rewards."

"Yes, and with no income tax it will be easier than ever."

A chant begins, "Hang Clymer, shoot Morris."

I turn to Virginia and say, "I'll trade you. Hanging just sounds too unpredictable."

Virginia laughs. I love her . . . laugh. She says, "Once they see how much better life is in America when the thieves in government are

gone, maybe they'll change the lyrics."

"Clymer and Morris, keep fighting for us," I try.

Virginia stares at me then concludes, "That is really bad."

The crowd becomes unruly. They begin smashing everything they can get their hands on. Someone lights a rag on fire and tosses it into a store. Chaos erupts as the march becomes an out-and-out riot. We no longer can make light of the protest.

I shake my head and say, "For those of you who are watching this disgusting display, I urge you not to make the same mistake as these fired-up, over-emotional, brain-washed, hate-driven fools. The New America you are about to enjoy offers promise for every citizen to live a better, more satisfying, and safer life. The shackles of government are being removed. Don't trade them for the shackles of a criminal. Use your new-found liberty to build a better future."

Virginia adds, "San Francisco is burning. What is to be gained by destroying your home?"

After we sign off, I must admit that I am disappointed in those protesters. In fact, I don't think they even know what they were protesting against. Statists ginned them up and set them in motion. A mindless beast bound to eventually go out of control. Yet, Virginia and my coverage and comments were for the nation, not the unruly mob that was obviously not watching. I hope it reached others considering resistance.

Now, there is more news. The United Nations General Assembly just voted to impose an embargo on all goods to and from the United States of America until the Holmes administration is reinstated, IMUs are established as the only reserve currency, no dollars are introduced into the economy, the Social Compensation program is both reinstated and control of all technology associated with it is turned over to the United Nations International Monetary Council. In their statement they conclude with, "It is time for this farce to end. The global community does not recognize the legality of the rebel coup under international law. These criminals must and will surrender to the international court. Failure to abide by this decree will result in the immediate assumption of control of the United States as a United Nations Enterprise Zone under the control of the United Nations Global Leadership Unified Economy (UNGLUE).

"The world decided to fight back," Walter observes.

"Holmes knew this was coming," I conclude. "She probably set it up. The big question is, how much of the military does she still have

under her control?”

“More importantly,” Virginia states, “What are we facing from foreign military? This could turn into a bloody shooting war on our soil.”

I ask, “Walter, what do we have in our quiver—technologically?”

“Quiver?” he smiles. “We have a few tools. Not necessarily military. You remember ‘Back Door’ we can enter practically any secure website in the world. That gives us an advantage if we know who the players are. Unfortunately, there are too few of us to monitor world activity. Even Prophet has limits.”

An idea pops into my head, “If we can access secure websites, can we not mess with the communications, power grids, industries, and other operations of foreign governments?”

“We can get in, turn things off, but may find some obstacles along the way.”

“We are about to engage in technological guerilla warfare, my friends,” I declare.

“I have an update,” Virginia interjects. “General Doolittle informs me that the Joint Chiefs of Staff are bound by their oaths to obey the Commander-in-Chief—President Sandra Holmes. However, due to the fact that she announced that she was going to resign and the United Nations requested that she be reinstated there is some question as to whether or not she is in fact the Commander-in-Chief. They have unanimously decided to wait until the question is settled. We can expect no action by our military against the rebellion. It is a law-enforcement issue. In fact, the *Posse Comitatus Act*, signed in 1878, prohibits military from engaging in domestic law enforcement activity. To do so, troops would have to be accompanied by law enforcement personnel as they perform only support roles. However, they are still bound by law to protect our nation from foreign attack.”

After an afternoon meeting of the New Continental Congress, we issue a formal statement.

As the United Nations General Assembly has threatened the sovereignty of the United States of America this nation has immediately withdrawn membership in this adversarial organization. All diplomats of foreign governments, visiting dignitaries, and personnel of the United Nations are hereby ordered to leave the United States of America within twenty-four hours. Failure to do so will result in revocation of diplomat status and arrest.

All materials contained within the United Nations building are hereby confiscated. Any attempt to remove materials from the premises will be considered possession of contraband. The United Nations Building located in New York City will be seized and future use determined at a later date.

“Now, before I receive a message from Sandra or the Secretary General, I have a proposal,” I lean back in my chair and try to look casual until I almost fall backwards. “What do you think of developing a plan to disrupt power, communications, and other utilities in the first nation to protest our eviction of the United Nations? Show them we are serious. Maybe we can prevent an embargo from ever happening.”

“I like it,” Walter bellows. “As Ronald Reagan once said, ‘If they can’t see the light, let them feel the heat.’” He thinks for a second and adds, “Let’s have a pool as to which country it will be. I say Germany.”

Neha Crying Wolf clears her throat and we all turn our attention toward her. Her dark eyes make one feel that there is so much wisdom behind them. “A pebble in one’s moccasin can be more painful than a boulder rolled down a hill that misses its target. The people do not protest. The leaders are the ones who walk a crooked line.”

Virginia responds, “She’s right. Shutting down a whole nation is overkill. Let’s draw up plans for a more targeted approach.”

I receive a message from the Secretary General of the United Nations—Ludvig Soder.

LUDVIG: I must protest this outrageous demand by your unseated and unrecognized group.

GEORGE: Mr. Soder you are aware of the fact that we control the entire economy of the United States of America. Further, Sandra Holmes has agreed to resign and turn the reins of the government over to an interim council until fair and honest elections can be held. This sir gives us the authority to make our demand.

LUDVIG: The world will not stand for it.

GEORGE: That may be and will be their decision. However, they will have to stand outside the borders of the United States.

LUDVIG: Don’t be glib with me.

GEORGE: Then I will be direct—get the hell out of our country within 24 hours.

LUDVIG: We will not comply.

GEORGE: That is what Sandra Holmes said.

LUDVIG: The United Nations Building is foreign soil. Do you plan to attack foreign nations?

GEORGE: I made no mention of military or police action. If you remain past the 24-hour deadline you will be subject to arrest. And, I assure you that you will leave that building. Please, don't doubt me.

LUDVIG: The global community will isolate the United States and bring it to its knees.

GEORGE: After we just got up. I don't think so.

LUDVIG: You are a rude and impetuous boy.

GEORGE: 24 Hours.

I end the conversation. In an odd way I miss my conversations with Dawn. Of course, I now have the pleasure of conversing in person, which is what I decide to do. I find her sitting in a small room working on her tablet. When she sees me she smiles.

"Do you have a few minutes?" I ask.

"Of course."

"I just finished verbal sparring with Ludvig Soder."

"Secretary General of the United Nations. Was he diplomatic?"

"Far from it. Called me a rude and impetuous boy."

"That you are not." Dawn stares at me for a moment as though she is about to paint my portrait. Then she says, "George, are you aware of what you have been doing?"

"I don't understand."

"Of course not, because it has come so naturally. You, my friend, have been leading. You are decisive and intuitive. That is why everyone is following your lead."

"It's a team effort."

"Agreed. But, don't ignore the fact that you are directing the team."

"Dawn, you choreographed this entire thing from placing the history book in that desk to now. I once asked you why me and you revealed knowledge of my past and my lineage and have shown faith in me every step of the way. I don't know whether to thank you or curse you." Dawn smiles. "What must the world think of some upstart leading a revolt against the global New World Order movement. In truth, I don't feel like a leader or revolutionary or anything out of the ordinary."

"That is the best type of leader."

Once more, I ask, "Why me?"

"George, when I was sixteen-years-old I was already committed to STUS. I sought council with the five surviving founders of STUS;

Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd (92), Asayo Nakahara (87), Erin Slattery (96) a naturopath MD who died that year, Angelina Granelli (81), and Neha Crying Wolf (77). They all knew the odds of them living long enough to execute a successful revolution were remote. Technologically, they were developing many of the tools you presently use, Black Pearl Satellite Network, Back Door, The Keep, and Suicide Queen. However, more time was needed. They persuaded me to continue the planning and preparation for a future revolution. Many long hours of discussion took place. Clandestine recruitment efforts began to enlist citizens, militia, law-enforcement, and military personnel who would support the cause of freedom. Remarkably, those numbers flourished. What we didn't have was true leadership. In one meeting Asayo Nakahara, an incredibly talented computer programmer and technology genius, commented that we needed the wisdom of our ancestors. It was decided that not our ancestors but the God-given brilliance of the founding fathers was the key. That was the year you were born."

"Please, don't say God's gift to the world."

"That I would never say."

"So, you tracked me from the day I was born?"

"You and a number of others. At the time Virginia was five-years-old, but we hadn't identified her as yet. Over the years it became clear that you were the best choice."

"I get this awful feeling that I was like a fish in an aquarium—my every move watched. That's irritating, frightening, and embarrassing."

"You weren't that closely watched. Except that one night in the summer of 69 when you were fourteen."

"What!?"

"Just kidding. But, what did happen in the summer of 69?" Dawn smiles.

"I appreciate you telling me how I got here. My only hope is that you made the correct decision."

"I am confident that we did."

I joke, "I won't tell you what happened in the summer of 69."

"That's fine—I already know."

"Now, they are rioting in Boston," Virginia announces when I enter the room. On the wall monitor I see mobs running through the streets of Boston. In the background there are noticeable fires. Windows are broken and shops looted. Yet, nowhere are there any police. "The police were told to stand down," Virginia states. "The socialist mayor wants this to be as strong a statement as possible against the rebellion."

Dee looks at me and says, "I have an idea." She turns and runs down the hall.

"Do we have any information on other cities?" I ask.

"There have been a number of protests. In some cities counter-protests in support of the rebellion have significantly outnumbered the socialists," Virginia answers.

"We have to be careful," I admit. "We don't want this to turn into a civil war."

"There are those who would be glad to see that," Walter states.

Later in the evening, a new episode of *The Capitalist* appears. Dee has been busy.

The scene opens with real footage from Boston of the riots. The camera zooms in bringing the action closer. It appears to fly over the unruly mob into a building through a third-floor window. In the room are six persons, four men and two women. One of the men who has a plastic looking appearance states, "Let's hope they keep this up all week. Then, maybe it will spread."

An obese homely stern-faced woman adds, "We have to keep them riled up. Tell them anything you have to, but make sure they tear this city apart."

A third person speaks, "If we create enough unrest these rebels will have to relinquish control to the United Nations. Then we become members of the elite world leadership."

The other woman, in her late fifties dripping with gaudy jewelry and teased blond hair, laughs while stating, "Once there is a global royalty class, we will be in it. Riches and power beyond the imagination will be ours. The world will be our domain and the serfs will labor to provide us, the chosen, with whatever we desire." Once more an evil laugh.

An explosion is heard down on street level.

A skinny, pale man leans back in his chair and comments, "Ah, the sounds of war. Our minions are hard at work following our direction without even knowing it."

The first man responds, "Throughout history ignorant starving masses have served the upper class. What amazes me is how easy it is to manipulate the fools. Help the poor, save the children, free stuff, mix it up, add a helping of emotion, a dash of hatred at the better-off target of the month and you have the gruel these sow gobble down. Then, just aim and fire." He laughs.

Stern-face speaks, "It is just the natural order of things. They toil to serve us. I've been told how easy it was just before the Reorganization

to divide the masses into little boxes and have them at each other's throats." She points a fat finger at one of the men, "You're a racist." Then at another man, "You're a homophobe." The third man in the room is selected, "You are a misogynist."

"A what?"

She explains, "You don't like women."

"Not true. I love women." He smiles, "As many as I can get."

They all laugh.

The door opens and standing in the doorway is Falcon.

"Don't you knock," one of the men hisses.

Falcon steps into the room. Tall, lean, and muscular he looks far healthier than the other six persons in the room. Dressed in all black—shirt, jeans, and boots—his long wavy blond hair and bright blue eyes are in sharp contrast.

"This is a private meeting. Get out!" After a moment of thought the man asks, "How did you get in here?"

"Your police guards have seen the glorious light of freedom," Falcon holds up his phone to reveal a video of the village that was in the first episode of *The Capitalist*.

The camera zooms into Falcon's phone screen until it becomes the full screen. A thriving town with new buildings, cars in the street, people carrying packages as they exit stores, children playing in a ball field, and smiling faces as citizens greet each other. The picture dissolves to show the first depressed view of the town. A voiceover states, "They would give you this." Dissolve back to the thriving center of town, "You deserve this."

A child runs down the sidewalk carrying an ice cream cone. The voiceover, "Liberty is a beautiful thing filled with hope and promise." The child stops abruptly but the scoop of ice cream does not. It falls to the pavement with a splat. In horror, the child stares at the melting wad on the pavement. Two dogs arrive and begin lapping up their new-found treat. The child laughs and begins breaking off pieces of the cone to feed to the dogs. "When there is plenty—there is plenty to share."

The camera dissolves back to the room.

Skinny, pale-man spits, "You can't stop our plans."

"I don't have to. The people will," Falcon states with confidence.

"In this world," teased hair says, "there are leaders and there are followers."

Falcon counters, "There are producers and there are thieves."

"How dare you!"

“I should ask you the same.”

Silence blankets the room. It is then that they realize there is silence outside, as well. As the six conspirators move to the window the camera follows to show their perspective. Down in the street the rioters have stopped and are watching a huge monitor hung from the roof of the building across the street. They watch as the little depressed village becomes a shining light on the hill. The voiceover sings, “Let freedom ring.”



Ronald Reagan
President: 1981 - 1989

“A cynical, mercenary, demagogic press will produce in time a people as base as itself.”

— Joseph Pulitzer

Chapter 40 | THE PULITZER

When Germany announces that they will not trade with the United States and have requested that all German businesses with facilities in our country cease operations immediately, we hear Walter yell from wherever he is in the house.

“Aha! I called it—pay up!”

Dr. Henry L. Rice, the college chancellor, and I are sitting at the table having breakfast. When we hear the croaking from Walter, Dr. Rice observes, “The economic element of the conflict has begun. This is the opening gambit. We must be vigilante as it would be illogical for Germany to act unilaterally. While our focus is on them, the real trap will be sprung.”

“Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing what the next move might be,” I admit.

“As in chess, there are many moves and counter-moves. There are also proven standard gambits such as the Ruy Lopez, the Italian, the Sicilian Defense, the French Defense, and the Caro Kann. White has twenty legal chess moves at his disposal. Some choices are better than others. So, you might ask, how do you determine which is best.”

“I might not ask. However, since you are leading the witness, I will ask.”

A slight smile briefly crosses his stern countenance. “The best tactics are initiated three or four moves into the game. Do not reflect on what has happened, but on what you wish to cause to happen. In chess, most masters wish to control the middle of the board.” Deep brown eyes burn into my brain as Dr. Price asks, “In world economics what do you wish to control?”

I quickly conclude that this is a question for the New Continental

Congress, so as you might imagine, lengthy discussions follow. With the entire team together, nine participants identify nine-hundred possibilities. It turns out, this is one humongous chess board. I find one area of discussion very interesting. Most nations in the world, with a few exceptions, have signed onto the United Nations Enterprise Zone concept. Why? It can't be concern about military force. However, it is about power—economic power.

David Trufire provides his perspective, "Slowly, the world went from a gold and silver backed currency economic system to a debt-backed system. Bankers love it because they continually profit from servicing debt. Now, follow me on this. Before the Reorganization, America was in debt to the Federal Reserve to the tune of 20 trillion dollars. That was on paper. At the time there was only 1.5 trillion dollars in circulation worldwide. If America could acquire every dollar in the world, they still couldn't make a dent in the debt. But, let's think about what if America could have paid the 20 trillion dollars. What would happen. The debt would be retired, therefore, no Federal Reserve notes would be issued backed by debt. No debt—no money."

I get it, but a part of my brain is spinning trying to bring it down to the personal level. If I have ten dollars, what do I have? It is a value of ten dollars with which I can make a purchase. However, its value is based on some entity somewhere owing ten dollars. So, if they pay that debt does my ten-dollar value disappear? And, what do they pay that debt with? The whole thing is based on nothing—air.

Walter derails my train of thought, "The world's first central bank, the Bank of England, was chartered in 1792. Mayer Rothschild was politically connected and a highly influential banker at that time. He knew control of a central bank would eventually allow him to seize control of the country. It was not overt, but behind the scenes control in the form of political influence. Those with money and power, coupled with the will to do whatever it takes to continue to accrue more, will do so until stopped. All they want is for you and I and our descendants to work for them completely and in perpetuity as slaves to their demands—passive and non-disruptive. The New World Order would have the entire population of the world doing the bidding of an elite chosen class in power. You don't think they won't fight us using any tactics at hand?"

David stands, thinks for a moment and continues, "Let me tell you of an event in history. In 1928, Josef Stalin, general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, introduced a program of agricultural collectivization in Ukraine. This area was called the 'Bread

Basket' of the Soviet Union. He forced family farmers off their land and into state-owned collective farms. Ukrainian peasant farmers who were already successful refused to join the collectives. They considered it a return to the serfdom of earlier centuries. Stalin believed these farming collectives would not only feed industrial workers in the cities, but would also provide a surplus. This would allow him to raise money for further industrialization. Armed dekulakization brigades confiscated land, livestock and other property, evicting entire families. In 1930-31 approximately half a million individuals were dragged from their homes, placed aboard freight trains, and shipped to remote areas like Siberia. They were left without shelter or food. Many died."

"Resistance was not tolerated. Production quotas from Ukrainian farms were sharply increased in 1932-33, making it impossible for farmers to meet assigned goals, while also feeding themselves. Starvation became widespread. The Soviet government decreed that any person, even a child, would be arrested for taking as little as a few stalks of wheat from the fields in which they worked. Military blockades were erected around villages to prevent the transportation of food. Stalin wanted to 'teach a lesson through famine' to the Ukrainian rural population. Eventually all food was confiscated from farmers' homes. At the height of the famine, Ukrainians starved to death at a rate of 22,000 per day. How many died in total is unknown. Estimates range from two million Ukrainian citizens to well over ten million. Suffering was so bad that people were arrested for eating dead bodies. In fact, the act was so widespread that the government put up signs reading, 'To eat your own children is a barbarian act.' And, at the same time all this was occurring, millions of tons of grain that could have fed the entire population were exported and sold."

"My God," I say, "it's hard to imagine a government so cold and brutal."

David Trufire responds, "Here's another fact you will find hard to believe. Stalin denied to the world that there was any famine in Ukraine. Fortunately for him, virtually all of the international press preferred to remain comfortable in Moscow, be fed Soviet propaganda, and remain ignorant of what was actually happening. Walter Duranty, the *New York Times* 'Man in Moscow' wrote 'any report of a famine in Russia is today an exaggeration or malignant propaganda.' He claimed stories of starvation were bunk and even commented, 'You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.' He was Stalin's puppet and for being incompetent won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage. The world would never have known

the truth had it not been for Canadian journalist, Rhea Clyman. She supported communism, calling it 'workers' paradise' where no one was unemployed, everyone was equal, and everyman had what he needed. Unlike the others, she went to the Soviet Union to see for herself." David pauses, then adds more, "Rhea Clyman was a single Jewish woman who lost a part of a leg in a streetcar accident. At the time, travel in Russia was not physically easy with the added risk of how poorly they treated Jews. When she left Moscow, Walter Duranty of the *New York Times* smugly offered to write her obituary."

I remark, "Nice guy. A real admirable human being."

David goes on, "Over a four-year period Rhea Clyman learned the Russian language and traveled over 5,000 miles through the countryside. In the Ukraine she found abandoned villages and starving people. In the village of Isoomka an emaciated and crippled fourteen-year-old boy approached her and asked if she was from Moscow. She said yes. He told her they wanted her to take a petition from a number of villages back to the Kremlin. The dying young boy then said, 'Tell the Kremlin we are starving; we have no bread.' In another village a tall, bearded man approached her and stated, 'We are good, hard-working peasants, loyal Soviet citizens, but the village Soviet has taken our land from us. We are in the collective farm, but we do not get any grain. Everything, land, cows and horses, have been taken from us, and we have nothing to eat. Our children were eating grass in the spring. They got down on all-fours like animals.' To illustrate the point, a tall, gaunt woman began to take the clothes off of children. She showed their sagging bellies, spindly legs, and their tortured, misshapen, twisted little bodies. This was the gruesome look of famine. The Canadian reporter shut her eyes as she could not bear to look at all the horror. It was called Holodomor which is a combination of two Ukrainian words: Holod, meaning hunger, and moryty, meaning a slow, cruel death. That is exactly what Ukrainians suffered during this period in history where a socialist government deliberately starved an entire people."

We all sit in silence.

"This is the demon we are fighting," David concludes. "When a few elitist statists control everything they become distant, far-removed from common folk. The masses disappear into a fog of numbers, unimportant and expendable. Do you think Stalin gave the starving children of the Ukraine a second thought? Every one that died was one less mouth that might consume some wheat he wished to sell. Their pain and suffering meant nothing. Their names inconsequential. What Stalin did to the

Ukraine the United Nations will do to far greater numbers of people.”

“How can they get away with it?” I ask.

David looks at me and replies, “In the early part of this century, socialists in our government began breaking the law, ignoring the original *Constitution*, and weaponizing the different government agencies. If you disagreed with them, you got investigated, or they accused you of the most outlandish or egregious of crimes. Many people lost their jobs, were disgraced, or prosecuted. One President was quoted as openly supporting a New World Order, another lied to Congress, one was elected under fraudulent conditions, still another economically destroyed the economy. Congress was overflowing with liars and thieves. Most got rich through corruption. The system was essentially destroyed from within.”

“Why didn’t the people revolt?” I ask in disbelief.

“First, the media ignored all the corruption. They were in it with them. What they did was jackal journalism—attack anyone who did not support the socialist cause. These empty-headed puppets also aided the statists whenever they attacked someone by delivering fake news, keeping facts from the public, or shaming those who protested. In the end, the first casualty was freedom of speech. Innocent persons would voice an opinion and be attacked and condemned until they either apologized or lost their job or both. Eventually, people no longer said anything against the special interest mobsters. Then when some individuals became witness to illegal activities, they were purported to have committed suicide in significant numbers. Of course, everyone knew the truth but it created enough fear to allow the corrupt politicians and businesspersons to continue operating. Corruption wasn’t investigated because the Justice Department, FBI, and courts were all complicit. It was a dishonest politician free-for-all until they drove the nation into the ground.”

“And, the people just stood by and let it happen,” I contend.

“They were spellbound by technological advances, games, gadgets, and well-crafted entertainment designed to make them think a certain way.”

I return to the original subject with an observation directed at Dr. Henry L. Rice, “Control the middle of the board.”

He nods. Was that slight smile?

“Germany is a white pawn moving up two squares. We can choose to attack that pawn or keep our eye on the black king. Which, in my opinion, remains the United Nations.”

All at the table sit silently and listen to my argument.

"The delegates will most likely hide in their respective embassies. Ringleaders will clandestinely direct international actions from their 'foreign soil' thinking that they can't be touched. So, if they comply, we have an empty building and the United Nations anti-American activities continuing. That pawn doesn't mean a thing." I turn to David Trufire, "Mr. Trufire . . ."

"David."

"Sir, can we use technology to cut off all communications in and out of the various embassies?"

"It's David. And, the answer is yes, but it would take a day or two to set up. Longer if we don't get cooperation by the local authorities. Unfortunately, New York City is a den of socialist thieves. They not only will not assist us but will interfere with our efforts."

"What do you recommend?"

"It's a tricky one—that's for sure. If we shut down the city government or keep them busy with crisis after crisis, they will most likely ignore what we do at the embassies. On the other hand, if we simply focus on the embassies, they wouldn't be able to complain because they would be unable to communicate."

"That is unless they physically leave the embassy," Virginia observes.

"In which case we threatened to arrest them," I state.

Walter, always the optimist, asks, "But how? Apparently, NYPD won't cooperate."

Dr. Rice adds, "It would be under federal jurisdiction."

I conclude, "Then maybe all we need is the threat. Aren't most of the embassies located in a small area of the city?"

Virginia refers to her tablet, "The area is called Turtle Bay on the east side of Manhattan. It extends from 43rd Street to 53rd Street between Lexington Avenue and the East River." She throws in, "It's patrolled by the 17th Precinct of the New York City Police Department."

I ask Alessandra Ramos-Ortega, a judge, "Can we deputize Federal Marshals?"

She smiles and replies, "If we contend that we are the federal government, at this time, we can legally appoint federal law enforcement officers."

"So, if we have twenty-five official-looking government SUVs patrolling Turtle Bay and 100 Federal Marshals waiting around the clock for any rat trying to escape we don't need NYPD."

"I'm on it," Walter states.

David Trufire provides his opinion, "I like it. If we keep them sequestered in their residences with no means of communication it's as good as being arrested—even better."

"The United Nations will have been shut down, foreign nations will not have any means of communications, and it will be achieved without violence," I conclude.

"What about Germany?" Walter asks.

"Was der Esel sagt, höre ich nicht," I reply.

"What the hell does that mean?"

"What the jackass says, I don't hear."

"You realize that the German chancellor will be very upset that we didn't take the bait," Virginia observes.

"We won't do anything directly, but what if we issue a proclamation that states; Any foreign business that ceases operations in the United States for more than 30 days is subject to buyout by its employees. The New American government will provide no-interest loans for this purpose," I emphasize the next point, "in dollars at an exchange rate of one dollar equal to two IMUs."

Dr. Henry L. Rice stares at me for a long moment, then states, "You have a devious mind. I understand what Dawn Eastwood was talking about."

I look at Dawn who remains expressionless.

"What if delegates refuse to leave the United Nations building?" Alessandra Ramos-Ortega asks.

Soo Bon-Hwa answers, "That part is easy. We have access to all of the building's computerized operations. The electrical power, backup units, air-conditioning, communications, water pumps, and security systems will all become inoperable. At the twenty-four-hour deadline she goes offline. Any holdouts will have a long treacherous journey down dark stairs."

David Trufire answers a question I haven't yet asked. "It took STUS engineers decades to develop the tools and then inject them into the global networks. We knew there would be a fine line between enough power to succeed with a revolution and too much power which in the wrong hands would be catastrophic. Just as with Suicide Queen, there are fail safes built into systems to prevent misuse of our technology."

Soo Bon-Hwa adds, "Prophet has a logical conscience."

I take him at his word.

Virginia and I introduce the newest and probably most important

program, *America's Got History*. I introduce the show, "Welcome to a show that is like no other. As we transition from a tyrannical socialist state to a representative republic, it's essential that we identify and recruit the best persons possible to represent each state in the rebuilding of our government process. Most of you do not know that there once were fifty states. Today there are thirty. Someday states may be redefined, but for now we will work with the present number."

Virginia takes over, "An eighteenth-century statesman and philosopher, Edmund Burke, said, 'Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it.' Over the ages this has proven to be true. As George said we need state representatives to form a congress, approve a constitution, and found a new America that offers freedom, individual liberty, and opportunity to all our citizens. In order to be an effective representative we believe you must know the true history of the United States of America—not the rewritten socialist view."

My turn, "Over the next few weeks we will provide a video history of America along with assigned websites to visit and materials to read. You can come from any walk of life, education level, or socio-economic group. If you learn America's history and wish to serve fill out an application."

Virginia, "The application is the test of your knowledge of American History. But, don't worry, you can look up answers. It is the fact that you know the history that counts."

Me, "There are open-ended questions to determine your perspective on the role of government. Then, once all applications are scored and those that pass are in, two representatives from each state will be chosen randomly by computer."

Virginia, "Sixty citizens will help shape our nation and the future."

After the program I receive a message from the Secretary General of the United Nations—Ludvig Soder.

LUDVIG: The Security Council has voted to remain and the General Assembly will follow.

GEORGE: I'm sorry to hear that. However, you will leave.

LUDVIG: The world is lining up against you. International business will shut down all operations in America. You do not have all the products your people require. They must be imported.

GEORGE: We are a strong and resourceful people.

LUDVIG: The American dollar is worthless internationally.

GEORGE: But, of great value domestically.

LUDVIG: Stop this foolishness. We can negotiate a better

economic enterprise approach.

GEORGE: America's sovereignty is not for sale.

LUDVIG: You cannot stop the future from happening, all you can do is delay it.

GEORGE: You cannot shape the future by stealing it.

LUDVIG: We will remain here.

GEORGE: I hope you have good walking shoes.

LUDVIG: What does that mean?

GEORGE: Twelve hours and counting.

Walter walks into the room. "We have 100 SUVs, 50 motorcycles, and 500 Federal Marshals on their way to New York."

"Isn't that overkill?" I ask.

"Hey, I can't help the fact that they volunteered. I couldn't stop them."

I receive another message. This time from Sandra Holmes.

HOLMES: You win. For the sake of the nation and our people I will resign. Next week, in the Capital Building in front of the media we will transfer power to your organization.

GEORGE: You do realize that if you arrest or execute us that control of the economy would still be unavailable to you or anyone in your administration.

HOLMES: That is abundantly clear. Let me assure you of your safe conduct. I will make a formal statement prior to the event to inform the public, thereby further ensuring your safety.

GEORGE: Thank you.

HOLMES: My hope is that, before the event, we come to a mutual agreement as to my immediate compensation and future pension benefits.

GEORGE: It is being developed as we speak.

HOLMES: Good.

That conversation ends.

In the next New Continental Congress meeting I inquire about security for the upcoming transfer of power. Virginia informs me that she has made arrangements for protection while in public and warned Sandra Holmes that if any harm comes to us that the ex-President's economic position would be dire and her physical safety uncertain.

"You know that it is against the law to threaten the President," Dr. Rice states sternly. As hard as he tries, he can't keep a smile from spreading across his face.

On the news stations there are fewer and fewer pro-government

protests or riots. I guess they stopped paying them.



George H W Bush
President: 1989 - 1993

“Never trust anyone who wants what you’ve got. Friend or no, envy is an overwhelming emotion.”

— Eubie Blake

Chapter 41 | THE BETRAYAL

If there is any true enemy territory—this is it. Wilson, D.C. is a ghost town in comparison to what we found during our first visit. On this occasion we sneak into town in a nondescript vehicle, or two, or three. Alright, we have a small caravan of four SUVs. As we travel through the city, we find little traffic and only a few pedestrians. The energy and opulence we found before have disappeared.

On this day, America will be set free. The governing elite will give up the stranglehold they have held for too long. The United Nations has been defanged. Oh, about the U.N., many delegates left the building. Some went to their residences, others to embassies, and still others left the country. A few hardcore globalists remained in the United Nations building, among them Secretary General Ludvig Soder. They stayed two days, but non-flushing toilets drove them out. I like to say that but lack of food, water, light, and other conveniences probably had something to do with it. Ludvig wrote me a nice note.

Before going to the Capital for the formal and public transition of power we agreed to a private meeting with soon-to-not-be President Sandra Holmes. Her request was to finalize her separation agreement before the event. As she put it, “My enthusiasm for and support of the transition will be in direct relation to the settlement.”

As Neha Crying Wolf observed, “It might be a worthwhile investment.”

We head toward the J Edgar Hoover Building at 935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW in Wilson, D.C. It’s an old deteriorating building that was built in 1975, which makes it one-hundred-years-old. The structure is eight stories high on the Pennsylvania Avenue side, and 11 stories high on the E Street side. Its exterior is rough buff-colored concrete that has

broken off and fallen over the decades leaving deep gashes and dents. Deep set, square, bronze-tinted windows run in rows on each level. We enter the underground garage. Many of the spaces are cordoned off with yellow police tape. Our caravan parks and we cautiously leave our vehicles. I immediately spot a sign that reads, “Beware, Falling Concrete.” Think about that. There is no way to determine what will or will not drop from above. Hey, at least you have been warned. If that isn’t a metaphor of our present government—nothing is.

A single young woman in a blue business suit greets us. “President Holmes welcomes you to Wilson, D.C. Allow me to guide you to a waiting area where your,” she peers at our armed guards, “uh, staff may wait. It was agreed that you would hold a private meeting.”

We follow.

Our team sets off alarms but we are allowed to enter. There is a dual elevator system, one for the public the other for staff. We are taken by a secure elevator to the sixth floor where our team are shown a large conference room with all communications venues available. After they agree to wait, Virginia and I are led to another private elevator. We go down to what is a subbasement. I fully expect to see prison bars when the doors open. Instead, there is a brightly lit hallway that leads to large double doors. Our guide opens one door to reveal Sandra Holmes seated at the far end of the room on a comfortable couch. In front of her is a low table. The guide does not enter, but closes the door after we are inside. Holmes face is expressionless. She appears almost comatose. The strain must be terrible. I’m talking about me.

When we get nearer, she says, “Please, sit.” And, indicates two chairs on either side of the couch facing each other and the low table.

I speak, “We have a proposal that was carefully drafted to allow you to be, uh, enthusiastic about this change in leadership.”

She nods. To her surprise, I pull out printed sheets of paper.

“Electronic correspondence has a habit of changing or disappearing,” I explain.

“Not when block-chained,” she replies.

This time I nod, but continue, “With this document you will be assured a comfortable lifestyle for the remainder of your life, you are given immunity for all past acts, and will receive Secret Service protection. On your part, you will resign your office and agree to not participate in any future political activity, including running for office.”

“No gag order?” she asks sarcastically.

“We believe in freedom of speech. You may express your opinion

anytime anywhere.”

“As long as it supports the new government.”

“No restrictions.”

“If I condemn what you are doing does that negate my settlement?”

“Absolutely not.”

“I will not remain silent.”

“That is your prerogative.”

Sandra Holmes, the woman who attempted to give American sovereignty away to the New World Order, who expected to be a key member of an ultra-elite ruling class, whose thirst for power could not be quenched, sits staring at the young rebel that brought her down. I’m sure she is filled with rage and hate. One small detail—allowing a single organization to control the machinery of the economy—brought down her house of cards. All the queen’s horses and all the queen’s men didn’t see it coming. What was it Sun Tzu said? “The greatest victory is that which requires no battle.”

To Virginia and my surprise, Sandra Holmes states, “Before I agree to this I have invited another person to our meeting for council.”

A door opens and in walks Seth Underwood, the spook, spy, mole, informant, traitor. He smiles broadly as he announces loudly, “Ah, my friends, we meet again.”

“Once a spook, always a spook,” Virginia comments.

Seth nods as he maintains his obnoxious arrogant smile. He sits next to Sandra Holmes on the couch.

“You’re too late,” I point out.

“Ah, my impetuous friend, you are wrong. Negotiations have just begun.”

“This is the only acceptable proposal,” I indicate the printed document.

“I meant negotiations for your lives,” Seth states confidently.

Virginia stares at Seth disapprovingly. I know she would like to take him out, immediately. She asks, “Why should we be willing to negotiate? We have already won.”

“You won a battle—not the war.”

“Explain.”

“With your technology, you succeeded in bringing down a sham government and removing the President of The United States.” He nods toward Sandra Holmes who sits like a totem pole unmoving. “But, like Eisenhower, you stopped short. Now, at this moment in history, with the

weapons you have in hand, you can achieve world conquest. Given your technology, every economy is vulnerable, every nation's leadership is in jeopardy, and every military rendered impotent."

I immediately point out, "We are not interested in world conquest."

"Then you are a fool."

"So be it. Our objective is returning freedom to the United States of America."

"At the risk of security?"

"What do you mean?"

Seth shakes his head as if frustrated by my ignorance. He answers, "The globalists will never stop seeking world domination. At best, if you succeed, it will delay their ultimate conquest." He leans forward, "However, if we beat them to the punch and take ironclad control of the world's economy and empower our chosen advocates to facilitate our agenda, we can rule for a thousand years."

"I thought you only wished to restore individual liberty and protect the sovereignty of the United States," I counter.

Seth looks at Sandra Holmes, then back at me, "That was before you revealed the colossal power of your technology. At this very moment it is unstoppable. A year from now that might not be true anymore. Together we can literally conquer the world. Don't you see that?"

"The world is comprised of so many different peoples and cultures," I insist. "You cannot bring them under a single umbrella of authority. They won't stand for it, as they shouldn't. Has history not taught you anything? Empires, no matter how vast, eventually crumble. That is because one standard of governance does not universally work on all people."

"There is one universal truth. People need to eat and will obey their masters if food is the reward. Serve the state or starve—the choice is theirs."

"Do you realize how fanatical you sound?"

"Is it fanatical to wish to finally bring peace to the world? Is it fanatical to want to help the poor?"

I decide to put an end to the debate. "It is a moot point, as we will never give you access to STUS technology."

"Ah, but we already have it," Seth states. He then orders an entity that must be listening, "Bring them in."

From the same door through which we entered the room walks, David Trufire and Walter Tize.

“Join us, my friends,” Seth states magnanimously while waving his hand. David and Walter pull chairs from the side of the room and sit about ten feet away. I stare at the two of them in disbelief. Over my shoulder I hear Seth saying, “They not only saw the logic of my argument, but shared the details of how everything at STUS works. Now, you must choose sides—the winning side with us or the losing side in jail or the executioner’s block.”

I look at David and ask, “Why?”

He shrugs.

Then I ask Walter, “Why?”

He replies, “The concept, in the long run makes sense. If we don’t take charge now, we will be in endless conflicts—militarily, economically, and culturally. For that reason we shared all the access to our technology.”

Seth intervenes, “George, I want this to be a good thing for all in this room. Don’t fight us—join us. Think of the riches you can enjoy. You and your family . . .”

Minus my mother, I think.

“can live anywhere like royalty. All I ask is that you confirm what they have told us about the STUS technology capabilities, facilities, and operations. In this way, we all begin our relationship with mutual respect and trust.”

I decide to buy time by asking, “How can we be sure that after we give you the keys to the tool chest that you won’t simply eliminate us?”

“I already have them,” Seth waves his arm. “I simply wish for you to demonstrate that you are with us by revealing the same information as they have.”

“Tell him all you know about the STUS facilities,” David says. “It’s alright. I assure you.”

I look at David and ask, “Profit or loss?”

He answers, “Profits are always better than losses.” It’s then that I notice something about the two STUS informants. Neither man casts a shadow. We are in the only other existing hologram room.

I ask Walter, “Are you sure that I should reveal everything without a shadow of a doubt?”

“Of course, all of us are allies,” he responds.

I look at Virginia, who has been patiently waiting for me to catch on to what I believe she already knows. “So, Dr. Hofstra must have agreed to this.”

She replies, with a slight smile, “It appears so.”

“Who is Dr. Hofstra?” Seth asks.

"They didn't tell you?" I nod toward David Trufire and Walter Tize.

"He was not mentioned."

"That's a huge oversight, as Dr. Hofstra handles the program controls. He, you might say, pushes the buttons."

"Where is Dr. Hofstra located?"

"At a hidden main control facility." I pause and see interest in Seth's eyes. "Before I tell you where to find him, I need to know a few things." Seth nods. "Besides you and Sandy, who will be the governing body of this world order? I mean, there you two are. Obviously, you offered these two something substantial or they never would have turned. Now, you offer to add Virginia and me to the mix. I need to know what I would be agreeing to in order to get involved. Is General Doolittle onboard?"

"General Doolittle is a career military man. He will fall in line with the others when the dust settles and a new government is in place," Seth states. "Don't worry about numbers at this point. There is plenty to go around. If you want a title that can be arranged. Keep your eye on the big picture. Whether it is two or twenty, you can be a part of the ruling class. Don't let this opportunity slip through your fingers. Tell us where this Dr. Hofstra can be found."

"He hides in the shadows."

"What?"

I stand and walk over to where David and Walter are sitting and declare, "Unlike these holograms, he casts a shadow—you son-of-a-bitch." I turn to face Seth Underwood just in time to see him pull a gun out of his jacket and aim it at me. The impact knocks me off my feet. One or was it two loud reports ring in my ears. I feel a heavy weight upon my chest. It's hard to inhale. Warm liquid drips onto my arm. My spinning head clears and I find Virginia atop me. Her pistol lays on the floor. I glance at Seth Underwood and he is sitting with his head back a hole in his neck dripping blood. Then I look at Virginia and she has blood cascading from a chest wound. My brain screams—no!

"Red! Please, why did you do it?"

Her forest green eyes stare at me. It is as though they are truly looking at me for the first time, expecting me to do or say something. "I'll get help," I croak.

Her hand gently squeezes my arm. I can feel weakness as her strength slips away. She can't speak, but together we share our thoughts and feelings. It doesn't take long for her breathing to stop. Tears well up

in my eyes as I lean down and kiss her forehead. No pain that I ever felt in my life comes near to this moment. I want to wail in my grief and despair like some wild animal that lost its mate. Yet, like a wild animal, anger and rage descends upon me. I pick up Virginia's Smith & Wesson pistol and aim it at Seth. It becomes clear that he is dead. I should have known that she wouldn't miss. My attention turns to Sandra Holmes. She sits in disbelief. And, yes, she casts a shadow. I aim at the devil. In my entire life I have never wanted to kill anyone more than at this very moment aiming at this evil target.

Doors open and staff rush in. I turn the gun toward them and they stop in their tracks. "Please, we were just following orders operating the equipment. We aren't armed."

I glance over my shoulder and David Trufire and Walter Tize are gone.

My attention returns to Sandra Holmes. She hasn't moved. So many thoughts fill my head—dark dangerous demonic thoughts. Slowly, I lower the pistol.

I stand alone in the Great Rotunda of the United States Capital Building—more alone than I have ever been before. The formal transfer of power is about to take place. A number of very difficult decisions had to be made. I wanted to shoot Sandra Holmes. She and Seth Underwood tried to use deception as a means of gaining our trust. Even if it was possible for me to reveal the truth about Prophet and to join their cabal, they would have eliminated us in the end. World domination is a drug. A poison too dangerous to swallow as it consumes the soul. Originally, I wanted to remove this witch from office and cast her out penniless to roam the streets begging for food. But even that wouldn't remove the vision of Virginia staring at me. I will spend the rest of my days looking into those eyes, helpless, scarred, and choking on guilt. Had I not made some harebrained move by going over to the holograms Red might still be alive standing by my side. Eventually, it was decided that the original proposal to compensate Sandra Holmes for her cooperation should stand. A peaceful transfer is in the best interest of the nation.

That done, I sit by Wildcat Creek watching the water peacefully flow by carrying bits and pieces of leaves, grass and other things. The soft sound of water is soothing. A shadow crosses the water and I look up. It is my father. Please dad, don't ask what I'm thinking about.

"I never thanked you," he states.

"Oh, for what?"

"When you were ten-years-old, I was working on that window

that wouldn't close all the way allowing a draft to keep our house uncomfortable in the winter. You tried so hard to hand me the proper tool that I asked for. You didn't know a phillips screwdriver from a slotted one. But you tried. I kept rejecting what you brought and sending you back to my toolbox. You never complained and when I was finished, I just packed everything up and went about my business. I never thanked you for helping."

Now, I know my father didn't come out here to tell me that lame story and thank me for helping ten years ago. It's his way of reaching out. He knows I'm struggling, but he also lost someone he loved. It's unfortunate that such bitter loss is what we have to share. Yes, I did, do, love Virginia. Only I was never able to tell her. It probably is best.

"I have a feeling that we are going to be helping each other for a long time," I tell my father.

"I also want to apologize for being so critical of you."

"That's not necessary."

"Yes—it is. You demonstrated strength and character that I failed to see. Without wishing to sound condescending I want you to know that I am proud of you."

My father leaves and Dee shows up. My hideaway isn't very hidden.

"How are you holding up, brother?"

"Good and bad."

"For what it's worth, I liked Virginia. We will all miss her. I know you will most of all. Remember when you have those black days, I'm here for you."

"I know you are. You've been an incredible help and will be needed as we go forward." I hug Dee. No comment.

Once I'm alone, I return to watching the water. Nature can be beautiful while also being harsh. I've got to get back to the task at hand. Endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights. It is up to me to see that the American people rediscover the power of liberty.

I'll cry when I've earned the right.



Bill Clinton
President: 1993 - 2001

“The Constitution is not a living document. It’s a legal document. It says what it says, and it doesn’t say what it doesn’t say.”

— Antonin Scalia

Chapter 42 | THE CONSTITUTION

Words matter. If there is anything that I’ve learned throughout this entire adventure it is that what is said and written down will be either misunderstood, taken out of context, or interpreted at a later date using different criteria. That is what happened to the original *United States Constitution*. As a result, we don’t want our new constitution to leave anything vague or open to a wide range of interpretations. The problem arises when I suggest that we use the original *United States Constitution* as a starting point.

Dr. Henry L. Rice asks, “Which constitution?”

I reply, “The American one.”

He then tells us, “I believe you need to hear this first. The original *Constitution for the United States of America* went into effect March 4, 1789. The Preamble read, ‘We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.’”

We look at each other wondering why he is telling us about something we’ve already read before.

Dr. Rice becomes very serious, “The founding fathers established a government by and for sovereigns—free citizens who were deemed the highest authority.” He looks at me and states, “Only people can be sovereign, such as a monarch. Government is an instrument used by a sovereign ruler. The founding fathers turned it upside down when as was written in the *Declaration of Independence* ‘government is subject to the consent of the governed.’ Citizens are the sovereign rulers.”

“So, I’ve been using it wrong,” I conclude.

Dr. Rice nods. “For the first time in history the government was meant to be the tool of sovereign citizens with there being no monarchs or other rulers. To achieve this and create a degree of order they established a representative republic. A glorious and noble experiment.”

“I’m sure that you are going to tell us what went wrong.”

“In 1790 passage of the *Residence Act* created a federal district that would be the capital of the United States. It was formed with land donated by Maryland and Virginia and named the District of Columbia. A new capital city named in honor of President George Washington was founded to the east of Georgetown in 1791. Congress later passed the *Organic Act of 1801*, which created the federal territory of Washington, D.C. These two legislative actions became vastly important at a later date.” He changes the subject, “During the Civil War, in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln instituted martial law. He ordered that the states either conscript troops and provide money in support of the North or be recognized as an enemy of the nation. The martial law act of Congress was never rescinded leaving Presidents with dictatorial authority to do anything that can legally be done by the government in accord with the *Constitution for the United States of America*. This laid the foundation of Presidential Executive Orders.”

Everyone in the room is listening intently. I’m sure we all feel the same that the more we know about our government the better we can fashion a new constitution.

“After the Civil War, Congress realized our country was in dire financial straits. They attempted to get loans from international banks, but as you know banks will not lend money to anyone without collateral or some other form of tangible element attached. Now, greedy international bankers, including the Rothschilds of London, long wanted to get their fingers into the American pie—this was their opportunity. Secretly, Congress cut a deal with these international bankers, thereby incurring a debt to said bankers that put the nation in a subservient position. A traitorous plan was devised. On February 21, 1871 the Forty-First Congress of the United States committed treason. They passed an act called: *An Act To Provide A Government For The District Of Columbia*, also known as the *Act of 1871*. Without Constitutional authority, Congress revoked the individual charters of the cities of Washington and Georgetown and combined them with Washington County to create a unified territory for the entire District of Columbia. This ten-mile square parcel was incorporated and became a state within a state with its own government, flag, and independent constitution. Its flag has three red

stars over two wide red stripes on a white background.”

I observe, “That’s like the American Flag.”

“Not quite, but close. The American Flag has three red stars but two wide blue stripes on the top and bottom. Although, on both flags the three red stars are symbolic of a three-city empire which consists of Washington D.C., London, and Vatican City. London is the corporate center and controls the world economically. Washington’s District of Columbia city state is in charge of the military. Finally, the Vatican controls it all under the guise of spiritual guidance. They are geographically separate, but are one interlocking empire called ‘Empire of the City.’ The constitution for the District of Columbia operates under tyrannical Vatican law known as ‘Lex Fori’ or the law courts.”

Dr. Rice again changes the subject, “Let’s consider the *Constitution of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*. What’s wrong with what I just said?”

I want to crack wise, but Dr. Rice is in serious mode.

“What might seem a minor change is in reality a treasonous act. They rewrote the *Constitution* changing its title from ‘the *Constitution for the United States of America*’ to ‘the *Constitution of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*’ establishing the government of the District of Columbia as a corporation. Two little words, for and of, along with capitalizing the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA had significant impact on the nation and its citizens. In essence, this act formed the corporation known as THE UNITED STATES, owned by foreign interests. The new constitution for the corporation replaced the original *Constitution* without the peoples’ knowledge. With subtle changes on a piece of parchment a corporation replaced a republic. Everything might have seemed the same, but instead of having absolute and unalienable rights guaranteed under the original *Constitution*, the people had ‘relative’ rights or privileges. Let me give you an example. A sovereign’s right to travel was transformed to a corporate governing policy privilege that requires citizens to be licensed—driver’s licenses and passports. By the way, the corporate *Constitution* does nothing to benefit the people. It serves the corporation.”

“Wait,” I ask, “Why didn’t the people revolt?”

“Ignorance. They didn’t know. The government overtly seemed the same. Citizens believed that the persons they sent to represent them would have their best interest at heart and operate in an honorable manner. While in fact, puppets of the banking owners created a shadow government to manage what the people believed was the government. So, a corporate government with no jurisdiction outside of a ten-mile square took over the United States of America and a shadow government

was put in place to act upon their orders effectively disallowing the people all rights of sui juris—you, in your sovereignty.”

“Holy shit!” Walter mumbles.

“In a letter to Colonel William F. Elkins on Nov. 21, 1864, President Lincoln expressed his fears.”

I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and cause me to tremble for safety of my country; corporations have been enthroned, an era of corruption in High Places will follow, and the Money Power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the People, until the wealth is aggregated in a few hands, and the Republic destroyed.

“Years later Supreme Court Justice Marshall Harlan in *Downes v. Bidwell*, 182, U.S. 244 1901 wrote in dissent the following.”

Two national governments exist; one to be maintained under the Constitution, with all its restrictions; the other to be maintained by Congress outside and Independently of that Instrument.

“Corporate United States began to accumulate debt via issuing bonds which came due in 1912. As usual, they could not pay. Seven families that had purchased the bonds demanded payment from Corporate United States. After negotiations, the families settled the debt for all the assets of Corporate United States including all the assets of the Treasury of the United States of America. At the beginning of 1913, Corporate United States lacked funds to carry out the business needs of the government. They approached the seven families for loans but were rejected. Instead the seven families created a private corporation named The Federal Reserve Bank. A relationship was formed whereby Corporate United States could transact business via note rather than money. Remember, a note represents debt owed. The agreement was between two corporations and did not involve the government in any way. That same year the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified which stated, ‘The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.’ At the same time Corporate United States added a sixteenth Amendment

to its Constitution adding the right to tax corporations. This amendment has become the basis for all subsequent federal income tax legislation and has greatly expanded the scope of federal taxing and spending in the years since.”

I realize all of this occurred before the Reorganization, but it still makes me angry that these fools destroyed something beautiful with so much promise. I make a promise to myself to create a new constitution that protects citizen sovereigns’ rights.

“There’s more,” Dr. Rice promises. “President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 6102 April 5, 1933 requiring Americans to surrender much of their gold to the government. Remember, if the original *Constitution for the United States of America* was being obeyed the government would have no authority to order such action from sovereigns. With the surrender of their gold, the people essentially surrendered their rights under the law. This is the way Roman Civil Law works which was our form of governance. It was based upon Roman Civil Law and Admiralty/Maritime Law—better known as the ‘Divine Right of Kings’ and ‘Law of the Seas,’ respectively. Roman Civil Law is also known as private international law. The government which was created for the District of Columbia via the *Act of 1871* operates under private international law, and not Common Law, which was the law of the Constitutional Republic. The stated reason for Executive Order 6102 was that hard times had caused “hoarding” of gold, stalling economic growth, and making the depression worse. In truth, the main rationale was actually to remove a constraint on the Federal Reserve which prevented it from increasing the money supply during the depression. *The Federal Reserve Act of 1913* required 40% gold backing of Federal Reserve Notes that were issued. It was near the limit, therefore, additional gold was required. Corporate United States needed more credit leading to more debt.”

“Without debt, there is no money,” I say in thought.

“The great divinely-inspired experiment lasted less than one-hundred-years. Think about that. In the recorded history of mankind one-hundred-years is the blink of an eye. That, my friends, is how long freedom and liberty lasted. American citizens went from sovereign to slave in, what, two generations.”

“How were they slaves?” Walter asks.

A wry smile makes a brief appearance on Henry L. Rice’s face. “A corporate government that makes nothing, spends money with abandon, and owes foreign bankers enormous sums has to use something for

collateral. After the ratification of the original *Constitution*, most federal government revenues were generated through tariffs—taxes on imported products—and excise taxes—taxes on transactions or the sale or use of specific products. The most common excise taxes were on fuel, tobacco, and alcohol. During the Civil War government debt increased dramatically. As a result, in 1862 Congress established an income tax on people who made more than \$600. This tax was abolished in 1872 in favor of higher excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol. They tried to re-establish an income tax in 1894, but it was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1895. Then in 1913—does that date sound familiar—the 16th Amendment to the *Constitution* gave Congress the power to tax the incomes of all individuals and the profits of all businesses. Now, they had collateral for all those Federal Reserve notes in the form of the current and future earnings of its citizens and businesses. When a child is born their parents register them with the government by receiving a birth certificate, which by the way is considered a bond. When the child is one-year-old it is issued a Social Security number with its name in all capital letters signifying that it is a corporation. This is so that the person can be used as collateral for the government to acquire debt. For the rest of his or her life their labor, time, and energy is what backs up the national debt. According to what I was able to find, by 1918 government revenue generated by the income tax exceeded \$1 billion. More than \$5 billion by 1920. And, with the introduction of mandatory withholding tax on employee wages in 1943 revenues almost reached \$45 billion in 1945. The last numbers I found were for 2010 when the Internal Revenue Service collected \$1.2 trillion from individuals and \$226 billion from corporations. Land of the free—my ass!”

“How did all that change with the Reorganization in 2024?” I ask.

Dr. Price shakes his head, “International bankers played a game of Three-Card-Monte with the world. Remember, there were Federal Reserve notes everywhere. All were backed by the United States debt. When it became obvious that corporate United States could no longer service the debt the Federal Reserve Bank turned to the World Court for relief. All the world leaders knew a collapse of the American economy would have far reaching global impact. Worldwide depression would be the result. All tangible American assets were awarded to the Federal Reserve Bank. At the same time in order to avoid catastrophic financial results world leaders were convinced to adopt International Monetary Units as the new reserve currency. All federal Reserve notes were then converted to IMUs at a rate of ten dollars for each IMU.” Dr. Price pauses

for effect. “Here is where the Three-Card-Monte comes in. The Federal Reserve knew the collapse was coming and even delayed it by moving the date when certain loans came due. They quietly converted Federal Reserve notes to IMUs before the devaluation. It was all done on paper with the issuing bank the World Bank owned by the same bankers who were partners in the Federal Reserve Bank. They succeeded in establishing a new world reserve currency issued by a central world bank while reducing their losses and placing every nation in debt—to them. They conquered the world without firing a shot.”

“Nations cannot operate without an instrument to execute financial transactions,” Dawn observes.

Dr. Rice surprises us all with his next comment, “Technologically, we are in the same position as the World Bankers. We could force the American dollar to be the reserve currency once more and essentially control global commerce. Eight people, in this room, could achieve what the United Nations with all its member states sought to do before we came along—world domination.”

“You can’t be serious,” I explode.

“But, I am. Conquest first took place face-to-face, then with ever more lethal weapons, that followed by economic means, and now technology. Should not the victor seize the opportunity?”

“What in the blue-hell are you suggesting!” Walter spits. “We are doing all this to promote liberty not tyranny!”

“Is that how you all feel?” Dr. Rice asks.

The room answers in unison, yes.

“Good. I had to check. Power is an addictive drug. Some are more susceptible than others. We found that out at a very high cost,” he looks at me and I think of Virginia.

With all the sobering thoughts in mind we tackle the writing of a new Constitution for the United States of America. I won’t bore you with all the details. Although, this should be of greatest interest to you as it affects the future of mankind. Eight people with the appearance of touching something sacred or at the very least magical approach the written document and place our signatures upon it. The signature of Virginia Morris also appears with none of us admitting to having made the addition.

We worked long hours to address every area where there might be confusion or numerous interpretations. It truly demonstrates what an enormous task the original writing was and how careful the founding fathers tried to be. I feel as though my ancestor, George Clymer, who

worked on the original document is looking over my shoulder, shaking his head, and mumbling, “Don’t make a mistake that will create controversy in the future.” In an odd way this process doesn’t give one a sense of power. Quite the opposite, it makes me feel very small.

With the exception of the preamble, I won’t provide the entire text of the new *Constitution for The United States of America*. You can find it. Instead, I’ll provide some of the more important changes to the original *Constitution* that was used as a starting point. You will see that there aren’t any amendments as all provisions were included in the main document.

PREAMBLE:

We the people, as sovereigns, in order to clearly define the role, extent, and limitations of government to act as an instrument instituted and exercised for the benefit of the people establish this Constitution for the United States of America. Its role is to secure the blessings of liberty for all citizens; insure domestic tranquility, protect life, property, and safety; offer assurance of equal and fair justice; provide for the common defense; and create a more perfect Union that will endure in perpetuity.

CHANGES TO THE ORIGINAL CONSTITUTION

GENERAL

- All legislative Powers derived from the people herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

- The people have an indubitable, unalienable, and inalienable right to reform or change their government, whenever it be found adverse or inadequate to the purposes of its institution.

- Congress shall make no law that in effect establishes a national religion, or prohibits the free exercise of religion in any private, public, or government location; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. No individual who, based on their faith, cannot support ALL laws of the United States shall be eligible to serve in elected office.

- Being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people, as sovereigns, to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed or inhibited or regulated through legislation or licensing or taxation or registration.

- No law shall be passed that gives favor or special privileges to any individual, group, or political ideology.
- All powers not delegated to the United States and limited by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the sovereign people.
- The government will have no authority to interfere with the ability of parents to raise their children unless clear and imminent physical danger to the child is determined.
- The federal government is forbidden to compete in any manner with private industry or professions by creating programs or institutions that offer like services or products.
- All matters of welfare, social programs, housing, and education are rendered to individual states as regional differences make a standard national policy inappropriate and wasteful.

REPRESENTATION/ELECTIONS

- Term limits for Congress set at 2 terms for Senators and 4 terms for Congresspersons.
- Any person wishing to run for office must complete a course on the structure and role of government as it applies to The United States of America and individual states.
- While like individuals might work as groups, no formal political parties will be recognized or shown on ballots.
- Housing will be provided, free of charge, for all elected federal officials in the House of Representatives and Senate to remove the strain and expense of finding adequate shelter. This also serves as a method of reducing the complexity and expense of security.
- Compensation for service will be provided by the individual states that they represent at no greater than 10% above the median income in that state.
- The President oath of office shall read, "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution for the United States, so help me God."

BUDGET/SPENDING

- The federal government is forbidden to borrow funds from any source.
- An approved budget must exist for the government to operate. Failure to pass a budget that is approved by the President by an

established date will result in the automatic continuation of the previous fiscal year budget minus ten percent.

JUDICIAL

- Membership of the Supreme Court shall be limited to an odd number not to exceed 11.
- In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial without lengthy delays.
- No federal court with regional jurisdiction may make any determination therein applying it to areas outside its jurisdiction, such as national in scope.
- Any judicial decision that impacts on the interpretation of any clause within the Constitution must be reviewed by the Supreme Court and, if upheld, must then be voted on by Congress and an appropriate amendment written if such is desired.

Along with the writing of a new *Constitution for the United States of America* we make a number of other decisions. It's essential that we bring order to the confusion as quickly as possible. On a federal level, it is surprising how much of the government that functions automatically. With Sandra Holmes resignation and her recognizing the transition tribunal as lawful the military continue operations as usual. In that every state government ceased operations, a request was made for the Joint Chiefs of Staff to appoint a military governor to serve until elections can be held.

The United Nations opens their new offices in Brussels, Belgium and immediately calls for a worldwide boycott of the rogue government of the United States of America. Germany, strangely, decides not to cease trading with America and German owned businesses continue operations. As expected, all the international banks refuse to accept dollars and announce that no credit is available for the United States. We immediately respond by announcing a new conversion rate. Instead of one-to-one the dollar will now be equal to ten International Monetary Units. Nations that are doing business in the United States are outraged, protest, and ultimately negotiate. In a very short period of time most nations agree to accept dollars as payment on an equal basis with IMUs.

I'm tired and I miss Virginia.



George W Bush
President: 2001 - 2009

“The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant.”

— Maximilien Robespierre

Chapter 43 | THE ELECTION

Two things are critical to establishing and keeping our republic—elections and education. Fair and honest elections to which the people have unobstructed availability are essential for sovereigns to remain sovereign. Every individual’s voice must be heard. Of equal importance is that the citizenry be fully versed in the structure, operations, traditions, and ultimate value of our system of government. A combination of a lack of understanding of how their government worked, little pride in what they were a part of, apathy, indoctrination by the education system, dishonest media, and greedy politicians led to the failure of the original form of government that led to the Reorganization. We must not let that ever happen again.

Before we can address these critical two factors a number of decisions have to be made. Let me begin by agreeing that this is a large nation. According to the 2070 Census the United States has a population of 351,555,102 broken down as follows.

Adults: 260,150,775

Males: 165,230,898

Females: 186,324,204

The challenge is to organize and simplify both government operations and citizen voting. Fifty years ago when the Reorganization took place some of the fifty states were combined and Texas left the Union. That left 30 states. After a long discussion we decide the logical course of action is to further combine states to reduce redundancy of state governments, as well as to attempt to reduce the potential for one state to dominate elections due to population. Using this reasoning we create eighteen states having populations between 12 and 25 million. Trust me it was quite a challenge.



For representation, we established that each state should have four senators and a number of representatives that would be approximately one representative per 750,000 people in the population. This resulted in 72 senators and 444 representatives. It breaks down as follows.

STATE	POPULATION	SENATORS	REPRESENTATIVES	TOTAL
California	23,600,000	4	31	35
Jefferson	23,077,313	4	31	35
New York	23,059,807	4	31	35
Hope	22,881,236	4	31	35
Dixie	21,720,668	4	29	33
Florida	21,593,204	4	29	33
Midland	19,512,584	4	26	30
Coastal	18,783,723	4	25	29
Carolina	18,251,941	4	24	28
Promise	18,245,834	4	24	28
New England	17,526,882	4	23	27
Delta	17,232,026	4	23	27
Heartland	16,484,113	4	22	26
Washington	16,383,395	4	22	26
Pennsylvania	15,112,331	4	20	24
Ohio	13,793,542	4	18	22
Appalachia	13,335,666	4	18	22
Virginia	12,164,050	4	16	20
TOTAL	332,758,314	72	444	516

I need to point out that New Mecca is no longer a state in the Union as they, insisting on Sharia law, could not support the new *Constitution*. All persons in New Mecca, numbering approximately 18,663,550, will no longer receive any Social Compensation Program payments and all federally funded programs have been cancelled. Of course, there has been loud and demanding protests, but we will not be swayed. Individual freedom includes responsibility and honoring a set of principles.

In our reborn America, states have expanded rights, as well as additional responsibilities. They will experience far less intrusion by the federal government than existed even before the Reorganization. States will decide what is best for them. As to elections, each state may decide for itself how to elect its Senators and Representatives. The federal government only sets the basic qualifications to run, term of office, number of members, and responsibilities when serving.

Electing the President and Vice-President of the United States is a different story. This process is completely managed by the federal government. To begin, there will be certain requirements and standards that must be met to qualify to run for either office. Vice President requirements are the same as President as the individual may through certain circumstances move into that office. Here are the requirements and rationale for each.

NATURAL BORN CITIZEN: There must exist uncontested proof of birth in one of the states, or to a citizen of the United States while traveling abroad. However, they cannot be raised in a foreign nation as that would influence their perspective in ways that cannot be reasonably evaluated.

ATTAINED THE AGE OF THIRTY-FIVE YEARS: All candidate must be thirty-five-years-old at the time that they would take the oath of office. It would be unduly restrictive if a young candidate who will be the appropriate age when they take the oath of office is unable to campaign while others could. For this reason, they have all the same rights as other candidates.

CLEAR OF A CRIMINAL RECORD: Any person convicted of a felony is disqualified from running for the office of President or Vice President of the United States. If they are under indictment their trial will be expedited, if possible. Failing a verdict, the person is ineligible.

SPEAKS ENGLISH: As clear communications are essential to operations of the office of President and Vice President all candidates must be fluent in English.

CITIZENSHIP TEST: When immigrants apply for citizenship, they must pass a test on American history, form of government, civics, economic model, and responsibilities of citizens. Any candidate wishing to lead the nation should pass a very stringent citizenship test.

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT 101: Not a test, however, a ten-week course on the structure and workings of the United States government as detailed in the *Constitution for the United States of America* will be provided and must be completed in order to be a candidate for the office of President of the United States.

MILITARY PROTOCOL: In that the elected President will become the Commander-in-Chief of the military it is imperative that they have a working knowledge of the branches of the military and basic operations.

The election process is completely different from what the original founding fathers designed, or the pre and post Reorganization methods of election. There are a number of reasons for this. First, there will be no political parties as these, over time, gain too much power, influence selection of candidates, and command displaced loyalty. Next, the entire process is executed without the need for financing. This removes the potential for any donor leverage or corruption. The Electoral College remains in effect with each state having between 20 and 35 Electors. Now you see the logic of the consolidation of states.

Election of President and Vice President will involve the following steps. Each state through popular vote can nominate one candidate for President/Vice President. While not every state may offer one there can be as many as 18 candidates for President/Vice President. All candidates will be given free websites on the government Election Channel. On this channel will also be the results of their Advanced Citizenship Test, past elected offices, and voting record. Then, over a fourteen-day period a question will be posted daily that each candidate is free to answer or comment on. Results will not be shown until the next day to remove the possibility of a candidate commenting on another candidate's position. On a designated day all candidates will give a fifteen-minute speech on their vision for America. These will be made available at the same time and left up for all voters to access. Two weeks later a nationwide popular vote primary will be held. The top six vote getters will become the candidates for President and Vice President.

Campaigning will be done on government sponsored election channels with candidates given equal time to present their best messages. All previous information about them will remain available. As we support freedom of the press, we cannot stop the media from

covering the various candidates and possibly providing biased information. If a candidate states an incorrect fact or blatantly lies it will be flagged on their page, corrected, and listed on a correction page.

When election day arrives voters will be identified by their IIDC chip to insure an honest and fair election. There isn't any need for early voting or absentee voting as essentially everyone has access to a computer, tablet, or phone. They can also access the voting site at police stations, firehouses, and government offices. As candidates win the popular vote in each state, they are awarded the number of electoral votes for which that state qualifies. The top two candidates, in terms of electoral votes, will be named the President and Vice President of the United States. Given that there are six candidates the potential for ties exists. If that happens a runoff election will be held with the top three or four candidates participating.

We created a process that ensures that no two candidates can come from the same state, money has no impact on their ability to get their message out, citizens are provided with all the information they require to make an informed vote, any identified misrepresentations are corrected, and no political party clouds the loyalty of a candidate. Our goal is to make it possible for any qualified person regardless of income or political connections to run for office.

I see you shaking your head. True. there is a strong possibility that flaws in the process do exist that will show up in the future. Hopefully, they will be easy to fix.

James A. Garfield, 20th President of the United States, said it best, "Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be maintained." Sadly, he was assassinated. He was shot July 2, 1881 at the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station in Washington D.C. three months after taking office. He died September 19, 1881.

From a federal government perspective, we have no right to interfere with how states educate their citizens. It is believed that a wide range of approaches and curriculum is considered preferable to a centralized form of teaching which could be abused or used for indoctrination as has happened in the past. It is our hope that each state will take education very seriously. The plan is to also create an atmosphere of competition among states by celebrating the best practices and student achievement. Federal government responsibility is to see that all citizens learn about American history, form of government, and economic model. Toward that end, we will produce video programs,

digital presentations, and downloadable documents. All of these will be available to state educators at no charge. There will be no intimidation, codification, or enticement to get states to use our materials. Our hope is that states will see the logic and value of an educated constituency and make it a priority. In addition, all federal educational materials will be available to any interested citizen. We have discussed developing entertainment venues to deliver our information. Time will tell.

Now, the first election. Simply, we need to have a functioning government in place as quickly as possible. It is agreed that the first President and Vice President will be selected from the transition team. Here is how this comes about.

“The quicker we begin acting like an administration, rather than a transition team, the better it will be in stabilizing the government,” Dawn declares.

Walter points out, “International forces are waiting for a misstep or sign of weakness. And, the United Nations will pounce the minute there is any sign of a loss of faith by the people.”

Dr. Rice adds, “Do not for one moment believe that the first President of the United States will not immediately be tested. We cannot take the risk of placing an unprepared individual in that position. For this reason, a general election would be a risk.”

“It should also be remembered that the first Chief Executive will set precedent for those who follow,” Neha Crying Wolf observes.

“It must be one of us, but not all of us wish to take on such a role,” Alessandra Ramos-Ortega states.

I chime in, “Soo Bon-Hwa and I don’t qualify—too young. I guess we’re the lucky ones.”

After the laughing dies down David Trufire states with sincerity, “You my friend will make the selection.”

“Me? Why me?”

“Because Soo has previously stated that he is a computational wizard and liaison to Prophet with no direct understanding of politics.” He looks around the table and concludes, “We will accept your choice.”

All present nod in agreement.

OK, here I sit with five persons—all of whom I respect—and I have to decide which one will be President of the United States. Think about it. I’m speaking for over three-hundred-million people. Now, that’s what I call pressure. Here I am twenty-one-years-old—yes, I had a birthday—and I’m selecting the President. That’s a heavy burden for one so young. Wait, eighteen-year-olds can vote and who says their vote isn’t the one

that leads to the selection. So, I toss a coin. Pay attention, we don't have coins.

I eliminate Walter Tize because he would tell world leaders to go screw themselves. Not that it would be a bad thing, but not with the first President.

The next person I eliminate is Alessandra Ramos-Ortega because she is a judge. She would make a perfect first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

David Trufire is a man I respect. He might be very good in the job, but STUS needs him as a significant number of changes are most likely coming.

That leaves Dawn Eastwood and Dr. Henry Rice. Both are qualified. However, only one has spent a lifetime pursuing this day. If anyone earned the seat, it is Dawn Eastwood.

I turn to Dawn and say, "Madame President, I'd like to introduce your Vice President Dr. Henry L. Rice."

To my relief and surprise applause fills the room.

Walter yells, "Hey, clown, where's my damn sandwich?" He smiles and winks.

Judge Ramos-Ortega admits, "I am so relieved." I don't tell her my thoughts about the Supreme Court.

David Trufire neither says anything nor shows any reaction.

Neha Crying Wolf walks over and places her hand on my shoulder. She says softly, "George, we made the correct decision. Your spirit is strong. From history to history. The path before you is your reward."

I'm not sure what that meant, but I couldn't help thinking of Virginia and how I wish she could share this moment.



Barack Obama
President: 2009 - 2017

“The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.”

— G.K. Chesterton

Chapter 44 | THE AMERICAN

Today is the Fourth of July 2076AD. This is a date that was a holiday for decades before the Reorganization. There were fireworks, cookouts, and parades as Americans celebrated freedom. Then it was forgotten. Removed from history. This year, the tradition of recognizing and celebrating the original birth of our nation begins anew.

In six months, a people demoralized, beaten, lost without hope, destined to be cast into an ever-expanding pool of subjects of global leaders escaped their sentence. Those who would be nothing more than numbers, digits on balance sheets, unrecognized on an individual basis, to the contrary, became greater than callous global leaders—they became sovereigns. An entire population has had the yoke of government removed allowing them to rise to whatever heights they are capable of achieving.

World media predicted disaster and chaos. “A Crashed Economy Awaits America,” one headline read. “Revolution Destined To Fizzle,” read another. “Economists Predict Millions Will Die.” And my particular favorite, “Boy Rebel Reveals Racist Attitude.” Do you get the feeling that they are rooting against us? President Dawn Eastwood seems unbothered by the doom-sayers. I should have expected that.

I once heard the phrase, “American exceptionalism.” At the time, the socialists decried that position claiming it was arrogant, unsubstantiated, insulting to other nations, and xenophobic. They sure were adept at coming up with phobias, judgmental words, and identity politics definitions involving more “ists” and “isms” than I thought possible. No joke, one politician accused anyone who owned a black dog, who wasn’t black, of being racist. It is difficult to understand how some can look at the world through such hateful jaundiced eyes. Yet, if

there ever was any doubt about the American spirit, drive, ambition, strength, or ability to succeed in spite of unwarranted criticism, you simply have to see the results when the fetters were removed.

Let's review the last six months.

The eighteen states of the United States of America began defining themselves physically, politically, and culturally. I must admit, it is amazing how each state turned out to be unique. It also didn't take long for citizens to develop pride in their state and local identity. Viva la difference! Military governors were replaced by newly elected officials. This includes Senators and Representatives sent to Washington, D.C. Given our policy of allowing states—wait wrong word—accepting states' right to operating with minimum federal interference, their style of government, local laws and regulations, services, and more vary widely. We have eighteen beautiful, distinct, impressive places citizens call home.

With a Congress in place, the *Constitution for The United States of America* was voted on and sent to the states for ratification. A new American Flag was designed and approved. It is the stars and stripes known as Old Glory only with eighteen stars—four, three, four, three, four. What a beautiful sight! Alessandra Ramos-Ortega was nominated for Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and approved by the Senate. Two other judges joined the court. My old pal, Walter Tize, was named Secretary of State. Now, he can literally tell world leaders where to go. I'm not sure how they will handle strength and straight forward talk. As expected, David Trufire was named Treasury Secretary. A discussion took place about the role of STUS and Prophet in terms of a national monetary system. It was decided that a central bank was not the best approach. However, a monetary system is needed. Gold and silver backed dollars are the goal, but how this will be facilitated is to be determined. Neha Crying Wolf is an advisor to the President and Soo Bon-Hwa technical liaison to Prophet. Me? You wouldn't believe it. I'll tell you later.

Freedom! It's magic. New industries popped up everywhere as Americans took advantage of no-interest business loans, built their operation from scratch on their own, or formed groups to found corporations. What we expected to be a drip-drip-drip of activity turned out to be a tidal wave.

I know that I haven't spoken of Dee in a long time. Little sister has been quite busy and is still an active participant in our quest for a bright future. Her latest project is a program that travels around America talking with everyday citizens and highlighting what's happening—titled

The American.

The program begins with our new American Flag waving in the breeze. Music is upbeat with almost a jazz sound. The first episode starts with a short biography of our first President, Dawn Eastwood. A voiceover asks, "How did we get here?" Still shots and video detail how America lost its way which prompted Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Eastwood and Sergeant Major Demarcus Shepherd to found STUS. Both men, along with seven other partners, knew the damage that had been inflicted on the nation was so severe that it would take a very long time to counter the effects. As retired military they could see that there would be pain, no easy fix, and it would require careful planning, time, as well as a bit of luck to prepare for a future revolution. What was also clear was that for most of them they would not see the fruits of their labors. Children and children's children would have to carry the torch. Dawn Eastwood, great granddaughter of Colonel Eastwood, never met him but was taught by him none-the-less to love America. She made an effort to learn about the real history of God's gift to man and to continue the fight to restore individual liberty. If there is any living person who has made the study of early America a life's endeavor it is President Dawn Eastwood."

I certainly can vouch for that.

Dee next meets a man standing next to an old white panel truck with a hand-painted sign, Mel Jacobs Plumber. She introduces herself and begins an interview. Mel tells of how before the revolution he eked out a living as a plumber by bribing corrupt politicians. They would recommend him for government plumbing jobs for half of what he made, after paying 80% in federal taxes. It didn't leave much, but an extra loaf of bread and meat once in a while was incentive enough. With a broad smile, he states, "With no income tax and plumbing jobs everywhere, I don't have to bribe anyone any more. In a year, I might be able to afford a better used truck." At the end of the interview the camera zooms in on a hand-painted small American Flag on the back of the truck. Now, that is inspiring.

The scene changes to a young woman sitting in a lounge. She is wearing workout gear and sneakers. A voiceover introduces her as Sheila Klingman, quarterback of the Philadelphia Eagles. "This will be my third season and we are definitely contenders. Training camp starts in about a month." When asked how she became a professional football player she responds, "I started in high school. The game fascinated me. There were a lot of boys playing at that time. I was determined to become a starter so I practiced day and night. There were times when my fingers would

bleed. It was all worth it, though. I was recruited to Florida State University and my sophomore year I replaced a young man as starting quarterback. By then they had perfected Computer Simulated Football (COSIMFO). Realistic graphics interface made what audiences watched on television indistinguishable from the physical, brutal, bone-breaking, injury-ridden game played in deteriorating stadiums by over-sized, performance enhanced Neanderthals. At first, they hired males, attached sensors to them, and had them run plays in a studio. Physical contact took place in the game portal. Computers compiled all the movements and generated a game on a screen. There was some audience resistance, but as stadium after stadium became condemned and closed the simulated game was the only one in town. When the first woman was tried out, she broke all records.” Sheila raised her hand to her eye and said, “Eye-hand coordination, as well as grace. It didn’t take long for team rosters to go pink. And, you know what, the game improved—faster, more complex moves, and bigger audiences. Of course, the computer-generated graphics still depict mammoth size men on the field. Some traditions die slow.”

When asked about new America Sheila replies, “Because we were in sports and entertainment we were treated quite well. However, you’d have to be blind to not see the suffering that was all around. Now, I see people being productive, businesses opening, properties being repaired and improved, all around happiness and hope.” When Sheila prepares to enter the restricted game studio she smiles and says, “President Eastwood has my vote next time around.”

This next interview is among my favorites.

It begins with a camera pulling back from a—are you ready—a printed book. You then see printing presses spinning with paper flowing this way and that. The song of industry fills the air. An older man is standing in front of a press looking at a printed book. His name is Vincent Malle. “Now that it is no longer illegal to print books, we have more work than we can handle. It took a while to get these old presses functioning, but they’re humming now. It’s nothing short of a miracle. I’ve hired twelve people already.” Not that he wasn’t already enthusiastic, Vincent becomes even more animated, “You want to see the first book that came off of these presses?” He holds up a bound volume titled *History of The United States of America*.

The program goes on showing people from all walks of life. Indeed, a sleeping eagle has awakened and is soaring higher and higher. Sorry, it’s the only image I could think of. I must admit, Darsey Patricia

Clymer has a real future in cinematography.

Everything wasn't wine and roses during the first six months. Anti-government protests continued, but became smaller and smaller. The media remained hostile omitting stories about all the positive economic activity and, might I say, fabricating stories to make President Eastwood and the others appear in the worst possible light. The good news is pro-American publications began to appear online and in print. It became more and more difficult for jackal journalists to find dirt or convince people who were living far better lives that things were bad.

The United Nations didn't go away quietly. They issued a declaration of war against the United States. However, they had a difficult time recruiting forces from their membership. General Doolittle, Chairman of the Joint Chief's of Staff, issued a stern warning that any troops that attempted to land on American soil would be dealt with quickly and thoroughly. That seems like pretty plain talk to me. President Dawn Eastwood issued a statement that if any foreign nationals took up arms against the United States it would be considered an act of war by the nation of their origin. The final event that squelched the United Nations' plans was when Japan, South Korea, Israel, Turkey, Ukraine, Norway, and other nations declared that if the United States was attacked, they would come to our defense.

While many good things were occurring in the United States, there was growing unrest in other nations. As hard as the international media and foreign leadership tried to suppress what was going on in the United States, news spread quickly. People became unhappy with their own present situation. Small revolts took place. I'm sure to some tyrannical leaders the example of American liberty leading to noticeable benefits to our citizens was as unwelcome as any revelation of their corruption. America became a shining light, as well as thorn in their side.

Two days before the Fourth of July, I received a message from President Dawn Eastwood. It went like this.

DAWN: George, you do realize that your work isn't finished.

GEORGE: Madame President, I thought that I could retire and live a normal life.

DAWN: Dawn, it will always be Dawn. There is still a great deal to be done.

GEORGE: Like what?

DAWN: Nation building. We have to fix what the socialists broke.

GEORGE: I'll get my wrench.

DAWN: LOL You won't need a wrench for what I require of you.

GEORGE: And, what is that?

DAWN: I'd rather discuss it with you in person.

GEORGE: I guess I can't refuse.

DAWN: You can, but you won't.

GEORGE: How come you think you know me so well?

DAWN: Because I do.

GEORGE: I might surprise you.

DAWN: You might, but I don't think so.

GEORGE: You're right, as usual.

DAWN: Don't for a minute think steadfastness and dependability are negative traits.

GEORGE: Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you!

DAWN: Precisely. Would you join me for lunch at the White House tomorrow?

GEORGE: I'll have to check my calendar.

DAWN: I'll have a car pick you up.

Not long ago, I was living in an old farm house. Now, I'm on my way to the White House. Anyone who doesn't think life is full of surprises isn't paying attention.

After normal pleasantries, Dawn—uh President Eastwood—and I sit down for a casual and simple lunch. Silence drapes the room. I feel it is proper protocol to wait for the President to speak first. She does.

"George, the founding fathers had great wisdom when they designed a government of the people. It was the first time in history that such an approach was taken. As a result, there were flaws and weaknesses that resulted in the ultimate collapse of the government they created. It is our task to improve on what they created and hopefully do so with fewer flaws and weaknesses. We cannot create a perfect government, but we must try."

When Dee's video stated that Dawn loves America, she didn't do justice to just how much.

"At present, we have many capable and honorable people helping the government redefine itself and function. The elite bureaucrats are gone."

I nod.

"Your DNA has proven itself. Now, I need you for something I believe only you are capable of doing."

I shudder.

"I need a devil's advocate. Someone to question everything, to

look at decisions with a critical eye, to consider the downside or unanticipated consequences of our actions. We are all too close to it to see the weaknesses. Evil men slowly stole liberty from the people. They were unscrupulous and devious. Later when they had control of power, they became brazen. We need to learn from past mistakes to avoid future ones. I need someone to point out every possible risk. I need that bird that whispers in your ear, 'beware.' I need an individual that I trust unconditionally. I need a George Clymer."

"I don't know. I'm not that brilliant."

"You are, but you also won't be alone."

"Thank God. Who else will be on the team?"

President Eastwood surprises me when she asks, "Profit or loss?"

I reply, "There are profits and there are prophets." Why is she asking me that now? That's when it hits me. Don't go there. I say in disbelief, "A computer?"

"Prophet is far more than a computer—you know that. She has capabilities that surpass human beings. She only lacks empathy and emotion. In this case that might be a good thing as emotions cloud judgment."

"I thought Soo Bon-Hwa was the liaison."

"He is a techie. I need a visionary."

"How would this work?"

"You and Prophet will review all of our actions and proposals looking for defects. I might contact you to discuss things that I am considering. You and Prophet can analyze it, tear it apart, find its flaws, and give me valuable feedback. And, you will have complete access to me."

"I would have to move to Austin, Texas—leave the country."

"You will. However, you will have carte blanche as to travel and diplomat status."

I sit in silence contemplating being in a foreign country paling around with a super-computer.

I hear Dawn's voice suggest, "You should look up that girl you watched the bats with."

"I don't even remember her name."

"Michelle Gillis."

I stare at Dawn for a moment, then say, "She was energetic, enthusiastic, and cute."

To my surprise, David Trufire enters the dining room. Dawn motions for him to sit down which he does. He looks at me and explains,

“America needs a monetary system that is secure, honest, and incapable of being weaponized. Prophet handles all Social Compensation Program payments, the Keep, the Individual Identification And Data Chip function, and all financial transactions. This makes it a powerful weapon in the wrong hands. Quite frankly that’s why it was built. Over decades all vital economic functions were concentrated into a single device. A damn powerful one I might add. In fact, we are not sure what Prophet’s limits are.”

Just how far can technology go, I wonder.

“George, what we are asking you to do is something many men could not be trusted with. In addition to all that President Eastwood requires, I need your assistance in finding ways to untangle our economic engine while keeping it secure and functioning. In a year there will not be a Social Compensation Program and the Keep will be expanded to be available to all citizens. The IIDC function will be moved to a different facility to reduce the potential for invasion of privacy. In the meantime, you will communicate with Prophet on the highest security level which places a weapon that could conceivably conquer the world in your hands. John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton warned, ‘All power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.’ I say with confidence, ‘He hasn’t met George Clymer.’ Your nation—no the world—is counting on you.”

Did you ever have a time when your stomach muscles become so tight that half your body goes numb?



Donald J Trump

President: 2017 -

“The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender, or submission.”

— John F Kennedy

Chapter 45 | THE TEAR

Millions of bats take to the air from under the Congress Avenue bridge in Austin, Texas. As a seemingly endless flow of fluttering wings pass before me, I envision millions of Americans taking wing across the nation due to their new found freedom. It’s funny how one completely non-related event can cause one’s brain to see a connection.

I said goodbye to my father and Dee at the airport. Yes, I hugged Dee. I guess that’s standard operating procedure, now. They will be remaining in Washington D.C. I had a lonely flight where I was somewhat homesick, but for where. In truth, it was more like for when. The government rented an apartment for me, I have a driver, my credentials are of a V.I.P. nature, credit has been established, and I am personal friends with the President of the United States. In some people’s books that is quite an enviable position to be in. And, don’t get me wrong—it is. But, along with all of that is the responsibility of being a watchdog, fortune-teller, and conscience of a nation. If a flaw or risk slips by me people may suffer. Taken to the extreme it could start the wheels of destruction all over, once more.

Back to the bats. I found Michelle Gillis, the young lady who introduced me to them. She graduated from the University of Texas two months ago and now is looking for a job. She still has that energetic, positive, upbeat personality that is contagious. People around her must always be smiling.

I surprise her when I reveal, “When we were last here a woman joined us. At the time I didn’t know who she was. However, she knew who I was.”

With a slightly confused look, Michelle responds, “Uh huh.”

“It was Dawn Eastwood, now President of the United States of

America.”

“You’re kidding! You know President Eastwood. That’s beyond outrageous.”

“I work for her.”

“Wait! This is getting weird. You didn’t know her a few months ago and now you work for her?” Michelle ponders what I told her and then the light flashes on. She sits up straight and states, “Head out of the sand.” Next, she shakes her head, “Clear the brain.” Finally, she concludes, “George Clymer! You led the revolution in America.”

“Not really. I was involved but there were a lot of people living and . . .” I pause, “and dead who made the rebirth of America possible.”

“I am so overwhelmed. What are you doing in Austin?”

“I’m sort of a diplomat working with a tech company for the government.”

She looks at me out of the tops of her eyes and asks, “Did you sign the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution*?”

“Yes, and yes.”

“How cool is that and I bought you a taco.”

“You did, which probably kept me alive, made the revolution possible, and saved America.”

“I’m glad I could help,” she teases.

I inquire, “What was your major?”

“Bat husbandry,” she giggles at her own joke. Then tells me, “Communications.”

“That covers a lot.”

“It does. There are jobs, if I want to work in the computer gaming industry, or be a weather girl on television, or write for a journal on nutrition.”

“How would you like to help shape a new government?”

“You’re teasing me.”

“No, I’m thinking that you grew up in a free country with a free market economy. Almost all Americans have no idea what that is. They’ve been isolated, misinformed, and brainwashed. To them, capitalism is a dirty word but they don’t know why. It’s going to take a great deal of re-education to open their eyes to all the wonderful possibilities.”

A deer in the headlights looks at me, “I don’t know. That’s a mighty big challenge.”

I point at an imaginary screen and say, “Tomorrow will be sunny with a chance of rain in the afternoon.”

Michelle laughs.

“Let me discuss it with Dawn—uh, President Eastwood.”

Bats continue to swarm out from under the bridge.

The next day my driver takes me to the STUS facility. Unlike last time, the limousine is not blacked out. Even though I now know where the site is the Austin roads are so confusing, I don’t believe I could find it on my own. We approach a barn. Yes, a real authentic red barn standing proudly in the sun on a Texas ranch. Once inside I exit the vehicle and it backs out of the structure. I stand and wait until a deep blue light appears from an, up-to-that-moment unseen door as it opens. A shadowy figure inside greets me, “Welcome to PROPHET.”

As I follow the shadowy figure through the unseen corridor a dark blue light dances along leaving darkness behind us. Step after step I cautiously walk. I’m still struck by the fact that there is no sound. My guide dissolves leaving me alone in a dark blue, uh, undefinable location. A moment later a light appears at floor level and moves upward in what appears to be a scan of the new arrival. When it completes its trip upward a door directly in front opens and I am greeted by the light of a room. A young man walks into the light and says, “Welcome to PROPHET, Mr. Clymer.”

I enter.

Once my eyes adjust to the light, I see the same comfortable looking room as before with a couch in front of a large monitor, two easy chairs, and a low coffee table. On the coffee table is a single coffee cup, a carafe of coffee, and bottled water. Much like the missing man formation flown by pilots, I am acutely aware of the missing second cup. Virginia should be here with me. Guilt blankets my consciousness. If I hadn’t gone over to the David Trufire and Walter Tize holograms and then turned to face Seth, Virginia would be alive. I still see her green eyes looking at me and not a word passing between us. Helpless doesn’t do justice to the emotion. I do love her. The pain I feel may never go away and, I guess, I deserve it.

Into the room walks Virginia.

I’m in shock! Of all the images to pick, why pour salt on an open wound? Before me is the person I miss most. It’s an affront. A cruel joke. Why make me face it? How insensitive can . . . a machine . . . be? A machine, computer, emotionless entity. I conclude that there is no malice, just an unfortunate miscalculation.

“You’ve taken the form of someone I cared deeply about and will forever miss. It is painful,” I state.

Virginia—Prophet—responds, “If I offend, I will correct the error.”

It is Virginia's voice.

Virginia asks, "Is there another image you would prefer?"

"Any other image," I say. Virginia rises to leave. "Wait!" I don't know why, but I can't let her leave. "Stay."

Virginia sits, once more, "You should not feel guilty."

"Why do you say that?"

"It shows on your face. You blame yourself. However, you should know that from all of the information and known facts, after analysis, it was concluded that neither of you would have left that room."

"Maybe, I would have preferred that," I whisper.

"It is not what Virginia would have preferred."

"How can you know?"

"Because, in preparation for your visit, I did extensive research into your past and that of Virginia Morris. Her history, comments, attitude, DNA, and psychological profile. Her essence and spirit shape this image. I concluded that it would make our interaction more productive."

"I'm talking to a ghost—yet it is one I don't wish to see leave."

"Then, let's proceed and at any time you wish that I leave—I will do so without complaint."

"You are an illusion that brings pain and comfort at the same time."

"I am not an illusion."

That tone is pure Virginia.

I don't mind telling you that first meeting was unsettling. I was talking with Virginia. I wanted so much to talk with Virginia. For brief moments, Prophet was Virginia in my mind. Her mannerisms, tone of voice, chosen words, and emerald green eyes reached inside me and haunted me. When I arrived back at my apartment the seas crashed upon the shore as I wept like a baby. You know my next move.

DAWN: George, how is Austin?

GEORGE: Did you know?

DAWN: Yes.

GEORGE: And, you thought it was a good idea?

DAWN: I thought it was a necessary step.

GEORGE: Did you give me any thought?

DAWN: I knew it would be difficult for you emotionally. That I regret. We had to try. First, you might have found some solace with her image.

GEORGE: And second?

DAWN: We need Virginia's thinking—even if simulated.

GEORGE: How can you be sure it is Virginia's thinking?

DAWN: Prophet is as close to being human as artificial intelligence can be. She knows more about Virginia Morris than any of us. There are things about Virginia only known to Prophet and it will remain that way.

GEORGE: I cried.

DAWN: We all did.

GEORGE: I guess I'm being a little self-centered about this.

DAWN: Understandable.

GEORGE: Let me tell you about a young college graduate.

Over the next few months Virginia and I have reviewed proposed legislation, provided our opinion of international affairs, analyzed situations, and been a couple of Pitbull watchdogs. I'm sure that you noticed that I refer to Virginia. Over time, it has become more natural. Quite easy to forget and just go with it. I slipped and called her Red one time. She threw a bottle of water at me. If it wasn't a hologram, she would have given me a concussion. I love Virginia and always will. I like this Virginia very much. It's a strange inconceivable relationship.

The world has settled down and accepted the new United States of America. Our economy is booming which, of course, is of great interest to other nations. Trade deals are being made, treaties being signed, and diplomatic missions reopening. The United Nations requested that their headquarters return to New York City.

"The United Nations has never been an ally to the United States," Virginia points out.

"I agree."

"It is comprised of New World Order globalists who want nothing more than to dominate the world," Virginia continues.

"I agree."

"We have to protect our sovereigns—the people."

"I agree."

"Not only should their headquarters not be in the United States, we shouldn't be a member of that organization."

"I agree."

"They owe us an apology for declaring war on us, for crying out loud."

"I agree."

"You're an idiot."

"I . . . don't agree."

Virginia smiles.

"You're really something," I offer.

On an October afternoon, Virginia and I are reviewing world events and national news. We stop on a channel where Senator Adam Short of California is giving a speech.

“Before I ran for office, I was a college professor at Harvard University. My decision to run came as a result of the fact that I didn’t like what I was seeing. The rich are getting richer and the poor are suffering. Queen Eastwood lives like royalty while little Penny Howard works two jobs as a single mother. The government that replaced the legitimate government is a sham. They are doing nothing for the people. I propose an extension of the Social Compensation Program beyond the established cut-off date. On an international basis, America has rejected membership in the very organization that works tirelessly to preserve peace—the United Nations. And, I hate to say it, our Vice-President, Dr. Henry Rice, turned his back on his race and sold out to blatantly racist leaders. He should be ashamed. Our environment is in crisis, but being ignored. Electrosmog, dirty electricity, and electrical pollution are killing thousands every year. It comes from obvious sources like cordless phones, wireless devices, cell phones, cell phone towers, wiring in your walls, electrical outlets, extension cords, lamps, and other electricity sources. Man-made electromagnetic exposures are artificial artifacts, with unusual intensities, signaling characteristics, pulsing patterns, and wave forms. They misdirect cells in the body many ways. This will lead to an inconceivable health catastrophe on a worldwide scale in the next ten years. What is needed is a strong worldwide initiative that focuses on green electronics using new energy technologies that acknowledge the health consequences of current technologies. The fools in Washington are failing you. Your government is failing you. They should retrofit every structure in America to provide EMF insulation.”

“Unbelievable, in our first year,” I comment.

Senator Short continues, “I am going to run for president in the next election. If I win, I will fundamentally change the direction of this nation. The government owes you protection from electrosmog, free healthcare, an education, affordable housing, safe cities without the threat of gun violence, elimination of hate speech, and punishment of those who are intolerant of persons who are different from themselves. You deserve a government that will take care of you and watch over you. Forward to victory.”

I’m stunned at how quickly the socialist forces rise once more. This man was elected to the Senate. He makes false promises, plays to peoples’ fears and prejudices, condemns the efforts of honorable

people, and in essence hates America. Yet, here he is using the liberty and freedom of speech we fought for in an effort to take it away from the very people who sent him here.

I conclude, “They’re never going to stop. It’s a mindset or a mental disorder. Damn socialists always believe that they alone can create and rule over a better society if they simply have the power. The scenario never changes. They start out by wanting to rid society of all its ills only to become the cause of ever worsening conditions.” I turn to Virginia. There she sits motionless. Her green eyes on the screen and to my complete surprise a tear rolls down her cheek.

My friends, freedom is not something you get from a government. It is your right from the day you are conceived. The air is there for you to breathe. Your life has meaning that only you can define. Liberty is more valuable than gold that evil men lust after. Defend your freedom, lest your life loses its meaning.

Profit or loss? There are profits and there are prophets. Freedom is not an economic concept. Freedom is an act of God.

My name is George and I’m a patriot.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kenneth J Munkens

Kenneth J Munkens is a storyteller with an unpredictably creative mind. There is nothing common about his work. Known for his complex stories populated with multi-dimensional characters he takes readers on an emotional and intellectual journey whose destination is unpredictable.

Enter the world that Munkens creates at your own risk. His stories will make you laugh, cry, smile, wonder, and care. Empathy serves him well as he understands the wide range of emotions involved in human relationships. His humor will sneak up on you while your heart will be stung by a depth of emotion so rare these days.

Character development is an art perfected by this author. He creates real human beings that stay with you long after you finish reading. Readers often state that they feel as though they know the characters as well as they know their friends and relatives. Many long for a sequel to continue to follow the lives of characters with whom they have become attached.

Born in the Bronx, congenital eye problems and loss of his mother at a young age shaped Munkens' character giving him the strength to face the real-world head on with a non-yielding spirit. Married over fifty years with two grown daughters, he values family, his enthusiasm is contagious, sense of humor notorious, and fascination with those strange creatures called human beings limitless.

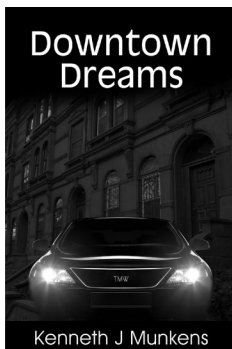
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Downtown Dreams

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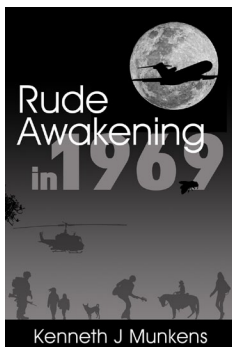
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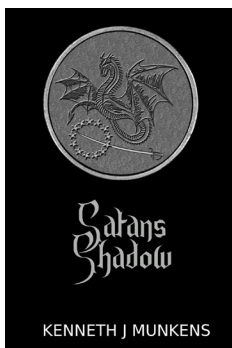
A patch of black ice sets in motion life-changing events as a father and daughter search for meaning in a world turned upside down. Music, the universal language, relates the haunting story of a young girl with a violin and a secret. Sometimes as complex as a symphony or simple as a child's tune, her story is one of hope disappointment, passion, courage, and the power of the human spirit. Just as black ice can sneak up on you, words in this tale will unexpectedly touch your heart and long be remembered.



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