

Mountain of Gold

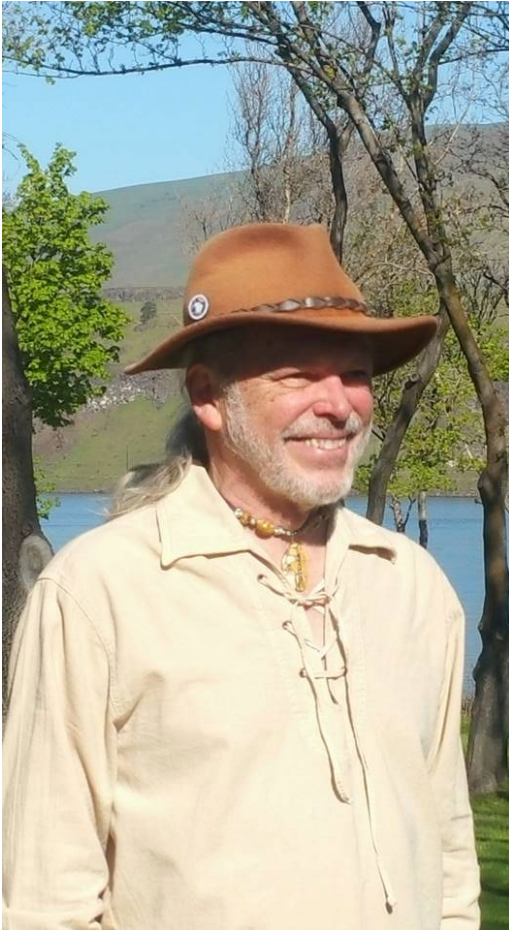
A Novel by

Russell E. Vance, III

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR.

Russell E. (Rusty) Vance, III, PhD. is a retired psychotherapist who, after retiring, has followed his passions and dreams. He and his wife, Pamela, spent the first ten years of retirement as nomadic RVer's spending over 90% of their life off-the-grid far out into the Sonoran Desert or in the dense cedar and hemlock forest of Glacier National Park in northwestern Montana where Rusty and Pamela served as volunteer campground hosts.

An unabashed tree-hugger and environmentalist, Rusty's post-retirement advocacy became wildlife management, living among and helping keep deer, mountain goats, big horn sheep, bears and other creatures safe. Many of his stories carry a strong environmental message. Rusty enjoys spending his evenings writing stories. His novels include – *AGEH*, *New Prince of Coillearnach*, *Tree of Life*, *The Tillman Place*, and *Mountain of Gold* along with several novella and short stories.



Prologue

A lone figure staggered unnoticed across the Sonoran Desert toward the gate of the Tumacacori mission. He went unnoticed because no one was out in the midday sun unless it was absolutely necessary. Brother Raphael was a young novice when he left Spain in 1608 to bring Jesus to the Indians of the Spanish empire in the new world. His youth was the only explanation for how he had survived to this point. Leaning up

against the gate of the mission he was too weak to reach the bell and slumped to the ground, laying in his wool habit until one of the brothers found him hours later.

Raphael was known to the monks at the mission. He and five other monks from the mission had accompanied Capitán Pedro de Málaga and a company of conquistadors to visit some pueblo Indians far to the north of the mission. They had left in November to take advantage of the cooler winter weather.

The thick adobe walls of his monastic cell gave little relief from the heat. Brothers took turns sponging Raphael as he lay unconscious. Even in a modern medical facility it would have been considered a miracle that the young man survived as long as he did. He would occasionally become conscious and babble about a mountain of gold – Montaña de Oro. When asked about the others he replied “dead. All dead.” Whether or not anything he said was accurate, it was the only account of the company anyone would ever have. After struggling for five days to survive, Brother Raphael died.

Brother Andrés, one of Raphael's friends, caregivers and an avid journalist, carefully recorded Raphael's accounts in his journal.

“Raphael awakened twice while I sat with him today. He told me that the natives had been very friendly and welcomed them into their city, which was quite large. His company camped outside the city near a river. He said that some of the conquistadors noticed that these natives wore gold jewelry instead of copper, which is more common and abundant here. When they asked the natives about their jewelry, they were shown a mountain of gold. A fight broke out when the commander of the conquistadors tried to take some of the gold. The conquistadors killed several of the natives, but in the end, all of the conquistadors died along with two of the brothers.

Brother Raphael, along with Brother Juan and Brother Amadeo, Capitán Pedro de Malága, and an interpreter were given some food and water and sent away with a warning for others to stay away. How Raphael made it back here was nothing short of a miracle.”

“Brother Andrés kept his journal in a niche dug out of the adobe wall in his cell. Since few of the brothers could read,” Dr. Michael Albertson, the head archeologist on the Tumacácori project, was saying to a group of students, “and no one was evidently interested in Brother Andrés journaling, it was obviously ignored and forgotten after his death.”

“What are you going to do with the journal?” asked a colleague.

“We have that conference at the University of New Mexico in a few weeks,” said Dr. Albertson, “I’m going to share it and see if anyone can help me connect the dots.”

“Do you think it could lead to a mountain of gold?” asked a student.

“Naw,” said the professor with a laugh. “the young friar was probably delirious. I know the gold rush started up by Quartzsite, here in Arizona, but I don't think there's that much gold in Arizona and New Mexico put together.”

They all laughed.



CHAPTER 1

My name is Rusty Gerber. Life has been extremely good to me. Today was one of those magnificently beautiful days just made to sit and contemplate my blessings and enjoy what I've been privileged to do with them. My canine companion, Butch, and I went to our favorite spot on top of Homestead Hill; the low mountain behind the cabin; looking out over our beautiful home still known to most people

as The Old Tillman Place.

Our horses; Janie, Penny and a few long-term four-legged guests; were grazing contentedly on black grama, tobosa and dropseed grass below us. Around us spread the most magnificent panorama of the high desert painted in Earth tones of browns and greens on a canvas of a clear, rich blue big sky with splashes of vivid color. The beauty of nature and the wonders of the high desert are all that can be seen in every direction with my small cabin and barn, at the foot of the mountain, blending into the vista. From here I can tell where the San Miguel River winds its way through the ranch by the line of Cottonwood and Palo Verde trees. Creosote, and mesquite dominate the broad flat range with Agave, Ocotillo, Yucca, Saguaro and other cacti providing a painter's palate of color.

Tracker Butte, the name I gave to the magnificent butte in the middle of my ranch to honor Tracker Tillman, who made all this possible, was a constant reminder to me that with such blessings comes responsibility to help those less fortunate. Otherwise, you are no more than an electi pauci; my name for the selfish few who control everything and share nothing.

Still one of the two best kept secrets in Lewis County, Tracker and his beloved Jeannie Wilcox had a phenomenal gold mine which they secretly used to help the people around them. They lived a good twenty miles from the village of Dead Horse and almost four miles up a dirt track on their ranch in a small, albeit comfortable, cabin without electricity and an old-fashioned windmill to pump their water. They had a classic propane fridge, the most beautiful enameled cast-iron cook stove you've ever seen, and Tracker had put a Franklin stove in the fireplace to make it more efficient. This cabin, their homestead and sanctuary for so long, is now my sweet haven many miles into the high desert away from the greed, destruction, chaos

and pain that passes for modern civilization.

Modern city people would call it poverty. To Tracker and Jeannie, it was a chunk of heaven in which I feel extremely fortunate to live. At first, I was planning on building another cabin farther into the wilderness, but I fell in love with their old place, and it is now my home.

After Tracker was murdered by his niece and I came into possession of the treasure, Jeannie would not take any of the gold. She works at her brother's mercantile in Dead Horse, which came to him through their family, and lives in a couple of rooms above the store. Along with several other good citizens; including a vet, banker, attorney and county assayer; we set up the Memorial Foundation, a secret group that helps me spend the gold on the people of Lewis County and the neighboring Laguna Pueblo known to us as the Kawaika.

I was privileged to have helped Dr. Kachina Corn find the Kawaika village. That was fun and exciting. I have a young couple, Bobby and Peggy Jean Jordan, living in the double-wide trailer at the front of the ranch. They are rancher's kids who went to agriculture school and are trying to reintroduce subsistence farming as a way of surviving the current capitalistic mayhem. They contribute a lot to the community. Perhaps their greatest contribution is their bringing hope to a community being killed by giant ag-corporations and feed lots.

We have kept several good local ranches from going under either by buying them, paying off debts or helping them find markets where they weren't forced to compete with the big feed lots. Even when we've erased debts, the new markets idea has proven the most successful. We got the idea from Bobby and Peggy Jean's parents who survive and employ five ranch-hands, with a herd of 1,500 cows on 1,100 acres.

Steve and Barbara knew that a big feed lot can keep that many

cows in only fifteen acres. Don't get me started on the inhumane conditions of those acres, but that's the capitalistic way.

Barbara did a lot of research, traveling and pitching the quality of free-range beef. They make no attempt to compete with the feed lots but focus on providing top quality beef to places like Disney, resorts, big casinos and others who do their own whole carcass meat fabrication. Currently they have a good clientele, but the profit margin is really super slim. That's why their son, Bobby, and his wife are farming the lower portion of my ranch. Steve and Barbara want to support Bobby and Peggy Jean's dream, but they don't really have the land to do it.

Lots of folks in the county understand what Barbara and Steve are doing and know that it is far better than trying to compete, but most of them do not have Barbara's skills. As a result, Bill Anderson, my good friend, attorney and attorney for the Foundation, is actually in the process of working with Barbara, a food group from near Flagstaff, and some progressive financial experts to investigate the possibility of starting a coop that would market our Lewis County beef to high-end markets and consumers. Barbara would be the coop's director. She is adamant about there being enough buyers out there who are willing to pay a fair price for high quality beef to keep all the ranchers in Lewis County in business. Sitting here the very thought almost makes me giddy because, like a secret Santa, I plan to provide the start-up funds.

The Kawaika people who live east of me are dear friends. They are perhaps more prosperous than many native American tribes but that still makes them far from rich by modern American standards. Their wealth is totally in the survival of their culture and that, despite the fact that the government has broken every treaty it has ever made with indigenous people, they are living on a portion of what was their ancestral home.

“We have a good life,” I said patting Butch and gazing out over the marvelous vista, “we have a very, very good life.”

It isn't at all what I had envisioned. I had originally bought this ranch and come here with the idea of settling into a hermit's life. I wanted to escape what is known as civilization. I wanted to hide from people. I had been a nomad, and now I am even more involved with people than ever before. But it is a different type of involvement. It is good.

The Kawaika are a most generous and caring people who love the land in the best way. The tribe and the ranchers have an excellent relationship and honor each other's history and culture.

Kachina's tremendous archeological find, known as the Kawaika Village, is actually on my ranch which, of course, had originally been Kawaika territory. Even though I would be quite willing to give them the land back, they don't want me to even whisper that idea. It is very much easier for the government to take the land from indigenous people than from a white male like me. We have an unwritten agreement that the tribe has use of my ranch as though it is theirs. I only ask that they don't bother Bobby and Peggy Jean who farm a one mile by six-mile swath along the county road at the south end of the ranch. In my will I am giving Kachina's husband, Dr. Carlo Russi, a white man, the land around the Kawaika Village because, again, it is harder to take something from a white man. Bill Anderson said that he's never written such a complicated will. It is all aimed at protecting the land for the tribe and the mine to continue helping people through the Foundation.

Kachina and her husband live in a traditional adobe hut by the Kawaika Village dig with an outdoor kitchen and ocotillo fenced corral. The hut replaces the hunting lodge in which they

originally lived. They are as happy as any young couple could be. Living in the simplicity of her ancestors, their home is often mistaken for an educational display by visitors. I can't believe how many people very seriously ask us 'how can you live like that?'

A friend has a poster with a picture of what I believe to be an African tribesman looking out over a savannah with the caption "Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you."

I have to laugh. I don't know how common it might be, but certain circumstances, events or comments will immediately bring to mind movie or book quotes which I feel compelled to share. When visitors wonder how we can live out here, I can't help but think of a conversation in the movie "Beverly Hillsbillies".

Jeb's sister is trying to get him to take his family away from the rural Ozark Mountains and starts going on about (paraphrased) 'look where you live. You live in a cabin in the woods surrounded by trees and swamps and snakes and critters ... ' When she finishes her tirade that she believes is belittling Jeb's life-style, Jeb smiles and replies, "Yes, we isa livin' in paradise." The same is true for us. This is our paradise.

I became extremely good friends with two shaman; Kachina's grandfather, Felipe Abeita, and the hermit known only as Istaqa – coyote man. Istaqa has been the protector of the Hidden Valley cliff dwellings all his adult life.

The cliff dwellings are also on my ranch. The valley is well hidden and if you flew over it, you would not see the cliff dwellings due to the overhang. Only about six of us know about this place we call the Hidden Valley Village. We keep it secret so that we don't have to worry about grave robbers, treasure hunters or the government. Istaqa has a lodge at the foot of the cliff where he lives and keeps watch over this

wonderful, world-class treasure.

Kachina was looking for this village when she discovered the Kawaika Village near the Coyote tank at the foot of South Table Mountain. I won't take your time re-telling the story which you can read in my account called *The Tillman Place*. It is important, however, to tell you that Kachina did end up lying in her doctoral dissertation to protect the cliff dwellings. She said that the stories she followed were about the village between the tank and the San Miguel River. Still, her discovery of the Kawaika Village is a major archaeological discovery at the center of the accounts I'm about to share with you.

The handsome young Kawaika man walked into the high desert toward a hill covered with juniper. His moccasin clad feet made no sound. Although it was the twenty-first century, one would have thought he had just walked out of the nineteenth. His trousers and tunic were made of the same unbleached, handwoven cotton and tied at the waist with a woven fabric belt of many bright colors. A similar band held back his long black hair. A medicine bag hung around his neck and at the end of a sash that went from his left shoulder to right hip was the antelope bone knife that had been passed down to him from many generations past.

He was headed toward a tiny figure in the distance. It was a young girl sitting cross-legged on a large stone. She was similarly dressed, except that she wore a dress that was made from two pieces of material and belted. The knife that hung from her sash was the bone knife that the approaching man, her grandfather, had made for her.

The child was facing away from her grandfather. Next to her was a pottery jar that was, were one able to see inside, empty. She had left her home quite some time ago to collect juniper

berries. It was not an uncommon thing for her to get distracted by the nature around her, so her grandfather was not worried.

As the man drew near there was a flap of wings just beyond the sitting figure and a great dyaami, eagle, rose into the sky. The Golden Eagle is common to this area, but one does not generally find them sitting with a young human girl as though in deep conversation.

“Kachina,” the man called.



The young girl turned and smiled.

“Baabaa,” she called. (That means grandpa in the Keres language.) “Isn’t she magnificent!?”

“She most certainly is,” replied her grandfather still speaking in their ancient native tongue. The two of them almost always spoke Keres to each other. He was the tribal shaman known as Felipe. “Did she tell you where to fill your jar with juniper berries?”

“No,” laughed the child continuing in the Keres language, “but she told me about the most wonderful Kawaika village that hangs on the side of a mountain.”

Now most people would pass that off as childish imagination, but not Felipe. He looked up at the sky where the giant eagle was circling lazily looking for the unwary jack rabbit or other tidbit for dinner.

“Did she tell you where it is?”

Kachina pointed at the mountains in the distance. Those mountains had been a part of the Kawaika hunting territory for hundreds of years. If there was such a village there is little doubt that it was in those mountains.

“It’s a good thing your mother doesn’t need those berries for dinner or we would all go hungry,” he teased the child.

“Oh, Baabaa,” the girl giggled.

“Let me help you fill your jar with berries so we can go home.” He held out his hand. The child took his hand and the two continued toward the hill of junipers.

“How does Dyaami know our ancestors?” Kachina asked. “Is she that old?”

“I don’t know,” Felipe answered honestly. “She might be a katsina.”

“I’m named after the katsina,” Kachina said proudly.

“Yes, I know,” replied her grandfather. “I asked your mother, my daughter, to name you Kachina because I knew when I first saw you that you were of the spirit world.”

Kachina just grinned. She had heard this story many, many times but never got tired of it. “I want to talk to the katsinim, like you,” the girl said seriously.

“You are way ahead of me already,” Felipe was equally as serious. “I’ve never known anyone to have a conversation with dyaami.”

“She is very sad at what she sees as she flies,” Kachina’s face turned dark and disturbed. “People are not showing respect to Mother Earth. The white man”

“Kachina,” Felipe interrupted her. “It isn’t just the white man anymore.” The child could see the sadness on his face. “We have all lost our way.”

“I want to help us find our way back,” the youngster said emphatically, “like you!”

“You will be much greater than me,” Felipe said.

He looked down at the beautiful child holding his hand. She indeed would be greater, he thought. At six years old she could speak Keres fluently as well as English. In fact, she almost never spoke English with her grandfather. That got both of them in trouble. She had a sense of nature that was far beyond her years. He would have had to admit that he was no longer surprised to find her sitting in the desert holding a conversation with a Golden Eagle. She seemed to know all the animals personally and Felipe would find her standing over the carcass of a slain animal thanking it for its life. While other children her age were sadly being drawn toward the white man’s cell phones and video games, Kachina was learning the ancient oral tradition that is passed down from one shaman to the next and disappearing into the desert to learn about life.

“Baabaa, what can I do to help our people?”

Felipe felt a sadness. Such a great task for a child to take on, but she insisted.

“Learn all you can. And you can learn a lot from the white man. His schools have treasures of knowledge that I’m not sure they realize. Find the true story of our people and hold it up to them like a mirror so we can realize that we are good and great people. The white man has claimed to own the land far too long

for us to change that, but you can lift your sisters and brothers so that they can not only live in the modern world but cherish and be proud of their culture and heritage.”

The little girl looked up at her grandfather and smiled. When she heard the word ‘wise’ she thought of Baabaa. She knew that is what she would do.

The child Kachina was happily picking juniper berries when Carlo shook her shoulder.

“Kachina, it’s time to get up.”

The adult Kachina rolled over and looked up at the smiling face of her husband, Carlo. He was always an early riser and would wait as late as possible to awaken Kachina. She thought about the dream. She was so grateful that Carlo had not interrupted it. She smiled at the thought of talking to dyaami, but Baabaa would insist that it was a true story. How she loved her Baabaa, she thought as she got up and started dressing for the archeological conference at the University of New Mexico.



CHAPTER 2

Brother Andres' journal was a big hit at the New Mexico conference. It was an archeologist's dream; a first-hand account of everything you are seeing around you. The academics knew to read it with the understanding that it would be a prejudiced history but that was better than nothing. They would have to try to read between the lines to get the true story.

The journal would obviously be from the perspective of the white invader. Any accounts by the native tribes would be oral. Sadly, many modern scholars assume that written history is superior to oral. That's really funny since the teachings of Buddha, the Jewish Torah and the Christian Gospels are nothing more than oral history put in print. Does anyone doubt that the written account of 1920 to 1950 would be totally different had Germany won the war? Yet the oral account of Jews who witnessed and/or survived the gas chambers will never change.

While the journal itself was a major crowd pleaser, very few had any serious interest in the “Montaña de Oro” entry except Dr. Kachina Corn.

A brilliant scholar, environmentalist and traditionalist, Kachina is dedicated to making sure that her people take their rightful place in history. Her theory, which she is quite capable of defending, is that by making sure that the true history is known and recorded, a just society cannot ignore its meaning for the present.

One person made a crack about the village being one of the Seven Cities of Cibola, but joking was about as far as it went. Kachina was interested not because she expected to find a mountain of gold, or even any gold, but because it confirmed the Kawaika and the oral tradition her grandfather and Istaqa had passed along to her.

Brother Andres' account of the conquistador's goal was like a giant arrow pointing right at the Kawaika village. Obviously assuming that Pedro de Malága didn't get side-tracked, the Kawaika village was north-northeast of the Tumacácori mission which is near the modern town of Tumacacori-Carmen, in Santa Cruz County, Arizona and right on the eastern border of the modern Tohono-O'odham reservation. Since de Malága was seriously focused on finding gold and the stories he was told led north, one can, within reason, assume that he did not get side-tracked.

I realize that an assumption can be deadly to an academic or other serious researcher. I'm not an academic, but my English skills are fairly good and I would have to argue that an assumption can be the working foundation of an academic hypothesis. Any assumption can be based on good logic. A hypothesis is the conclusion that one reaches based upon a series of events, data or factors. Is that conclusion anything

more than an assumption based on good logic? In both cases, they are not considered fact until they have been tested. Once they have been tested they are no longer assumptions or hypotheses.

Kachina had found a large village on the San Miguel River. Her gut told her that everything she was hearing from the journal pointed to her village being the city in the story. If “just outside the city near a river” means, as it implies, close proximity to both, then the village would almost have to be Kawaika Village. All of the other large villages of which Kachina was aware; like Walnut Canyon, Tonto Upper and Lower, and Montezuma; were above their water source, all being cliff dwellings, with no place near for the Spaniards to be between village and river.

In every profession and discipline there are always the self-proclaimed patriachs who make their reputation by demeaning and belittling others, especially the females whom they generally see as invading the inter-sanctum of male power. This is no less true in academia, and, for better or for worse, one such patriarch was in attendance at the New Mexico conference.

Dr. Terrance “Terry” Northrup was the lead antagonist among the patriachs. He was actually a good archeologist. He was well published and even those who didn't like the man personally had to admit that he had made some good contributions to their academic discipline of archaeology. He did carry a chip on his shoulder when he didn't get an appointment to one of the major research universities, and he really got steamed when a female archeologist would get a position he wanted. The University of New Mexico is one such “public research university”. He had really been upset when

Carlo Russi got the assistant's position there. Next to females, “foreigners” were Terry's next target group. How could Gabe Stevens, the UNM dean, give such an important position to an immigrant? Most people didn't even know that Carlo Russi had not been born in the United States.

Now here was this female, Kachina Corn; an Indian who still dressed like a savage, lived in a lodge and had just finished her degree. You absolutely were not going to hear Terrance Northrup address her as Dr. Corn, even though they had both earned the same degree. One of the greatest archeological finds in many years, Northrup fumed, and she gets to be the excavation director. That really burned Terry Northrup.

Somehow in the break-time interaction Terry Northrup and Kachina Corn found themselves face to face. Kachina knew his reputation. She wasn't afraid of him. She just didn't want any trouble, so she had avoided him.

“Well, well,” Terry Northrup's voice belied the coming insults and sarcasm. “If it isn't the fair-haired child of the New Mexico graduate program.” He looked around to see if he was gathering an audience. He was. He always did.

“How does it feel to be wearing shoes and hob-knobbing with the smart folk?”

“Hello *Doctor* Northrup,” Kachina emphasized his title. She had spent enough time being bullied, put down and insulted by white males that she had learned that being super-nice to them and totally ignoring their insults drives them up the proverbial wall. They want you to look and act insulted. So, instead of bristling at the insult, Kachina said “It feels great. I'm enjoying it. How about you?”

Northrup was now the one to bristle a bit. He was, like most white-male bullies, set back a bit by Kachina's sweetness, but

he was mostly trying to figure out if her reply wasn't an extremely subtle put-down. Noticing how those observing their encounter were snickering, he figured that he had just been zinged.

"I've never known the littlest kid in the sandbox to be put in charge." It wasn't subtle, but Northrup felt he made his point. "It must be exciting to be in charge of a real archeological dig."

"Yes, it is," Kachina agreed.

"How exactly did you get that position?"

Kachina's husband noticed the crowd gathering around the two. He knew Terry Northrup and his knee-jerk inclination was to race to Kachina's defense. However, he knew better. She could handle Northrup. In fact, he smiled to himself as he thought he really should feel sorry for Northrup if he pushed too far.

"Well, *sir*, it just happens that I was the one that practiced archeology, did the research, dug the holes and found the village. I guess Dr. Stevens figured it was my project." Those gathered around chuckled. Northrup's face grew a little more scarlet. It took him a moment to recover.

"Well, tell me, how's it going? I heard that someone sprang for the cost of the ISRC. What did you have to do for that?" A murmur and a few "oohs" passed through the crowd.

"It didn't take as much as you'd think," Kachina was still smiling light-heartedly, "it was a white male so all I had to do was flash some titties. I didn't even have to sleep with him." The crowd roared and Northrup blustered.

"Have you found anything?" Northrup was trying desperately to recover. "Perhaps you need some help from *real* seasoned

professionals.” Ouch, thought the on-lookers. That was really low.

Dr. Gabe Stevens; Eggan Chair, Professor of Archaeology and Dean of Anthropology and Archeology at University of New Mexico; who had been Kachina’s doctoral advisor and mentor, also knew that Kachina could take care of herself. She was definitely demonstrating it for everyone, but he just couldn't stay out of it. Terry Northrup was perhaps Gabe's least liked person, and he really wanted a chance to put him down like he does others.

“Actually,” Gabe interrupted, “I think she's got it covered.”

“Really?” Northrup pivoted on his heels to face the approaching Dean. He had almost a sadistic smirk on his face. “Really!?”

“Definitely!” replied the Dean; his calm and pleasant demeanor belied the excitement inside as he prepared to bring the bully down a few pegs. “Did you see that big climate-controlled shipping container in the parking lot? It's full of artifacts from her dig. I really need a full-time staff just for that, and she's got another container at her site that's almost full. If you'd like to let some of your graduate students transfer to UNM we can give them some really great hands-on experience.”

With that the crowd howled and began to disperse. Kachina was a bit disappointed that she didn't get a few more digs in, but she had to hand it to Dr. Stevens for the knockout line.

Sitting by the fire outside their adobe hut next to the Kawaika village, Kachina was staring at the area between the village and the river. She was trying to envision a Spanish encampment. History says that the native

people tolerated the Spaniards and missionaries for a long time. The Spanish Kingdom of New Mexico, with its capital in Santa Fe, forced the tribes to convert to Catholicism and completely discard their own religious practices. They demanded food, gold and labor from the people. After seventy years of such abuse the tribes in New Mexico fought back. In 1680 the Kawaika and several other tribes rebelled and launched a coordinated attack on Santa Fe.

The siege lasted nine days. In the end, four-hundred Spaniards died and the remaining two thousand fled to Mexico. Sadly, the Spanish military returned in 1692 and reasserted their control. The area around the Kawaika village would become a haven for Hopi, Zuni and others fleeing the return of the Spanish. That's why the modern Laguna Pueblo has four dialects of the Keres language.

Kachina turned her gaze toward the mountain above Coyote Tank. The mountain was neither gold nor, as far as Kachina knew, filled with gold. She had not seen any signs of her ancestors mining. Jewelry was a personal item that was most likely buried with the person, and Kachina had yet to find their burial grounds.

Could Raphael have seen a large pile of gold items collected by the Spanish and called it “Montaña de Oro”? There was no oral history that indicated that the Kawaika held gold in high esteem or thought it of special value. That would have been a Spanish thing. Since there are gold mines in the area today, Kachina figured that gold just happened to be the most common metal. Other tribes used copper because they had lots of copper available. The world’s largest copper mines south of the Kawaika Village attested to that.

Assuming this to be the case, why would they even think to show the Spanish a pile of gold? Kachina's money was on the

Spanish having observed some part of Kawaika daily life combined with their obsession with gold. While there was still a lot of the Kawaika Village to be excavated, Kachina had found no signs of mining, smelting or even jewelry making.



CHAPTER 3

Nanabah, where have you been?" called her mother. "Hunting," said the tall gangly teenage girl holding up a large jack rabbit as she walked toward her mother who was grinding corn in front of their adobe home.

"Oh, my," said her mother. "you're never going to get a mate if you don't start acting more like a girl."

Nanabah looked crestfallen.

"I'm sorry," said her mother gently. "You should have been born a boy." Her mother walked to Nanabah and gave her a hug. "You know your father and I are very proud of you. You really should have the choice of all the boys in the village."

"Why don't boys want strong mates?" asked Nanabah.

"It's a boy thing," her mother laughed. "Give me the rabbit. I'll

start cleaning it. It will be a great dinner. I need you to go to the tank and fetch me some water.”

“It looks big enough to make a small medicine bag from its pelt,” Nanabah was recovering from her hurt feelings. “would you help me make one?”

“Of course,” her mother smiled.

Her spirits lifted, Nanabah picked up the bucket and headed toward the tank while her mother took the jack rabbit and began skinning it.

Bidziil, perhaps Nanabah’s closest friend, came up and walked along with her. He was a tall, muscular youth just a bit older than Nanabah. The two of them had been close friends all their lives and Bidziil had no problems competing with Nanabah. The other girls were a bit jealous of their friendship and the time they spent together. Nanabah didn’t seem to notice, but to the other girls Bidziil was considered the best catch among the young men. Even his name means ‘he is strong.’

“I heard what your mother said,” Bidziil said falling into step with Nanabah. “For a lot of the boys, she’d be right.”

“Really?” the hurt look was returning.

“Yes, but I would love a strong mate.” Bidziil watched carefully for a reaction.

It took a moment for Bidziil’s words to sink in. When they did, Nanabah stopped with a look of total disbelief on her face.

“You would want me?”

“Is that so hard to believe?”

“Well, yes, in a way,” Nanabah gave her friend a strange look. “You’ve been like a brother. We’ve been best friends and we’re always competing. Would you marry your sister when you could have any girl in the tribe?”

“You’re not my sister and, assuming you’re right about my having my pick, I can’t imagine making a better choice.”

Nanabah just stood and looked. This was one extreme to the other. Her mother was worried that she would not find a mate, and now her best friend and the most desired boy in the tribe was talking about being her mate. She stepped up and gave the brawny lad a hug.

“You’re not just trying to make me feel better, are you?”

“You’re not going to make it easy on me,” Bidziil laughed.

“You haven’t said that you would have me.”

“That’s a silly question,” Nanabah giggled. “You’re not only the most eligible bachelor in the tribe but you’re my best friend.”

“Could we be more than friends?” Bidziil almost whispered. For him, it was the most important question he had ever asked.

Nanabah wanted to give Bidziil a big kiss. No one would probably have noticed since everyone was accustomed to seeing the two of them together, but Nanabah decided that the situation called for her best behavior. She lowered her eyes and softly said, “definitely.”

“I’m going to stop by this evening and talk to your father,” Bidziil promised.

Two years later Nanabah and Bidziil were sitting in front of their own adobe home which the two had built. A little girl lay on a blanket in front of them. On her right shoulder blade was the same birthmark as on Nanabah’s shoulder; a stick figure that looked like a dancing Katsina. The tribal shaman said that it was a blessing from the spirits.

As they sat talking about their dreams for their daughter,

Bidziil noticed dust in the distance. They would soon encounter the first Spaniards. Life would never be the same.

What Kachina didn't know.... Correction. What no one knew and still do not know is the true story of Brother Raphael and Capitán Pedro de Malága.

Brother Raphael was no more than eighteen when he arrived in New Spain (Mexico) in 1608. He had joined a Franciscan order and become enamored with the idea of going to the new world and converting the heathen natives.

Despite Francis of Assisi, the founding father of his order, being a very compassionate person, those who carried his name were not necessarily like him. It may not have been totally Raphael's personality or his fault, but he was much more interested in "making" converts than in serving or caring for people; the latter being the focus of the man Francis of Assisi.

After all Raphael was born and raised in the heart of the infamous Spanish Inquisition which lasted from 1478 to 1834. Brother Raphael was sent to Tumacácori mission because he had become so expert at "making" converts. When Capitán Pedro de Malága decided to push north in search of gold, Raphael volunteered to go along to make converts.

Capitán Pedro de Malága was the youngest son of Eduardo and Cristina de Malága. Cristina was a cousin to King Infante Carlo of the Habsburg dynasty, giving them title and prestige but little else. In those days the common practice, to avoid sibling rivalry, was for the eldest son to get the father's title, the second to become a priest and the third go to the military. Pedro figured that he was really quite fortunate. His father's title was basically worthless and Pedro secretly hated the church. Being a cousin to the king, albeit a distant cousin, was a big help in

the military. Pedro was a Hernan Cortez wannabe, but he was much more like Lope de Aguirre who called himself the “*Wrath of God, Prince of Freedom, King of Tierra Firme*” when everyone else just called him “*El Loco*.” Like the other infamous invaders, Pedro de Malága was obsessed with gold. The Spanish had had some success in Mexico and thought it would be the same further north in modern Arizona and New Mexico. They were wrong. To lead an expedition further north was a make it or break it move for the young de Malága.

On that fateful day in October of 1609, Capitán Pedro de Malága, three junior officers along to make themselves a name, a company of twenty-five soldiers, six monks, three native translators and a string of pack horses headed due north from Tumacácori mission.

As they rode north the company encountered several different bands of native people. At each encounter Pedro would try to find gold and have his translators ask about gold. When they had no gold he would push on. Raphael didn't like this practice. He wanted to spend time making converts, but Pedro only wanted to find gold, and each of the tribes had told him stories about a tribe further north that had a mountain of gold.

When Pedro encountered the Kawaika, he and his men were again welcomed. The Kawaika were a peaceful, highly civilized, agrarian society. Pedro saw nothing but the gold jewelry they wore.

Brother Andres description of the Spanish camp definitely gives one the visual of a peaceful cluster of tents by the river. That wasn't exactly the way it was. Pedro didn't put his encampment away from the village to be nice to his hosts. He put his encampment on a rise just across the river that was militarily strategic.

The Kawaika didn't think much of it as the Spaniards built fortified bunkers. They were quite tolerant of the foreigners and wrote the bunkers off to just their way of doing things.

The first conflict was when Brothers Raphael and the other monks attempted to take over the Kiva and destroy it. They were going to make the villagers become Christians if it killed them; the villagers, that is. Sadly, history shows us that more often than not they did kill the indigenous people. From this point on the Spanish became more aggressive and the tribe less tolerant.

Pedro started demanding gold tribute threatening plunder and rape as the consequence of resistance. He demanded that the shaman show him the source of their gold. The Kawaika didn't care if the outsiders wanted gold. It was in the ground for all to use. The shaman took Pedro to a spot at the foot of the mountain just west of the tank where most people would find the ore to make their jewelry.

The captain had several of his soldiers digging in the dirt where others had dug and soon found some gold nuggets. The shaman noticed that Capitán de Málaga seemed to transform into a demon. The lust for the shiny metal was far beyond the shaman's understanding.

By the next day there was a significant hole in the side of the mountain and soon there was a mine. Since Málaga had only a few soldiers, he started subscribing villagers to dig in his mine. The people became slaves to the Spanish invaders and were forced to not only feed the invaders but dig their precious gold.

The normally peaceful Kawaika had enough when a group of Spaniards raped and killed a young girl in their nightly brawling. The Kawaika killed four of the soldiers and attacked

the Spanish encampment in an effort to apprehend the others involved in the girl's murder.

It only took a couple of villagers killed for the Kawaika to figure out the Spanish fortified camp. They fell back but would not let the Spaniards out of their presidio.

Their presidio was dug out of the top of the hill. Since they didn't have time to build a stone fort, the presidio was totally of earth. Pedro used the military concepts of the day with bastions at the four corners so that they could catch any attackers in a crossfire. While the native bow was powerful and efficient, the cross-bow's greater power made up for its lack of efficacy. It was also fortunate for Malága that the Kawaika had not noticed the time it took to reload a cross-bow.

The Kawaika, however, were not planning to risk more lives with any sort of assault. They kept the Spaniards inside their fancy presidio to bake under the summer sun during the day and freeze at night. The desert has no mercy on those who are not prepared to live in and with it. When the Spanish would send someone out to try to get water from the river, they were met with a hail of arrows and driven back in. The Spanish had only what food and water was in the presidio when the fighting started.

Malága would not surrender. After a few days the Kawaika noticed no signs of life. In that time they had figured out a weak point in the fortification. A small wash ran past one of the bastions. Since the presidio was nothing more than earthen bunkers, the Kawaika slipped up the wash and easily climbed over one of the bunkers while the Spaniards were distracted by what appeared to be a frontal assault.

What the Kawaika found inside was starvation and death. It could easily be argued that the Kawaika attack was a compassionate coup de grâce. The Spanish soldiers were hardly

able to fight but would not surrender. Malága would not let them and was seen killing at least one of his own men because they would not fight. Killing these poor dying creatures was quite a merciful act.

Pedro de Malága was finally apprehended. Seven foot-soldiers and one officer survived, as did two of the interpreters and three of the monks. Three of the seven soldiers died within a week. The rest lived out their natural lives working for the tribe. One of the surviving four continued to be antagonistic but the other three actually accepted Kawaika ways, marrying Kawaika women and becoming contributing members of the tribe.

Malága, the three monks and one of the interpreters were given food and told to go home. They sent them off on foot. The interpreter was told that he should tell the story of the Spaniard's death and warn the others to stay away.

It was a 440 mile walk and despite the interpreter's hunting skills, Malága and two of the monks died before they reach the Sinequa village which is known today as Montazuma Castle near modern day Camp Verde, Arizona. Raphael and the interpreter rested there for several weeks then continued their trek to Tumacácori mission.

The two men did not know that they had the better part of two weeks of walking ahead of them. They seemed to have survived the worst and were strong, rested and well-supplied. Actually, things were going well for them. The interpreter was a good hunter, so they rarely went without meat, and the farther south he got the more edible plants he recognized.

Some say that fate is fickle. Somewhere near the Rillito River the interpreter was bit by a rattlesnake. They camped by the river. The interpreter found some *Eryngium*, restricted the blood-flow between his heart and the bite, made an incision

over the bite, and had Raphael suck out the venom. These were all common and heroic treatments of the day, but four days later the interpreter died.

Raphael, now alone, had no choice but to push on. He had another five days or more, if he could maintain a descent pace. As we know he did and didn't make it. He somehow survived to the mission but died a short time later.

Bidziil, Nanabah and Shandiin stood on a hill watching the Spaniards walk away. Bidziil told Nanabah the gruesome sight and horrendous smell that met the warriors when they entered the presidio.

A few warriors followed the five men for a couple of days to be sure that they didn't do something stupid like decide to return. The interpreter was the only one who knew anything about hunting and foraging. The tribe had allowed him to have a bow and several arrows. The Kawaika didn't really understand the Spanish social system, but they knew that Málaga and the three monks were useless as either hunters or gatherers. They were also the most dangerous of the Spaniards. Most of the tribe figured that the interpreter would soon abandon Málaga and the monks and either go home or take refuge with one of the tribes further south.

Bidziil and the other men of the tribe met that evening in the kiva. No one said that they should not have allowed the surviving Spaniards to live, but none truly believed that the gruesome death in the presidio would be enough to keep all invaders away. They had all seen the selfishness and greed for gold change the Spanish into evil slave drivers. No one missed the fact that the invaders had arrived at the Kawaika village knowing about gold, so other Spaniards probably also know.

“Their hole in the mountain,” the shaman addressed the others, “is a horrible reminder. I have little doubt that others will not follow. You all saw their lust for the shiny metal. Even if Pedro doesn’t get back to his village and tell them about the metal, you all know that others will come looking for it as he did. If they come here and see his hole, they will know that the metal is here and they will also try to enslave us to dig it for them. I think we must seal and hide the hole.”

“Should we also drag the dead Spaniards and their metal from their hill up to the hole?” someone asked.

“No,” said the chief. “That is a lot of work. I think we should seal the room containing the metal and bodies with a wall and then fill in the courtyard with dirt.”

“Why not use their fancy hill as our dump?” another man suggested.

“That sounds like revenge,” said the shaman.

“Perhaps,” replied the man, “but do they deserve any better after what they did to us? They were going to kill you because they wanted the rest of us to follow their religion.”

“Revenge or not,” added a third man, “filling their fort with trash is probably a good idea. Would those who follow dig through the trash to find their comrades?”

“No, but they’d do it for the metal.”

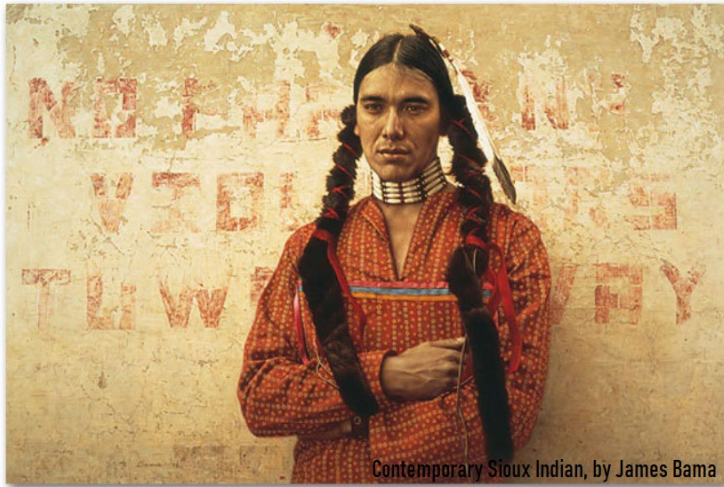
“But they will not know that there is metal with the bodies.”

“Besides,” added Bidziil, “what person in their right mind digs through other peoples’ trash?” The room laughed. One can’t help but wonder what Bidziil would think if he knew that his own granddaughter, seventeen generations from then, would be just the one.

So it was decided. There would be three work group. The first would make adobe bricks for the wall. The second would build the wall to seal in the Spaniards and their gold. The third would start filling the hole in the mountain and try to erase signs of the mine.

“I’m one of the lucky ones,” Bidziil told Nanabah later as he related the meeting. “I’m with group three. It may be hard work to fill the hole with dirt, stone and sand, but it has to be better than spending my day smelling the dead Spaniards and the filth they left behind.”

Filling the mine took the most time, but several weeks later the side of the mountain looked like a normal scree field. All signs of mining were gone. Group two dumped a lot of sand and dirt against the wall. Since trash is a daily thing, the presidio courtyard soon began to fill.



Contemporary Sioux Indian, by James Bama

CHAPTER 4

The young Lakota girl stood peering into the glass showcases mesmerized by the array of Lakota Sioux jewelry. Most of the pieces in the case were made by Hotah Enapay, the little girl's father. Custer, South Dakota was the largest tourist town near Red Shirt, on the Pine Ridge Reservation, so Hotah would make the one-hundred-mile round trip here to sell his jewelry. There were lots of little gift shops, many featuring Native American arts and crafts. It helped that it was surrounded by Black Hills National Forest, Wind Cave National Park, the Crazy Horse statue and park, Custer State Park and Mount Rushmore. Hotah also worked as a ranger for the Badlands National Park, but there just wasn't the market for native art there. In fact, he could only think of two places in or near the park that carried anything approaching native art.

While the little girl wore a traditional Sioux dress, Hotah, a handsome man in his early thirties, was dressed in a long-sleeve western shirt, well-worn blue jeans, and cowboy boots. Long black braids, that hung well past his shoulders, protruded from under his straw cowboy hat. In front of him was a piece of rawhide on which lay three pieces of his jewelry. The woman across the counter was admiring a five-strand choker of black and green beads.

“This is magnificent,” exclaimed the woman. “I could sell a dozen of these a day.”

“Thank you,” Hotah smiled.

“I’ll give you the usual,” she said.

“I really need more,” Hotah said hesitantly. “I can barely feed my family.”

“I’m sorry, Hotah, but that’s all I’m allowed to offer. I don’t give the other that much.”

“But look,” he pointed to the display case. “You just said you could sell a dozen a day, and you have them priced at ten times what you pay me.”

“I’m really, really sorry but the company demands its profit.”

Hotah stood silently looking down at the display case. He knew that it would be the same everywhere. As he hesitated to take the offer, a tourist couple entered the store.

“Is that a real Indian?” a child could be heard asking.

“Shhh,” one of the adults said. “They might hear you.”

Hotah was still contemplating his position but was aware of the tourist. The young Lakota girl turned and looked at the child who had spoken.

“Can they speak American? Why is he wearing a cowboy hat? Why doesn’t he have on war paint? Did he take those boots from some settler he scalped?” The adults were unable to stop the questions.

The little girl walked up to the child.

“Hi, my name is Makawee.” She said to the tourist child and his parents. “You don’t know anything about Indians, do you?” The child’s parents looked sincerely embarrassed.

“I speak excellent English. There is no such language as American. Americans speak English. I also speak both the Lakota and Dakota dialects of the Sioux language which is known as Siouan. How many languages do you speak? That’s my father. We are Lakota Sioux. He’s a great artist. He doesn’t wear war-paint because we’re not at war. He dresses like you because the white man made us dress like them. He’s never hurt anyone, and it was the English colonists who started scalping Indians, not us. They did it to get the money the government paid for dead Indians.”

Now it was Hotah who was embarrassed. He was quickly at Makawee’s side.

“Wakanjejah,” he said putting his hand on her shoulder. “You don’t want to bother these nice people with a history lesson.”

The child’s parents smiled. “Out of the mouths of babes,” the anglo-woman said.

“You’re daughter said you’re an artist. Is any of this work yours,” said the man indicating the showroom full of native art.

“Yes, I’m a jewelry maker.”

The anglo-man looked at his wife, “wouldn’t it be phenomenal to buy a piece of jewelry right from the artist.” The woman agreed.

Hotah looked over his shoulder at the jewelry still laying on the counter. The clerk, whom Hotah knew would have liked to offer him more, smiled.

“I’ve got to do something in the back,” she said moving toward the door to the storeroom. “Good luck.”

“I was just showing the clerk some new pieces,” said Hotah holding up the black and green choker.

“Oh, Larry, isn’t that magnificent!” exclaimed the woman.

“How much is it?” asked Larry.

“The store sells them for eighty dollars, but I’ll let you have this one for half that.”

“They don’t give you much, do they?” Larry said quietly. Looking toward the back room.

“No,” Hotah answered honestly.

“I’ll make you a deal,” said Larry. “I’ll buy all three at forty dollars each if you agree to join us for lunch and tell us some of your history, . . . and lunch is on us.”

Hotah smiled. The store wasn't going to give him forty dollars for all three. "You've got a deal."

Larry, his wife, Betty, and son, Jason were from Pennsylvania. This was their first trip west. Makawee gave them an in depth synopsis of Sioux history and a detailed account of their family. They asked lots of questions and were sincerely abhorred at the poverty on the reservation. Hotah really liked Betty and Larry and wanted to say to Makawee 'see, all white people do not look down on us.'

As Hotah and Makawee were ready to leave, Larry handed Hotah two bills; a one-hundred dollar bill and a fifty. "I don't have the correct amount," he said with a smile. "Just take it. Your beautiful art and Makawee's history lesson are worth more than that."

As their old F150 rattled along the gravel road toward home the two talked about their new friends and how generous Larry had been. Makawee asked, "but why don't white people know anything about us?"

"Because some of their elders don't want them to know the truth."

"That's really sad," Makawee looked back toward town. "when I grow up I'm going to teach them the truth so we can make friends like we did today."

Hotah looked over at his daughter and beamed with pride. Knowing her, he had no doubt that's exactly what she would do.

Up to the point where Kachina's excavation started making news and receiving visitors, the casino museum had been little more than a curiosity that visitors would walk briefly through on the way to the gaming tables. Other than dusting the displays, there wasn't a lot that needed to be done. While it had some very fine pieces it was not a destination for students or researchers. Area schools made regular visits but that was about it.

This began to change as there were more and more visitors to the Kawaika Village. Chuck and the tour guides were encouraging visitors to go to the museum. Archaeology students were showing up and needing someone to give them guidance and answer questions. Even with Kachina and Carlo somewhat nearby, the casino management realized that the museum was drawing more people requiring more time and skill than they had.

At a meeting with the Kawaika Village staff, tribal council and casino board, Kachina made the case for a professional curator.

“This could be a boon for the casino and the tribe,” Kachina said. “It could pay for itself.”

“How's that?” asked Floyd Mason, the casino manager.

“If we had a knowledgeable curator, they would be able to put on programs that would draw a crowd. They would be able to set up areas where students and researchers could use the museum for research. Besides the fact that it makes sense for them to stay at the casino hotel and eat at the casino restaurant, the museum would also be showing up as a reference in internet articles and professional journals. Floyd, don't you have an advertising budget?”

“Of course,” Floyd replied.

“So, you understand how important it is to have name recognition and a reason for people to come.”

“That makes sense,” Floyd smiled. “I’m beginning to like this idea.”

Kachina leaned back in her chair and grinned.

“Okay, so how do we find a curator?” asked George Kanteena, the tribal chief.

“I’ll do the search. I’m being selfish. I want to pick her,” replied Kachina.

Laughter filled the room, but no one could complain. The search was on.

Kachina posted the position in all of the major journals, schools with good Native American programs and on the internet and, as would be expected, received a great many applications.

Kachina and Carlo sifted through each resume looking for skills and experiences that they thought would be important. Dr. Stevens had given them some good ideas of what to look for, but nothing really resonated with Kachina.

She and Carlo had identified the top five candidates and invited them to interview.

Kachina was quite impressed with the first three people they interviewed. Each of them was intelligent, had a very good idea how to go about organizing, promoting, and running a museum, and had the credentials needed. They presented themselves well; the two men wearing suits and the woman looking like she had just come out of a New York board room. It was the fourth applicant, however, who really made a hit.

Kachina was sitting in the museum office waiting for Makawee Enapay, when a young woman, dressed in traditional Lakota Sioux garb, appeared at the door.

“Guuwáátsíí,” she said cheerfully, “I’m looking for Dr. Corn.” Obviously, this young Sioux woman had taken the time to at least learn how to say “hello” in the Keres language.

Makawee Enapay had the same credentials as the others, but she had something more which Kachina couldn't identify. Actually, had one of the others been watching, they could have told Kachina what that ‘something more’ was. For Kachina, this young woman was like talking to herself in a mirror. Talking to Makawee, Kachina was seeing and experiencing what others saw and experienced when they talked to her.

The two had a great time talking about the museum's potential and walking through the gallery.

Finally, Kachina asked her, “why do you want to leave an established, well-known and highly reputable museum?”

“There are two reasons,” Makawee said with a smile. She knew this question was coming and she was ready. “Firstly, I love the museum where I now work. The people are good and I have absolutely no complaints. However, like almost all museums, it was founded by white men, and run by white men with a very white man view of everything. There's no way visitors are going to grow in their understanding of native people when everything is presented from the white man perspective. I think they like me, but there's no way they will ever ask me about a native perspective. In eight years, I have never once been asked about whether a display, document or program properly represents the native people, nor have I been asked to share the native perspective. As much as I love my museum, really like my fellow employees, and respect my boss and board, I know

well that I'm nothing more than a good technician who gets them points by being a Lakota Sioux.”

“Your museum, on the other hand, is owned by natives and run by natives. If the visitor goes away from this museum without a native perspective and a better understanding of Kawaika culture and civilization, they're probably closed minded, or we haven't done our job properly.”

“That was quite succinct and to the point,” Kachina laughed. “Bet it took some time to put that together.”

Makawee was a bit embarrassed. “Did it sound rehearsed?”

“No, it did not sound rehearsed, but it was too well organized not to have been thought through before.”

“Truthfully. I practiced that answer almost all the way from Seattle to here,” Makawee laughed.

“I know it doesn't have any direct relationship to the job, but would you like to see the Kawaika Village?”

“That would be wonderful. I bought a ticket for the morning bus when I first arrived.”

“Well, how about we go together and we can talk archaeology and museums.”

“Great.”

“You have two choices,” Kachina smiled. This was actually one of her little tests. “we can take about an hour and drive over in my old pickup, or we can take about two hour and ride over on horseback.”

“I'd prefer to ride,” Makawee replied. “unless we have to ride on a highway.”

“No, we'd be cutting cross-country on a hunter's trail.”

“Now that sounds like fun!” Makawee said thrilled with the idea of riding across this beautiful high desert on horseback.

“This way,” Kachina led Makawee to her pickup which they used to get to Felipe's home on the reservation where Nishoni, Kachina's horse, was waiting. Felipe's neighbor had several horses and let Makawee use one for their trip.

On the drive to Felipe's, Makawee was checking out the reservation. “I know I'm not registered with your tribe but, if I get the job, would I be able to have a place on the rez where I could have my horse?”

“All the other applicants want to live in Farmington,” Kachina laughed.

“Oh, I'm so ready to get away from the city. Right now I have to drive twenty minutes to see Kohana, . . . that's my horse.”

The two young women had a good time riding across the high desert to the Kawaika Village. They talked about everything except business. Actually, Kachina thought, every question Makawee asked indirectly helped her better understand the job.

They put the horses in the corral by Kachina's lodge.

“Is this an educational display? It looks like someone really lives here,” said Makawee.

“Someone really does live here. Me. This is my home,” Kachina grinned.

“Oh, wow!” exclaimed Makawee. “This is outstanding! I'd love to be living here.”

“My lodge is not a part of the package,” Kachina laughed, “but my husband is at the university, so you're welcome to stay here for the night.”

“Are you kidding?!” Makawee paused as she stared at the lodge then continued “Dumb question. I heard you. You said I could stay here tonight. I'd love that!”

The two spent the rest of the afternoon looking at the Kawaika Village and the evening talking, cooking over the open fire, and comparing notes about growing up on a reservation.

Kachina knew that Makawee was the one for the job. She was torn whether or not to contact the fifth applicant and tell them the position was filled but she didn't feel right not to give them a chance. Who knows, the person may not be the best choice for curator, but they might have some talent that the tribe, the dig or the museum could really use.

“I've found our curator,” Kachina told the Board. “Her name is Makawee Enapay. She is Lakota Sioux and has an MA in archeology from University of Wyoming where she graduated cum laude. For eight years she has been at the indigenous culture museum by Seattle.”

“You seem quite taken with this woman,” noticed Professor Stevens. “What was different about her?”

“First of all, she took a few moments to learn how to say 'hello' in Keres,” you could almost see Kachina making a bulleted list in her head. “What impressed me about that was that she knew that addressing someone in their own language is powerful and she knew how to use that power. That will be beneficial dealing with the public, researchers and employees.”

“Then,” Kachina moved on, “she preferred to go to the village by horse and is an excellent rider.” The board members gave her a curious look. What did that have to do with being a

curator? “And you should have seen her face when I offered for her to spend the night in my lodge.” The group laughed.

“So, she's one-hundred percent Indian,” said Istaqa still grinning.

“Yes,” Kachina said realizing how her description sounded, “but that's really important in this case.”

You could see the rest of the board waiting for her explanation.

“Would you want a person who has never been to sea to be the one to present your maritime museum to the public?” She gave a moment for the question to sink in. “They may have excellent academic knowledge, but that isn't what's going to make people interested in your museum. Someone who is a sailor can give the public the knowledge and share real, personal experience that turns that knowledge into understanding.”

“She can take her depth of academic knowledge, add her real-life experience growing up on a reservation and being an environmentalist, and make the visitor feel like they have literally gone back in history. Visitors will love it.”

“She wears her traditional garb very naturally. For her it is not a costume, so it comes across very real and very normal. If you hire her, I'm torn whether to have her continue wearing her Sioux clothing or dress as a Kawaika. Sadly, I'm afraid that the Sioux dress might confuse visitors.”

“Her love for her horse, not wanting to live in town, enjoying living in traditional dwellings, wearing traditional clothes, and a super-sponge soaking up knowledge, new information and the details of a culture's individuality, tell me that we would be fools not to have her on our team and that she is that final ingredient that can turn our museum and Kawaika Village into a must-see destination.”

“Dang, you sold me!” I laughed. “She's got my vote. I'm anxious to meet her.”

The others shared my point of view and soon we made the formal offer to Makawee Enapay. The casino and community college will share her salary. Makawee will teach two classes a semester, one being a lab at the museum. All money from contributions and fees will be available to her for programs.

Makawee had not been working a month before she had organized a hands-on program for middle school students that was getting response from schools across the four-corners. She had two teenage programs; one was an “internship” where the student learned about the care and management of a museum and a hands-on experience that taught them about basic Kawaika skills of daily living.

Shortly after her arrival Makawee asked permission to ride her horse to work. That, of course, led to a small shelter and corral with an ocotillo fence.

Soon we were thinking that her horse, Kohana, needed to be on the payroll. Looking out the large windows at the back of the museum at Kohana and his corral became an integral part of the museum experience and a way to bring the academia inside the museum together with the traditional world of the Kawaika people.

Before we knew it, Makawee had visitors of all ages out in the desert behind the museum making hunting lodges, cooking on an open fire, learning how to make adobe bricks, and other daily skills. Their awareness of and interest in the museum exhibits was so much greater after they came back in from Makawee's hands-on experience.

It wasn't long after that that she was found sleeping out back with Kohana.

“Dang,” someone commented, “now we have two Kachina!”

“Great, huh?!” I replied.



CHAPTER 5

Some of you will remember Terry and Elsa Hudson. Saving their ranch was the first big project by the Memorial Foundation as I reported in my account entitled *The Tillman Place*.

Because our small local bank didn't have the ability to give farm loans, people in Lewis County always had to go to some place like Farmington or Flagstaff to finance their ranches. Well, I'm sure I don't have to paint you a picture of the potential problems that creates.

Even the larger banks would end up "selling" the mortgage which would ultimately end up with one of the giant mortgage companies that could care less about the people or community. When hard times would hit, the giant lenders tended to push the borrowers toward selling to a big agriculture corporation.

The biggest problem with this scenario is, as Bobby and Peggy Jean will be quick to tell you, the big corporations are only interested in profits, will destroy the community and the land, and abandon it when they can't make a profit. That, they will explain, will happen sooner than people think because giant agri-business, like most capitalistic enterprises, isn't sustainable.

Bobby and Peggy Jean grew up on the farm and are college educated. Allowing them to use the front portion of my ranch gave them the chance they needed to prove that there is an alternative to big agri-business that will survive.

The Memorial Foundation bailed Terry and Elsa out of debt, which cut out the big corporation as well as keeping the ranch locally owned and operated. Then we enabled Bobby and Peggy Jean to buy all of the Hudson's land except the ten acres around the house. A win-win situation. There was also the added benefit that this deal opened the way for our small local bank to start making bigger loans which kept local family's mortgages from ending up being owned by a bank in some big city thousands of miles away.

Bobby and Peggy Jean have been struggling but they are making progress. They sell enough of their crops and livestock to pay their mortgage and meet their commitment to me. They are also documenting their success and publishing how-to articles in academic as well as farm journals. It is amazing how many agriculture faculty and students visit their farm. Of course, the biggest problem is start-up costs, and a number of big named economist are watching. More and more economists are realizing that capitalism isn't sustainable and the race is on to find a solution for an over-populated world.

You will also remember that the Hudson's built a small RV park on their remaining property across the road from my

ranch. It has been a great success. Right now almost all their sites are being taken by workers and researchers at the dig site. They try to keep a few places for travelers but that isn't easy. They finally opened up a meadow where people can boondock for a nominal fee. That was perhaps the best thing they could have done because it provided a place for people who don't need or want utilities.

I broke down and we built a road from the county road that runs along the southern boundary of my ranch to the parking area of the dig. The San Miguel River is too deep and fast here to ford, so we had to build a simple bridge. It was during the construction of the bridge that a couple of students noticed what looked like a bastion on the rise on the south side of the river overlooking the village. They petitioned Kachina to do a bit of digging there.

As a result of so many long-term visitors at Hudson's there was again a shortage of camp sites. The tribe decided to open a campground on the river between the casino and the village. The location is beautiful with lots of big Cottonwood trees. They actually have three camping areas. There is a loop that has forty-seven campsites with water and 50-amp electrical hookups. Then there is a loop that has several water spigots but no electricity for those who are tent camping or are self-contained. The third area is separated from everyone by a line of trees. It is a small meadow with a cluster of adobe lodges. There was a single water spigot that was made to look like a spring. They may have been able to drink from the river in the 17th century but that isn't possible now. The whole idea of this loop is to give the visitor a more authentic Kawaika living experience.

The Tribe let the nomads continue to stay in the casino parking lot in exchange for keeping the parking lot tidy. Since the new campground had electricity, water and a dump site, it was the

first choice of people who were not nomads and not there for the gambling. The bus would stop by on its way to and from the casino. In fact, Chuck, founder and chief driver of the shuttle system, ended up buying two more buses and soon had five stops on his route; the casino, the new Kawaika Campground, Hudson's Campground, the village of Dead Horse and the new Lewis County Recreation and Long-term Visitor Area.

This latter recreation and camping area is on the west edge of my ranch. Doris and Jack Matthews, who own the ranch west of me, gave a parcel of their land up against the mountains for this project. I added a parcel from my ranch. The county developed a primitive campground, lots of trails and a visitor center. It is a great success. Matthews and I keep ownership of the land so no bigger government agency, state or federal, can come in and take over.

Our little far-from-rich county and our Kawaika neighbors are making great strides toward being self-reliant and affluent; with affluent being used here in its true definition. The way I see it, prosperity is not necessarily financial gain. After all, there is a lot more to wealth than money and possessions. Affluence is not, by definition, power and money but the satisfaction of one's needs.

Anthropologist, Dr. Marshall Sahlins, and other anthropologists, show us that primitive hunter-gatherers did not live on the brink of starvation. Rather, they lived very comfortable lives with "work weeks" that were around 15 hours, as compared to our 40-60 hour work week plus up to 20 hours more of commute time. In a culture of limited wants, the anthropologists argue, the hunter-gatherers were able to live affluently through the easy satisfaction of their material needs.

Our little community neither wants nor needs big houses, fancy cars or swimming pools. Well, we might like a community swimming pool, if we knew we'd have enough water to fill it. Our culture is simple and simple things in nature satisfy us and make us happy. We all know that if we want the life and culture of a big city like Farmington there is nothing stopping us.

Of course, one must realize that we are not as free as the hunter-gatherers but we're not nearly as confined and manipulated as the poor city folk.

Raintree stood majestically next to the barn. A beautiful, twelve-year-old, fourteen and a half hands high sorrel mare, Raintree, was waiting for her rider. Within a few minutes Betsy Marmon emerged from the barn with a strange-looking saddle in hand.

She put the saddle on Raintree and took a moment to give the horse some loving as a couple appeared around the corner of the barn pushing a wheelchair. The occupant of the wheelchair was a young boy whose excitement was intense. Betsy and the boy's parents put him in the special saddle. He beamed.

Raintree was a therapy horse in training. Not long before she had been rescued from a slaughterhouse. She had been a racehorse and sent to slaughter because she could no longer race and was "no good" as a brood mare. That is not an uncommon ending for a racehorse, and it makes Betsy angry.

As a result, Betsy's riding stable expanded to include a rehab facility for horses. It all started when one of her friends in Flagstaff asked her to take a horse that was being sent to slaughter for being unridable.

It is beautiful to watch her work with the horses. In a short time Betsy developed a five step rehab program.

The first step is to create trust. For most of her horses, their biggest problem can be traced back to fearing and/or not trusting humans because someone abused and hurt them. Once trust is developed Betsy starts activities with the horse that helps deal with their issues. This is where Betsy is, indeed, the horse-whisperer. Almost all humans have a hard time telling when a horse, or any other animal for that matter, is upset, angry or frightened. Betsy can spend a short time with a horse and turn around and tell you all about its anger issues or pain. Her third step is to introduce other humans back into the daily routine. This is followed by matching the horse with a human, and, step five, having that human visit, love and care for the horse until their bond with their new human is greater than that with Betsy.

The two people who had come with the young rider walked around the ring with Raintree, each of them taking turns leading Raintree through her paces. At one point the young rider got so excited and animated that Raintree stopped. This cued the adults to turn their attention to making sure that the rider was safely situated in the special saddle. They let the lead go slack. That's okay – a part of the drill – since Raintree knows not to move until her rider has quieted down or been removed.

Unbeknown to any casual onlooker, this session was not therapy for the rider, even though he had a great time. This session was teaching the adults how to work with Raintree, and a part of that last step where the horse becomes more attached to their new humans. Raintree and the two adults were rapidly approaching the point where Betsy can let her go home with them.

The couple own a riding therapy stable outside Phoenix. The child riding Raintree each day is their son and the reason they now have a therapy stable. They saw the almost miraculous confidence, joy, and overall mental health the horses brought to their son, so they decided that to enable themselves to give more to their son they should share with others. They had made this last week with Raintree and their preparation a family vacation.

They had the most phenomenal horse trailer Betsy and Chuck had ever seen. It could carry five horses in the lap of equine luxury with a hay mound, tack room and family quarters. Betsy let them park it next to the barn. That was mostly because the trailer was just too big to fit in any of the area campgrounds. The upside to the arrangement was that the couple would actually be able to spend a lot more time with Raintree, who seemed quite smitten with the three of them.

This wasn't all that different from the other horses with which Betsy had worked. Betsy doesn't have to advertise her business. Her success stories pass quickly through the equine world. She has had a waiting list of therapy organizations and individuals almost since the beginning, and she cannot acquire and train the horses fast enough. Sadly, the therapeutic care for the horse is a skill that really can't be taught, so she must do all of it. Yet her staff are important and very good at helping what Betsy calls 'the new family' get ready.

Some organizations would ask if they could just bring their special needs clients to visit the horses. Betsy and her staff soon learned that that was really quite fun. We all know that horses seem to know and understand a human with a special need, and Betsy's horses are no different. It made me think of the story about how the Blackfeet came to call the horse ponokáómitaa, which translates as 'elk-dog'.

The Blackfeet have always loved their dogs and the dog was a significant part of tribal life. When they first encountered a horse, they didn't have a name for it, but it didn't take them long to realize that this wonderful new animal had the personality of their beloved dogs. The result was that they named the horse ponokáómitaa, elk-dog, because it is the size of an elk with the personality of a dog. Today ponokáómitaa, imitáá (dog) and unii (bison) are still extremely important parts of the Blackfeet life and culture.

I can't tell you how many stories Betsy has shared with us about how a horse, that had been sent to the slaughterhouse because it was “mean”, ambles up to a frightened, distraught, unhappy person and bring a smile to their face with a soft nuzzle.



CHAPTER 6

That sure doesn't look like a friendly camp near the village," Kachina said sarcastically as she looked at the definite outline of a bastion the students had uncovered and then at the village below them across the river.

"Looks like a mini-me for a Spanish fort," Carlo added.

"For some reason this rather shakes the credibility of Brother Raphael's story," Kachina laughed. That was situation normal when one considers the credibility of an invader's account.

"I think we need to include it in our excavation," Carlo was looking around at the size of the presidio.

"I know you're right, but we're already pushing our funds to the max."

“Give it to the grad students,” Carlo said after giving Kachina's answer some thought.

“What do you mean by that?”

“Our focus must rightly be on the village,” Carlo explained, “but, like the burial grounds, this is also an important part of the story. It confirms that the Spanish were here and weren't being as friendly as they'd like us to believe. It will help us confirm some dating and, I hate to sound like a capitalist, but it might connect us to some other research and more funding. We can create a unit of graduate students who are given the opportunity to run a dig. We'll keep an eye on them, but these students aren't going to destroy the bunker and it will give them some great experience.”

Professor Stevens wasn't sure anything like that had ever been done before, but soon graduate students were signing up for a one-term stay at what we started calling 'The Bastion.' What Kachina found amazing was that the addition of the bastion didn't reduce the number of graduate students at the village. On the contrary, there seemed to be more applicants. The only pre-requisite for the Bastion was that the person had to be a doctoral candidate and have minimal field experience.

Carlo was to be the chief archaeologist and excavation director of the bastion dig. The graduate students would report to Carlo and he would monitor their actions and progress. In fact, New Mexico University, and several other research universities, included the bastion as well as the village in their field schools. Their share of the students' tuition helped pay all excavation expenses.

It was really slow going since this was an earthen bunker. It was more of a clearing away than a dig. They could finally sink a shovel after they had spent several weeks carefully outlining the presidio. Using different color line with matching

flags, the students carefully outlined the top edge of the bunkers and bastions. Right under the top soil they found timbers.

Kachina had leased several metal detectors designed to find things deeply buried. The DRS Ground Expert Pro is a state of the art, advanced deep seeking treasure metal detector and metal locating system. It 'sees' in real time with a full color image scans of targets as deep as five meters below the ground.

The students gathered around as the operator of the DRS started scanning the open center of the presidio. Nothing. She then turned to an area which appeared like it was or had been a large, roofed building which the students were thinking might well have been the main, or only, building inside the presidio. It was a short wait before there, on the screen of the metal detector, was a Morion; a heavy steel helm with a pronounced crest or comb on top and sweeping sides that come to points on either end. This was none other than the famous seventeenth century Spanish helmet.

Their cheers could probably be heard in Albuquerque. Well, if not in Albuquerque it was sufficient to bring Kachina, Carlo, Istaqa and several of the other archaeologist running. As the crowd was gathering, the detector operator found several Morion close together. The site had all the indicators of a mass grave.

“Well, this goes a long way to confirming your suspicions that this is the village in Brother Raphael's account,” Carlo said looking at the DRS screen image.

“For the most part,” Kachina agreed. It was an important find, and Kachina congratulated and complimented the excited students on a job well done.

They really had done an excellent job so far. Obviously, there was a lot more to do.

I'm sure you've heard of someone being taught to swim by being thrown into the deep end of a swimming pool. That was, believe it or not, a real 'method' in the mid-twentieth century and earlier. But everyone learns differently. The modern reel or You-tube is one of the more popular today. Some people, however, want to read and use schematics. And, yes, there are still those who prefer to be thrown into the deep end of a new skill.

I remember a young man who told me about his first summer internship when he was in culinary school. His school was more like a European apprenticeship. You are hands-on the day you walk in. Other schools use a more classroom lecture method. The students sit in observation areas and watch the professor cook. The students from the second type of school had not yet experienced the pressure, the yelling, and organized chaos of the real working restaurant kitchen. Of course, the students from the first type were right at home. The young man told me that two or three of the students from the second type of school quit almost immediately. It was a learn-by-doing situation which is just too much for some people.

Carlo's graduate students had jumped into the deep end. There was no one to tell them what to do or how to do it. They had to apply the skills and techniques they had learned from books or demonstrations. It was the ultimate challenge and they had shown themselves up to it.

"Now all you have to do," Kachina laughed, "is to figure out how you're going to get to those guys without destroying your site."

There were lots of ideas and lots of debate among the students. Carlo watched and listened but left the decision up to the students. This was their project and, from the first day, unless they were in danger of making a catastrophic mistake, he stayed out of the discussion.

The plan that won the day was to carefully dig down to the roof and then see if they could slide a fiber-optic probe into the room, assuming, or more like hoping, that it isn't filled with rock and sand.

The students carefully exposed a portion of the roof. It was made of tree boughs and branches on top of poles. It was in amazingly good condition, so they carefully pulled back some of the roof material creating a small opening. The group watched anxiously as one of the students inserted a fiber-optic probe through the hole. The room was still intact and filled with skeletons in Spanish armor.

A second round of jubilation and cheering. It was all they could do to continue slowly and carefully. As the room began to be exposed, it became evident that it had been very purposely closed off from the outside. After pictures were taken, a small opening was made.

The room was probably twenty feet long and almost twelve feet deep with the roof being barely above a modern person's head. There were thirty-three bodies. Three of them were officers, but none of the officers was el Capitan. Raphael had told Brother Andrés that three monks had been sent away. Where was Capitan Pedro de Málaga? Here was another anomaly that questioned Brother Andrés account. Nevertheless, it was obvious that these soldiers had been buried in this room with little care or dignity. They had been brought here and dumped. They didn't die here. The villagers had then put up a wall to close off the room.

As they began to clear out the central area of the presidio the students noticed an inordinate amount of trash and it wasn't modern trash. Carbon dating showed that it was four-hundred-year-old trash. Usually a tribe would dump its trash in an arroyo – a steep gully created by water erosion – but this had obviously become the village dump. One can't help but wonder whether that was a conscious act meant to humiliate the Spaniards buried there.

One side room was an armory with other supplies, while a third room was filled with Kawaika jewelry and bars of gold. Raphael's account said that the fight started over Pedro taking gold. The hoarding of the jewelry and gold indicated that if the battle did start over Pedro taking gold, it wasn't the first time. Especially the bars of gold indicated that, similar to Spanish behavior elsewhere that is well documented, Pedro and his men were demanding gold from the Kawaika. This was the type of behavior that led to the 1680 rebellion that temporarily drove the Spanish out of New Mexico and Arizona.

Carlo and Kachina were extremely proud of their graduate students and Project Bastion. What bothered Kachina about this turning point in her ancestor's history was its relationship to the Hidden Valley village, which, of course, was unknown to all but a few. She knew that when the Spanish returned in 1692 several tribes fled to this area to try to escape the Spanish. Was the cliff dwelling here in 1609 or was it built as a hiding place and defense against the returning Spaniards?



CHAPTER 7

It was a crisp morning in the early fall. The sky was bright blue with a clarity only found in the great west. Three young Kawaikas were camped near a large boulder among the green ephedra and pinyon pines. A cool breeze was coming down the canyon.

Kele, the eldest of the three boys, was the first one up, had rekindled the fire and was warming some fry-bread and prickly pear cactus. It was his mother's fry-bread, and he was sure it was the best in the world. There was a lot of prickly pear near their camp so they had decided to save the dried fish they had brought with them and cooked the tasty paddles.

“Get up, lazy heads,” Kele called to his younger companions. “the deer aren’t going to wait for us.” Kele and his friends, Aditsan and Ahiga, were on their first solo hunting trip. They wanted to show their elders that they were ready to join hunting parties. They had picked up signs of a herd of deer a

mile or so from the village and were tracking them north.

Aditsan and Ahiga made comments about Kele's cooking as they scanned the horizon for signs of their prey.

"We should probably keep our eyes open for water," said Ahiga as he shook his water skin.

"I saw some cottonwood up in that box canyon," replied Aditsan, still scanning the distance. The boys knew that Cottonwood trees were a good sign of nearby water. The Palo Verde can also be an indicator growing along gulches. Of course, they knew that the river was very close but they preferred the sweet spring water that comes from the mountain.

The three young hunters started north following the prints and scat of the deer and soon realized that they were approaching the end of the canyon, but there were no deer. As they drew closer they could see that the canyon made a sharp turn to the west. The deer tracks, however, went east toward a solid wall.

The tracks led the boys around the end of a high shoulder of the mountain into a narrow passage between high mountain walls. It looked like another dead end, but the deer tracks were fresh in the gravel and sand underfoot, so the three moved farther into the narrow passage.

It was as though the mountainside suddenly opened for them. A sharp turn left and they were standing in a beautiful hidden valley. A line of dense pinyon pine, cottonwood and ephedra ahead belied nearby water. The deer tracks were headed toward the lush ridge.

The boys moved quietly. Unless there was another hidden entrance, the deer had to be just ahead.

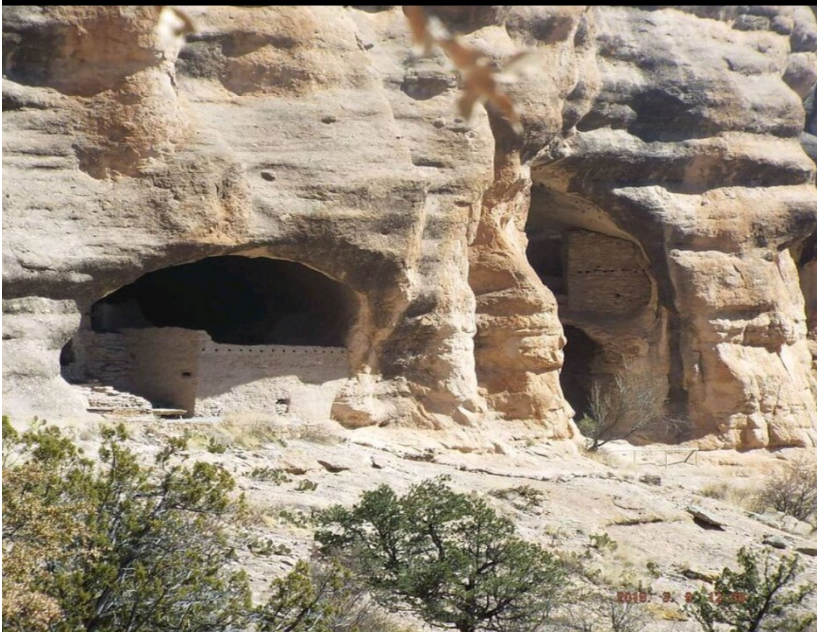
Aditsan was the first to spot a deer. He notched an arrow, took aim and let the arrow fly. He missed. That's all it took to spook

the entire herd. Deer began running along the ridge and down the far side from the young hunters. At almost the same time that Aditsan spotted his deer, Kele spotted one silhouetted on the ridge. A large youth, Kele had a strong draw even for an older man. His bow looked as though it would break in half as he drew back on the sinew bow string. The arrow flew straight and fast. The deer took one leap and dropped.

The boys cheered and ran toward the fallen deer. When they got there all three stood looking ahead in amazement. There, at the end of the canyon, was an enormous gash in the mountain side that created a large, recessed area that was almost totally covered by an overhang. It was almost halfway up the mountain wall and filled the entire end of the valley. None of them had ever seen anything like it.

If they had not had a deer to prepare and return home, the boys would have loved to have climbed up the cliff. However, getting the deer meat home as quickly as possible had to be their first priority.

It would be almost a full cycle of the moon before the boys would return to their hidden valley cliff. When they did return, their fathers went with them. It was an adventure that was told around many campfires. Unfortunately, the story was lost long before it got to Istaqa or Felipe. In truth, the story of the cliff's discovery being lost probably contributed to keeping its location a secret and the village safe for so many years.



CHAPTER 8

Since the Delvey incident, I have spent at least one night a week at the cliff dwellings with Istaqa and Felipe. Kachina always knew where to find us and she and Carlo would frequently join us. Of course, we're not naïve. Kachina came for the cliff dwellings.

We always have a good time, but I did have a serious reason to frequent the cliff. I really, really want to learn the Keres language. I'm horrible at linguistics. On top of that, I have never encountered a native American language that a non-native could master or even learn well enough to be called fluent. Keres was giving me a firsthand understanding of why

the Germans could never understand the famous Navajo Code-talkers. But I'm not giving up.

Carlo and Kachina were so busy with the Kawaika Village that they didn't have the time they wanted to study the cliff dwelling. Kachina had to constantly remind herself that the cliff dwelling was still a secret. Whenever they were there, they would wander the remains and make copious notes.

When the shadows of evening would force them to stop, the two could always be found on the cliff ledge smudging.

I asked Felipe about this. He told me that Kachina was thanking the ancestors and katsinim – spirits - for allowing them to see and visit the home of her ancestors. She wasn't asking for favors. She was showing respect and appreciation for being allowed to tromp through their homes.

The evening campfire was a time of sharing. Felipe would tell Kachina and Carlo about how well I was doing, while Istaqa laughed. Carlo and Kachina would tell about what they had discovered in the dwellings or share events at the dig.

On this evening Kachina was telling us how she was pondering the hypothesis that the Kawaika moved to the cliff after the 1680 rebellion as a place to hide. It would also be a good defensive position since a limited number of warriors could keep an army out of the hidden canyon.

This was definitely a 'which came first' situation, but, since in the big picture the two villages existed at about the same time, it was going to be next to impossible to tell which was first.

Kachina would ask Istaqa and Felipe to tell and retell the old stories she had heard so many times before. Istaqa and Felipe ran through the Kawaika oral tradition like a couple of librarians organizing their card catalogue. Kachina, Carlo and I spent countless hours around the evening campfire below the

cliff listening to stories from the Kawaika past; always listening for that account that might connect with Br. Raphael or there being two villages.

Of all the methods of dating, Radiocarbon is probably best for the Kawaika Village since the dating range has been argued to be as little as fifty years. Radiocarbon dating is basically the calculation of the decay of a radioactive isotope known as ^{14}C . It is generally accepted that the half-life of ^{14}C is 5,700 years \pm 60 years. This means that it cannot measure a subtle difference in age of as little as twelve years. It can only be used with organic materials and it is expensive; about \$500 per specimen.

In Kachina's case the easiest, least expensive and most reliable method would be to find where they buried their dead, learning which site had the oldest cemetery and comparing items buried with the bodies. This brought Kachina back to pondering where these people buried their dead. They had not found a burial site near either village.

The modern green funeral practice of the tribe was to wrap the person in clean cotton and bury them so their bodies would go back to the Earth. As far as any of the Kawaika knew, their ancestors were not one of those tribes that put their dead on platforms or in trees where there would be no signs and few remains after several years.

The two archeologists figured that they should find some special place with bones and items that had been buried with the deceased. This, of course, always sent them searching the dwellings again, and always without success. Studying the ISRC's data yet again, Kachina was trying to envision the village. She had done this countless times but she kept feeling she was missing something. Then she thought about the bastion. That had been discovered by accident because it was outside the scope of the ISRC's study. If it isn't showing up on

the data it must be outside the area. “If you lived here and someone died, where would you bury them?” Kachina would ask herself and anyone nearby willing to listen.



CHAPTER 9

Shandiin was sitting in front of the small Adobe hut in the tunnel near the main community room where she lived with her parents, Nanabah and Bidziil, and little brother, Hania. They only lived here when the elders were worried about Spanish finding their cliff home. She had been born in the village by the river but moved to the cliff village when the Spanish returned. While she loved her cliff village, Shandiin missed living by the river with the high desert to explore. Even though the hidden valley is beautiful, there was a sense of being closed in. That was probably because Shandiin knew they were hiding from the Spaniards.

When the Spanish were snooping around and the elders were afraid they might discover the hidden valley, they would have everyone go into the caves. This time they had been here for several days. Her father would take his turn at the lookout on

the side of the mountain and tending the animals that were kept in a small valley that could not be seen from the desert. It was little more than an arroyo, but it was big enough to have some grazing. The corral kept the animals up against the mountain by the entrance. There they could store feed and have a place to keep the animals out of a storm.

Her father told her that strong young warriors would climb across the side of the mountain and be able to watch the Spaniards below. Two of them would watch from the mountain. If they needed to send a message back to the elders, one of them would hurry back to a spot where another brave waited. The first brave would stay there while that brave moved quickly around the mountain to another brave. This way there was always a communications chain.

Bidziil couldn't do this job because he had been hurt during the battle with the first Spanish invaders and couldn't bend his left leg very well, but that didn't stop him from being a part of the war party that finally drove the Spaniards away at least for most of Shandiin's life.

Now they were back. Shandiin was glad that they had the cliff village and the cave, but she wished that the Spanish would just go home and leave her tribe in peace. She was definitely tired of having to hide.

Shandiin's best friends, Peetra and Tawadza, came along as Shandiin was thinking about the village by the river. Peetra had been Shandiin's best friend as long as she could remember. He was small compared to her. As a result he was always doing something to prove that he was as strong as the next boy. Tawadza was Peetra's younger sister. She was only about 18 moons younger and was almost as big as Shandiin. The three of them always seemed to be the ringleader when there was mischief afoot.

Today was no different. They had decided that they would explore the cave beyond what was known as the Narrows. Just beyond the kiva from Shandiin's home, no one went into the Narrows. There was no reason. Probably just because it is a tight passage and the tribe had plenty of room without whatever chamber was beyond.

The chamber beyond the narrows was rather large. It seemed gigantic to the children. No one will ever know what inspired them, but the three young Kawaika decided that they should paint a mural on the wall. Perhaps they wanted to leave their story for anyone who might follow them into this remote cavern. Let's be honest. We all like to tell our stories. It is a part of our immortality.

On a large wall of black basalt the three began drawing the account of their young lives. They drew a picture of their home on the river. They told the story of the Spaniards and of having to flee to the cliff village. Little did they know that one day one of their descendants would stand looking at their mural and understand.



Chapter 10

Shortly after Makawee arrived it was evident that I was not the only person who wanders the wilderness and climbs mountains alone. Okay, so I knew that I was not the only one. I have several nomad friends who go alone well out into the desert and cover countless miles of desert and mountains by themselves. Nevertheless, Makawee was my corroboration. I knew that Kachina spent many days alone

digging holes near Coyote Tank, and I know that she's quite capable of other solo exploration, but Makawee became the local poster-child for solo adventuring. The only difference between Makawee and me is that I have always done solo hiking and climbing because I lived alone in the wilderness while Makawee wasn't often able to find someone to go with her.

Makawee awoke on her day off to a magnificent high desert day. Folks who have never at least visited the west really have no idea of the magnitude of the 'big sky'; a darker blue that seemed to go on forever. To top that off the temperature was in the sixties with low humidity. Makawee stuck her head out of her lodge behind the museum and smiled. This was perfect weather for an adventure. Everyone she could think of asking to go with her was working. At that time she didn't know me well enough to know that I would have loved to have joined her.

This situation was nothing new to Makawee, so she added plenty of food and water to the other survival and wilderness supplies already in her bag, saddled up Kohana and headed into my ranch. She stopped briefly to say 'hi' to Kachina and Carlo at the dig and started around South Table, which is the mountain above the tank.

As she rounded the west end of South Table, T-Bone Peak came into view and a plan was hatched. She rode to the northern end of the mountain where the climb wasn't as steep, and leaving Kohana to graze, she started up the mountain. Kohana was accustomed to this behavior by her human companion and began looking around for the best grasses.

By the time Makawee was within a hundred feet of the top she realized that it was becoming too steep and too dangerous to go alone. Makawee was one of those people who was

adventuresome but not foolhardy. As she made her way back to where Kohana was enjoying some Sideoats Grama, Makawee stepped on a rock that was evidently the only thing stopping a rockslide. The next thing she knew it seemed that the mountain was coming down on her.

Ducking the large boulders, Makawee was pummeled by a hailstorm of small rocks. As she thought the rockslide was over one last large bolder pinned her to the ground. The pain was like nothing she had ever felt before in her life, and she was sure that her legs were gone. After a short time trying to assess her situation the pain in her legs began to grow exponentially.

She struggled to keep from passing out. It was all she could do to get her backpack off and get to her ResQLink. A ResQLink is a powerful distress beacon that is registered with the owner's government and the frequency monitored by two-hundred countries around the world. It is only to be used for serious emergencies. If ever there was an appropriate time to use it, it was now. The backpack had provided a lot of protection from the flying rocks but it had not protected the rescue beacon. It had been crushed. So much for pushing a button and waiting to be rescued.

Kohana had fled the slide and was standing on a ridge. She was agitated and appeared to be looking for Makawee. Makawee called to her and the faithful companion made her way to her fallen human. Try as they may, there was nothing the two of them could do to free Makawee. She had to send Kohana for help. Here was where she was going to learn how smart Kohana was and how well they communicated.

Makawee said "go get help" several times. Kohana moved around Makawee showing the frustration she was feeling not being able to help. Makawee had been pointing in the direction of Kawaika village. After what seemed forever, but was most

likely no more than a couple of minutes, Kohana stood near Makawee and looked in the direction Makawee was pointing. Makawee and Kohana had been together since Kohana was a young filly. Makawee knew that Kohana did not want to leave and was very frightened and upset. Finally, Kohana nuzzled Makawee and turned, made her way down to the valley, and was soon running south toward the river and the Kawaika village.

I was on my way to the village and just coming up to the intersection of the road to the village and the trail to Hidden Canyon when I saw Kohana in the distance running like the devil was chasing her. It didn't take any time to realize that Kohana didn't have a rider.

I turned Janie toward the approaching horse, had Butch jump up on my lap where he always rode when I wanted to make time and set off at a run.

Kohana was agitated and soaking wet when we got to her. I gave her some water from my canvas bucket and wiped the sweat from her body in an attempt to calm her down a bit. She kept looking back at the direction from which she had come and would prance anxiously. I finally gave up and let her lead us back up the trail. She ran ahead and stood by Makawee as we drew near.

Makawee was unconscious. Her first aid kit and survival bag lay open by her side.

The boulder was large and heavy. Makawee regained consciousness while I was trying to get the boulder off her legs. I had just decided that I needed to find a way to let the horses help when she awakened.

“Oh, thank goodness,” she said weakly but with a smile. “Kohana and I couldn't get the boulder to move, so I sent her for help.”

“She did a great job,” I said as I looked for a way to put a rope around the boulder. “She was coming down the trail like a bat out of hell.”

“Good girl,” Makawee reached toward the horse that was standing a few feet away keeping close watch. When Kohana drew near to nuzzle her friend, Makawee gave her a kiss.

I had checked Makawee as best I could. She didn't have any serious injuries apart from her legs being pinned, and most likely broken.

“How are you doing?” I asked as I tried to make her comfortable while I worked on the boulder.

“The pain is getting pretty fierce,” she said. “I'm afraid I'm going to pass out again.”

“Did you have anything for the pain?”

“All I had was Tylenol.”

Despite what all the big pharmaceutical companies and the politicians whose careers they finance tell you, cannabis has been well researched and found to be not only safe but unbelievably beneficial for everything from insomnia to arthritis pain to cancer. I'm so glad that so many states are making it legal. I'm especially glad that our state is one of them. I hurt my knees in the service of Uncle Sam and am always in serious pain by bedtime.

I quickly got into my knap sack and came out with my RSO pain killer.

I squeezed a generous portion from the syringe onto my finger and told Makawee to open her mouth. I put the RSO under her tongue.

“That's RSO cannabis,” I explained. “There is almost no chance it will make you high but it should help with the pain and, at worst, put you to sleep.”

Makawee gave me a questioning look as she said “thank you.”

“My knees are really messed up, and that's the best pain killer I've had. The worst side effects are falling asleep or getting a bit giddy.”

Makawee actually laughed.

“I don't really like it when I get high,” I told her. “I think it's an icky feeling as far as I'm concerned.”

“You don't have to explain to me,” Makawee said smiling through her pain. “I kinda like getting the giggles. I've never had it for pain.”

“It has pain killing qualities for everyone but, unless you smoke it, which gives you all of the different cannabinoids, it often takes time to figure out which of the 540 compounds in cannabis is what you need,” I said trying to make small talk to distract her as much as possible from her pain and get time to come up with a way to get her legs out from under the bolder. “I don't smoke and found this mix to do the best for my pain.”

As we talked about cannabis as a pain killer and cancer fighter, I was trying desperately to come up with a way to have the two horses help me move the rock. I could wrap a rope around the bolder and have the horses pull, but there was too great a risk that the bolder would hit one of the horses on its way down. Thankfully the RSO started to work for Makawee. She did get

a bit giggly because I had been quite generous, but more importantly it was helping her pain.

I finally decided that I had enough rope to use a small tree down the hill like a pulley. The horses and I would be uphill from the bolder when it started to roll. I would apply leverage to the uphill side of the bolder while the horses pulled.

The first attempt was a total failure. It was try number three when I felt movement, and on the fourth try the giant rock leaned precariously forward. I gave it a push and it thundered down the mountain.

I must admit that I didn't really want to look at Makawee's legs. Years ago I was a member of a rescue squad. I guess I've seen more than my share of broken bodies.

A miracle, by definition, is an event that is inexplicable by human understanding of the laws of science and nature. Most people credit some deity with miracles so a good atheist will not accept miracles. Looking down at her legs with the expectation of a bloody mangled mess, the only word I could think of was “miracle.”

Yes, she had one break, which was probably the source of most of her pain. Otherwise, the boulder had pushed her legs into a crevasse and pinned them there. That had to hurt but it didn't grind and crush as I had expected.

I offered her more cannabis before I moved her and started splinting her break.

Kohana stayed very close to Makawee frequently literally looking over my shoulder to see what I was doing to her beloved human. As I finished splinting her broken leg Makawee was getting enough relief that she was acting sleepy.

“Take care of her,” I said to Butch as I began looking for materials to make a travois. Butch laid down next to the now sleeping woman. For some reason that also seemed to help calm Kohana.

Her falling asleep took a lot of pressure off me. I was able to think more clearly and work more efficiently, so soon I had a relatively comfortable travois ready.

A travois is a simple platform or carrier lashed between two poles that plains tribes used to pull teepees and other bulky items behind a dog or horse. Most travois with which I have been familiar have used teepee poles strapped to the horse with a simple platform between the two poles. I didn't have any teepee poles. Fortunately, a nearby stand of Aspen provided the poles. Kohana was a bit jumpy when I went to lash the poles to the billet straps on her saddle, so I ended up having Janie do the pulling. I would just let Kohana walk along behind so she could always see Makawee. I'd just walk with Butch. We only had about five or six miles and we wouldn't be able to travel any faster if I was riding. I did get a bit fancy by making several cross pieces so Makawee could ride parallel with the line of travel and with her head slightly elevated instead of perpendicular. While a sling might have been even more comfortable, I was concerned that the movement in a sling might increase her pain and perhaps do further damage to her leg, so she ended up riding on a rather ridged platform between the two poles. My bareback pad and her sleeping bag provided some padding.

I picked Makawee up and put her on the litter as gently as possible. Even then it was not without at least one yelp of pain. But we were ready to move out.

The process had taken quite some time and we were soon enveloped in the shadows of approaching night. I didn't want to

stop because my supplies were limited, but it was a moonless night and there was no visibility. We didn't need a twisted ankle or other injury on top of what we already faced.

I made camp near where the trail to the box canyon turned east. We had made it the better part of halfway. I found a nice, sheltered area up against South Table and unstrapped the travois from Janie. I rummaged through Makawee's saddle bags and found a good supply of traveling food. Makawee was still sleeping so I took care of Janie, Kohana and Butch firsts. Butch again sat down close to Makawee while I set up camp and in a short while we had a fire and everyone was fed.

I had enough RSO for two more extra-generous pain killing doses. If Makawee would sleep until light, that should be enough to get her through the journey.

I was awakened just before first light by Makawee moaning. I was amazed that the RSO had lasted this long. "Here," I said, having squeezed out a generous dose of RSO. "Open up."

Makawee opened her mouth and I administered about half of my remaining RSO. I realized that she had used almost a week's worth in the past twelve hours. It didn't matter. Unlike pharmaceutical pain killers, this wasn't going to hurt her. She smiled weakly as I put the tar-like substance under her tongue.

We arrived at the Kawaika Village as workers were arriving and Kachina was cleaning up after breakfast. Makawee was asleep again so we decided to call an ambulance instead of putting her through more pain trying to get her into a vehicle.

Kohana, whom we had put into Kachina's corral with Janie and Nihone, was not happy about being separated from Makawee.

She wanted to be with Makawee so fussed and whinnied as we put Makawee in the ambulance.



Chapter 11

Kachina's name means “spirit” in the Keres language, not to be mistaken with the Kachin Belief System where a katsina (plural katsinim) can represent anything in the natural world from a beloved ancestor to a natural phenomenon like the sun or thunderstorms. The people do not worship katsinim. Each katsina is considered a very powerful being who, if venerated and shown respect, may use her power to help the human. It was this help that Istaqa and Felipe were seeking.

The two shaman felt that the katsinim would help Kachina find the burial ground. Her motivation was pure and unselfish. Istaqa and Felipe asked permission to build a kiva near the

Kawaika Village so that they could practice rituals seeking help from the katsinim.

A kiva is a round room built underground that is used by the tribe for ceremonies and tribal gatherings. They built a Chaco-style kiva which is small and completely below ground level; making it a part of mother Earth. Here they would chant and meditate. Carlo and I joined with a number of others helping to build the kiva. Even the process of preparing the kiva was a spiritual experience.

Once completed the two shaman began meditating, chanting and listening for the Katsinim. For much of the next week the two holy men stayed in the kiva. Members of the tribe who still practiced the Kachin religion brought food for the men, and others would join them from time to time chanting and meditating. Carlo and I were among those who would spend time in the kiva sitting respectfully as Felipe and Istaqa would burn a black sage smudge and go into deep trance states. The rich, heavy aroma of the black sage, which is considered to attract your energy and consciousness into other dimensions, would make us feel lightheaded. I would always worry about it putting me to sleep, which I figured would be quite disrespectful, but I could see why shamans preferred the black sage for their shamanic journeys.

I'm a hard-core atheist, nevertheless I could not help but be moved by the experience. It wasn't the worship of a deity or expecting a god to perform some miracle for us. It was communication with everything around us. Humans are like the monkey-brain described in Buddhism; we never shut up and listen to the rest of nature.

Quantum physics has shown us that the universe is one; i.e. in reality there is nothing separating us. The universe is one

therefore the concept of a common consciousness is not unreasonable.

Scientists have also discovered that plants communicate through the mycorrhiza network. This network uses the fungi mycelium. A tree sends chemical signals to its roots, which then travel through the mycelium and are received by other trees, who alter their behavior based on the information that they receive. In a wood there is usually a Mother Tree that monitors and looks after the others. The Mother Tree has been found to actually direct more water or minerals to a tree in distress.

All of this not only demonstrates that human language is far from the only means of communication in the universe, but the concepts of spirit, which developed before quantum reality was discovered, is not out of line with science. To the contrary, it actually clarifies aspects of our spiritual experiences.

Felipe explained that perhaps the biggest reason that it takes so long to hear what the katsinim is telling you is that we humans gave up our connection to the rest of nature long ago.

“Have you heard the story of Otapi?” Felipe asked.

“Otapi grew up in the time before time when humans knew that they were a part of Ha’ats’i - the land, nature,” Felipe started his story. “One day Otapi was hunting. The game led him far from the village into the land of Wakkay.

“Otapi didn’t know about Wakkay. None of the people knew about Wakkay because for all of human history the katsinim had protected the people from Wakkay. Wakkay carried the diseases of selfishness, avariciousness, hatred and jealousy.

“Otapi had just killed a deer and was preparing it for the journey back to the village when Wakkay appeared.”

“What do you have there?” asked Wakkay with a mischievous smile.

“I killed a deer,” replied Otapi. Otapi didn’t wonder about Wakkay’s sudden appearance, and because he was a bit on the dull side, Otapi didn’t notice Wakkay’s wicked smile.

“What will you do with the deer?”

“I’ll take it back to my village,” said Otapi. “It will feed us for several days and the hide will make wonderful clothes.”

“You are going to share?”

“Yes,” even dull Otapi was a bit puzzled by that. They always shared.

“Why should you share your deer with others?” Wakkay insisted. “You came a long way to find it. You have done all the work. It is your deer. The others should get their own. It is silly for you to share.”

Otapi was too slow witted to argue with Wakkay and was soon infected by Wakkay’s diseases. He returned to his village and refused to share his deer. That created anger, hatred, and jealousy which had never been in their village. They didn’t even have a word for ‘mine’. In his anger, Otapi invited Wakkay to visit the village to explain, and soon there was no sharing.

Wakkay taught the people that they weren’t really children of Mother Earth. He told them that they were superior to the other animals and need not follow the rules of nature. The Katsinim tried to warn the people and tell them that Wakkay was evil and was leading them on a path to destruction, but the people had forsaken their birthright. They believed Wakkay because he made his way sound so good and exciting. They could no longer hear the katsinim or understand the languages of nature.

They were soon building fences and wall, fighting with each other, and creating gods in their own image who repeated the words of Wakkay. And Wakkay was very, very happy.”

“Today,” Istaqa picked up the explanation, “there are some of us who work very hard to re-learn the languages of nature and listen to the katsinim, but we must meditate and listen very, very carefully because we are still descendants of Otapi. No matter how hard we might work to overcome greed, anger, envy and the other diseases of Wakkay, those diseases lay dormant inside us.”

It was near the end of the second week. The kiva was full of people. Makawee, Kachina, Carlo and I were among those sitting quietly as Istaqa and Felipe were in a deep trance. Traditionally only men entered the kiva, but Felipe and Istaqa both figured that male superiority was most likely Wakkay’s idea.

Makawee was extremely excited not only to be permitted in the kiva but to be allowed to be a part of a Kawaika ceremony. We had both arrived at the Kawaika village about the same time and were putting Janie and Kohana in the corral with Nihone. Makawee was talking non-stop about the honor which she felt.

Suddenly she stepped up so close to me that our noses almost touched.

“Do you have any idea what this means to me?” she asked seriously.

Up to this point I had struggled not to show my amusement at her constant chatter.

With the seriousness of her expression, looking into the depths of her beautiful brown eyes, my spirit felt a rush of joy, love and admiration, yet the best I could do was “I think I have some idea.”

When we entered the kiva Makawee showed a mixture of excitement, fascination and fear. Looking at Istaqa and Felipe sitting cross-legged near the fire pit, she almost dropped to the ground. Refusing a stool, she sat cross-legged across from the two shaman where she had soon shut out the world around her and was focused, with an expression of awe and admiration, on Felipe and Istaqa.

Watching her I soon realized that she had actually joined the two in a deep trance state with her body rocking ever so slightly. I glanced at Kachina who was also noticing Makawee. Our eyes met. Kachina just smiled and lowered her head. I realized that she too was joining her friend.

I looked around the kiva. The others were sitting quietly and respectfully, but the only ones in a trance state were Istaqa, Felipe, Kachina and Makawee. It was physically and emotionally uncomfortable to focus my attention on people around me, so I allowed my eyes to rest on a piece of charred wood in the fire pit.

I don't know how it happened but, when I looked up, I was standing outside the Kiva with Felipe, Istaqa, Makawee and Kachina. They were talking in the Keres language to a woman wearing traditional Kawaika garb. Somehow I could understand.

"If you were the shaman when this village was alive," she asked, "where would you bury the dead?"

Almost instantly and without a word, Felipe and Istaqa both pointed at a slight rise just east of the kiva. The woman smiled.

The next instant I was again sitting in the kiva. I looked around. Istaqa, Felipe, Makawee and Kachina were no longer in a trance state. Istaqa and Felipe started chanting in Keres and

the room erupted in cheers.

Kachina saw my puzzled look.

“The katsinim gave them a vision,” she said.

I caught myself saying “I know.”

Kachina laughed, “yes. You were there too.”

We all filed out of the kiva. Carlo took off at a run to get one of the DRS Ground Expert Pro metal detectors.

Making our way to the ridge the four of us had seen in our vision, Carlo began a quick scan. It only took moments for him to see the images. We had found the burial ground. I stood looking back toward the kiva. What, I wondered, just happened?

We had quite a party that night, but I found myself sitting quietly trying to comprehend what I had experienced. Evidently Felipe noticed.

“Still trying to wrap your brain around that?” he said sitting down beside me and offering me a delicious traditional Kawaika drink called ah-geh; a warm drink of blur corn, water, a sweetener like honey, spices like vanilla and cinnamon and fruit.

“That’s an understatement,” I replied taking a sip of the sweet fruity beverage. “I can understand having gone into a trance state myself but you saw me there, and I saw the hill at which you pointed. How was that possible? How did I get into your vision, or perhaps you got into mine? How did any of this happen?”

“I really have no idea,” Felipe laughed. “My guess, however, is

that you really wanted to share our experience. No matter how often you tell me you're an atheist you have a good spirit. I know. You don't have to believe in gods to be spiritual. In some ways, however, I think you are more spiritual than many people who are religious. And you do actually work at keeping an open mind."

"Oh, I believe your story about Otapi is just a story, but it does make a valid and, what I believe to be, a true analysis of the human situation. We have worked hard at separating ourselves from nature, and I have always wanted to overcome that."

"Well, you just did."

"That isn't exactly how I expected."

"Of course not," again Felipe laughed heartily. "I think you ended up with us because you actually believe all the parts, but never put them together as a whole. You didn't have any problem accepting someone going into a trance state so when you found yourself there you accepted it."

"Quantum physics," I replied. "Quantum reality. "

"What?" It was now Felipe's turn to look confused.

"In quantum physics you can be in two places at the same time, in fact, you have the potential of being in an infinite number of places at any one moment."

"Maybe," Felipe said still considering the concept of quantum physics, "but I don't think we were actually all there physically."

"Somehow, though, we all shared the same experience or vision."

"The power of the katsina."

"Perhaps, but I'm leaning more toward the Penrose-Hameroff

theory of quantum consciousness and Laszlo's Akashic Field."

"Perhaps that Akashic Field is the power of the katsina."

"Are you familiar with the Akashic Field?"

"No."

"The philosopher-scientist, Ervin Laszlo, developed the concept of the Akashic Field. He said that it is a cosmic field where all information and knowledge is interconnected. His theory makes sense in light of quantum physics' oneness, which is pretty much a given. If he is correct, our very reality, our consciousness, is anchored in this oneness of connected information that he believes gives rise to everything."

"In other words," Felipe looked like the proverbial light had come on, "when we all went into a trance state together we met in this Akashic Field. The search was for us to make contact with someone, call it a katsina, in that field."

"I guess that could be a working hypothesis," I replied. "He does claim that our consciousness is grounded in the oneness. That would explain our ability to meet while in a trance state and meet someone, or a katsina, from the past."

The party was a segue to lots of work. The excavation of the burial grounds was going to significantly tax Kachina's resources, most especially her staff. Money was rarely an issue. Only Carlo, who kept the books, and Dr. Stevens knew that I would cover any short-term shortages. I had sworn them to secrecy. They were not to tell anyone, especially Kachina, that any money or resources came from me.

Kachina felt that we needed a separate team just for the burial grounds. Continuity is important.

“We could set up another graduate student dig,” suggested Carlo. “The bastion was a great success, and this should be technically easier. We could even allow some undergraduates.”

“I could create a program at the museum that would bring volunteers to do things like carry earth, spread the dirt after it has been sieved, and run errands. That would take a lot of busy work from your staff.” Makawee was excited. She loved getting visitors and school children physically involved. She firmly believed that such involvement helped them understand, relate and remember. “There are programs where visitors actually pay to work a dig, and as Carlo pointed out, a burial ground isn't technically difficult. It would be an excellent first hands-on experience.”



CHAPTER 12

The burial ground project was running full tilt within a week. Dr. Stevens, having witnessed the success of the bastion project, was happy to cooperate and allow some of their undergrad and master's students to apply. Makawee soon had a waiting list of tourist volunteers. She made arrangements with Chuck to provide transportation. The volunteers gladly paid the cost of transportation and supplies. For the type of visitor who volunteers to do the grunt work at an archeological dig, this was not an issue. To experience and be a part of a real archeological dig was worth much more.

It took almost no time for archeology student across the country to learn of the new opportunity. In fact, there were so

many applications that Carlo got some of the doctoral students to help him sort through them.

Kachina had grabbed a cup of coffee and was out making rounds by eight o'clock. Gone were the days of enjoying a hearty Kawaika breakfast. Today she was just lucky to get coffee. If Carlo hadn't awakened earlier and made coffee as he planned his busy day, she wouldn't have had any coffee.

She had just checked the work schedule when she saw two buses pulling into the parking lot. That, she thought to herself, was strange since the first tour wasn't until ten and, unless Makawee made some last-minute changes to the schedule, there were no schools scheduled. She didn't really have time to give it any attention and went back to her rounds.

She was heading toward the village kiva, which had just recently been opened. When they discovered it the roof was mostly intact. Considering the location and material covering it, Kachina, Carlo and the other archeologists were thinking that the villagers purposely buried their kiva in the hopes that the Spanish would not notice it and therefore not bother it. It was a beautiful example of the Mesa Verdean style and Kachina was anxious to see inside. That's when her two-way radio called her name causing her to jump.

"Dr. Corn," came the voice, "there's a Dr. Northrup here to see you."

"Damn, I don't need this," she said out loud but not over the radio. She paused, thinking about how she might avoid him, then thought better. "I'll be right there," she spoke in her radio. She hoped that her feelings didn't show in her voice.

Kachina would normally have loved another crack at the chauvinist asshole, but today was not the day. She walked toward the visitor cabin like a condemned woman.

“Good morning, Dr. Corn,” Terry Northrup said with a big smile and holding out his hand as he moved to meet her. Accepting his hand Kachina couldn't help but realize that he had just addressed her as doctor and wasn't being sarcastic.

“I'm sure I'm the last person you wanted to see this morning,” Northrup's voice was pleasant and sincere sounding. “But I hope you'll give me a chance to explain.”

“Sure,” Kachina tried to smile convincingly.

“Thank you,” Terry said sincerely. “You see, I've been practicing this speech for several weeks.”

“Really?” Kachina couldn't help being curious.

“It is an apology,” said Northrup. Kachina's mouth must have dropped open. “I'm serious.”

“I didn't mean to appear . . .”

“It's okay,” Terry interrupted. “I knew when I decided to come here that I would be the last man on Earth you'd want to see and I must be prepared to accept whatever reaction awaited me.”

“This must be important and it must be hard,” Kachina said gently. The man was obviously struggling.

“You don't know the half of it,” Terry gave a friendly smile but Kachina could see the fear in his eyes. They were pleading, but for what Kachina wondered.

“Come on,” said Kachina. “Looks like you're going to need some coffee. Let's go to my lodge.”

Despite our best efforts, much about us and the way our lives develop can be traced back to what we are told we are, what we are told we are to be or should be, and

the limitations of our expectations to achieve even the most mundane of successes.

Almost at our birth we are confronted by King Ghidorah, the three-headed monster who rules the world. Even the parent who has struggled and broken free from Ghidorah's power cannot save their children from this encounter. It is inevitable. Nor can they do more than watch and cry and hope as their children face their own struggle.

Each of Ghidorah's heads pleads, cajoles, whispers and threatens us from womb to grave. One tells us what we believe. The next tells us whom we shall serve while the third turns us into human resources.

Very honestly, few of us escape Ghidorah's grasp because few of us recognize Ghidorah who pretends to be our friend and protector. Ghidorah breeds and molds us so we believe his lies and accept his use of us as though it is our prescribed destiny. We become domesticated.

"Fortunately some," wrote Henri Bergson, the French analytic philosopher who was very influential in the first half of the twentieth century, "are born with spiritual immune systems that sooner or later give rejection to the illusory worldview grafted upon them from birth through social conditioning." However, most who escape from Ghidorah do so by suffering a painful experience that forces them to critically appraise their concept of reality. Terrance Northrup was of this latter group.

Once at the lodge, sitting with coffee in hand, Terry Northrup started his story.

"I have a wonderful and exceptionally talented daughter, Tonya. She's a chemistry genius. And I'm not just a proud father. She was always in trouble in high school and

college because she could figure out a chemistry problem better than her teachers. A few weeks ago she applied for a fellowship. She has unbelievable credentials. She has authored three highly acclaimed academic papers for which her white male professors got credit. The fellowship went to a white male with questionable credentials and no experience.”

Kachina sat shaking her head. Been there. Done that.

“When they told her of their decision their reasoning was ‘he’s a man with a family to support.’ What a stupid excuse. Tonya is married and has a child plus she has the credentials for the job.”

“When I learned of what happened I threw a fit ... temper tantrum might be a better word,” Terry continued. “Tonya just looked at me. I stopped almost in mid-sentence when I realized she was just sitting there. I asked if she wasn't upset. She said she was livid but added ‘dad, that's what you do every day’. I was so shocked that I didn't know what to say. I started to deny it, but the memory of how I acted with you at the conference hit me hard.”

“I realized that my own daughter was a victim of my behavior. She was hurt and angry but she didn't share that with me because ‘that’s what daddy would have done.’ I have never felt so low and disgusting in my life.”

Terry Northrup sat with his head down peering into his coffee cup. Kachina sat watching, not knowing what to say.

“I can't fix all of my mistakes or take back the pain I've caused,” he said daring to look at Kachina, “but I can at least try to make restitution for my most recent behavior.”

“Apology accepted,” Kachina said quietly.

“Thank you, but I don't want to stop with a simple apology,” Terry looked up with tears in his eyes. “I can't really make amends for my past behavior, but I'd like do something”

“Oh?”

“I have two buses full of students with me,” Terry looked a bit sheepish. “One of them is full of undergraduates I brought to see your work, but most of them would love to get their hands dirty. Also, most of them are bright young women. The other bus has graduate students. They're here to work. Whatever you need. I want them to see what passion for a project and hard work can bring.”

A long silence followed as Kachina tried to comprehend what she had just heard. It wasn't the buses of students but the confession, apology and sincere contrition of a hardcore white male chauvinist was almost more than she could grasp. Terry Northrup broke the silence.

“And I'd like to help, if that would be okay.”

“We'd love to have you,” replied Kachina.

Neither Kachina nor Terry were ready for the tears. Terry Northrup started to cry. Kachina's natural compassion was almost more than he could handle. He had spent his adult life being cold, calculating and mean to those with whom he disagreed or those who were different and upon whom he looked down. Now he was being accepted not only by one of his own victims but by a young indigenous woman whose gender and culture had suffered and continues to suffer outrageous atrocities at the hands of white males.

Northrup's students were given a tour of the dig and work assignments. Kachina and Terry were standing on the bridge with Carlo looking at the bastion. Carlo was describing the project and how it had given a number of doctoral students some outstanding experience.

"Does this seem like it might fit with Brother Andrés' account of Brother Raphael's story?" Kachina asked Terry. "Just about everything fits except this bastion, but we know that especially the monks weren't going to admit that they came to plunder, kill and destroy a culture."

"You've got that right." Terry laughed. "Is there evidence of gold here?"

"Yes. Farther south you find mostly copper, but these folks had gold. All of the metal jewelry we've found is gold."

"That would sure send a Spaniard into a feeding frenzy," Terry replied, still concentrating on the bastion. "That bastion is so . . . I can't find the right word . . . so paranoid. They had to have realized that they would soon be recognized as invaders. Of course, building forts is what the Europeans did."

"Whether or not this was Brother Raphael's group doesn't matter a great deal," Terry continued. "You definitely have evidence of a Spanish invasion. If there was a way to show that this was Raphael's friend's work, it would help you know whether these events were pre-1680 or post 1692. That would be fabulous."

"I never thought about that," confessed Kachina. "I was so intent upon establishing the presence of my ancestors that I hadn't looked beyond that to the impact of this discovery putting history into perspective."

"I think this place is unbelievably important," Terry said, shifting his gaze from the bastion to the village. "I think your

analysis of the bodies in the bastion is probably right on. What I find interesting is that the Kawaika were able to overpower the bastion. It's pretty crude but it was still an excellent defense position."

"If I were the villagers," Carlo offered, "I wouldn't risk anyone getting killed by attacking. Just don't let them out. Between the desert heat and the lack of food and water, it would be over soon."

"Dang, that's the best scenario yet," exclaimed Terry. "Modern Americans like to think of the indigenous people as being ignorant and superstitious, but the ignorant and superstitious ones were actually the invaders."

"What do we know about Capitán Pedro de Málaga?" Carlo asked.

"Who?" said Terry.

"That's the commander of the company which Raphael had joined," Kachina answered. "But the only remains of officers were junior officers. We didn't find the commander."

"You might not have to," Terry smiled. "Sometimes experience; especially when you fail; is a very valuable commodity." Kachina and Carlo gave him a quizzical look. "I learned an important lesson the hard way many years ago. If we can come up with the names of the junior officers, find family in Spain, we can use DNA to see if the bodies you have here are Málaga's junior officers. If they were here, you can bet that he was too."

"Brilliant!" exclaimed Kachina.

"Like I said. I learned the hard way."

“Now all I have to do is find their names, trace their descendants, get them to give me a DNA sample, and compare the results.”

“It isn’t all that hard,” Terry replied.

“No, but very time consuming,” Kachina smiled, “and it will probably mean a trip to Spain.”

“Would that be so bad?” Terry teased.

“No, but I don’t have the time or the money.”

“I think I can help there,” said Terry. “I’ll let you know at lunch.”

Most of Northrup’s students pitched in at the burial grounds, while his more experienced students helped open the kiva. Those who originally came along just to see the dig ended up helping out somewhere and having a great time. Makawee took most of them under her wings and turned the most mundane tasks into a living workshop. Everyone agreed that she is a phenomenal educator and a master at such things.

One of the undergrads who had come along for the tour was confined to a wheelchair. While his classmates took off to carry dirt, shake sieves and do other tasks, he sat in his chair on the bridge sadly watching the bustle of activity around him. Fortunately, Makawee spotted him.

“Someone without a job?!” she exclaimed as she approached.

“Nothing for a guy in a wheelchair to do.”

“Why?”

“I can’t do those things. I’m stuck in here,” he smacked the arms of his chair.

“My ancestors didn’t have wheelchairs,” Makawee smiled, “but they had all of the injuries and diseases that put modern people in wheelchairs, and you know what . . . ?”

“What?” the young man’s voice was a cross between the anger he was feeling at not being able to join in and curiosity about what Makawee was saying.

“That didn’t get anyone out of work,” they both laughed.

“What put you in that chair?”

“A climbing accident,” said the young man. “Guess I should be glad I’m not dead.”

“Good point,” Makawee smiled. “What’s your name?”

“Jason. Jason Banning.”

“Okay, Mr. Banning. I’m going to give you the hardest assignment here today.” Makawee laughed as though that was the funniest thing she’d heard all day. “Then you’re going to go dig up bones in the cemetery with the others. Doesn’t that sound like fun?”

Jason looked at Makawee in disbelief. There was something about her. Her excitement, passion, and compassion were infectious, and that wasn’t lost on Jason. Suddenly he beamed and exclaimed “that sounds great!”

“I’m a Lakota Sioux,” Makawee was saying as she pushed Jason toward the village. “I grew up in South Dakota and one of my best friends fell off her horse and landed on a stone. She was never able to walk again. However, she didn’t accept the modern solution of a wheelchair. She kept saying that if this had happened to her hundreds of years earlier she would have either found a way to continue her daily life or die.”

“That isn’t a choice,” Jason interjected.

“I’m glad that you don’t see dying as a choice. That means you must be more like my friend.” Makawee smiled and continued. “She ended up making herself a type of walker. Only the elders believed that she could do it. All of the ‘modern’ Indians thought she was crazy. She not only was able to get around with her homemade walker but she was soon riding again. She found that when riding bareback the contact between she and the horse enabled them both to more easily adjust and be aware of what the other was doing. She couldn’t hold on with her legs, so if she wanted to run or canter, she would lay up against the horse’s neck.”

“Are we going to make me a walker?”

“I don’t know. What do you think? What’s your major?”

“I’m a computer science major,” said Jason, “but I took an archaeology course as an elective and loved it. I took a couple more archaeology courses and have been thinking about changing my major.”

“Outstanding! Now use all of that creativity to figure out how a person in your situation would have survived four hundred years ago.”

“I don’t know anything about people four hundred years ago.”

“You don’t have to know any details of their lives. You just need to do what they would have done – think outside the box and look for solutions that don’t involve anything modern but use what you have around you.”

“I like your friend’s walker idea,” Jason said. “Is it okay if I copy?”

“That’s fine with me, if it works for you.”

“I don’t know if I could use a walker. I didn’t even get rehab. I get some passive exercise to slow any muscle deterioration, but

it was determined from my x-rays that I would never walk so no one ever offered to let me try and the insurance companies didn't want to pay for anything.”

“You're kidding me,” exclaimed Makawee. “I'm so sorry. I know you're not kidding me. I just find that totally unacceptable. Not too long ago I was hiking up in the mountains and a boulder fell on my legs. We expected to find my legs crushed but they weren't crushed. The odds of having a boulder fall on your legs and not crushing them is probably like standing on top of a mountain holding a lightning rod in a thunderstorm and not getting hit. My point being, you never know. The physicians are most likely right. They have the odds and experience on their side. But it doesn't take much to see if you're that one in a million.”

“Can I try?”

“As long as you realize that it is a one in a million chance.”

Kachina was eating lunch in “the dining hall”, a large canopy that sheltered several rows of tables and benches with a large buffet table at the end piled high with native and modern American foods. She had a group of students gathered around her asking questions while she attempted to eat. They were so excited that they didn't think about it being rude. The fact that most of the students were young women wasn't lost on Kachina. In fact, she realized that most of the questions were about being a woman breaking into a predominantly male domain.

The more feminist questions stopped when Terry Northrup entered the tent. If Terry was being honest with himself and others, and if he really was working at changing, this type of reaction to his presence should eventually change, but for

now ... well, let's just say the girls didn't like being around him.

Smiling and waving at Kachina, Northrup started to make his way to where she sat. Kachina noticed that more than one of the young women who knew the professor appeared seriously puzzled.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen," he said with a broad and sincere smile. "May I please break in to have a word with Dr. Corn?"

The students cleared a place across from Kachina for Dr. Northrup and the young woman who was following along behind him.

Giving every indication of significant excitement, which was not a common state for Terry, he was talking before his butt hit the seat. "I've got some exciting news for you!"

"You're definitely excited," Kachina laughed.

"It's a great new feeling." Kachina was the only one who knew what the professor meant. "And, yes, I'm excited." Terry turned to the young woman who had, by now, taken her place next to Dr. Northrup. "This is Liz Holiday," he said by way of introduction. "she's one of my brightest grad students."

The young woman, whom we now know as Liz Holiday, blushed as she and Kachina exchanged greetings.

"Liz is leaning toward ethnohistory," said Terry Northrup, "but I won't hold that against her." He laughed as though he had just made the best joke ever. "I asked her if she would want to do the research on our young officers. It would definitely help her decide between ethnohistory and dig-in-the-dirt archeology."

Switching her focus from the new Terry Northrup to the student sitting next to him, Kachina noticed that the girl was

quite excited but working hard to contain her excitement as she awaited Kachina's decision.

"Wow," said Kachina. "Would you really like to give it a try?!"

"Yes, Dr. Corn," Liz replied, now showing her excitement. "I really think I can do it. I'm also fluent in Spanish, which should help a great deal."

"I'd love to have you give it a go," Kachina couldn't help that the expression on her face told anyone looking that the next word was going to be "but".

"I know what you're going to say," Terry interrupted. "but, I've got that covered too."

"What was I going to say?"

"You were going to say 'but, we don't have the money.'" Terry was smiling. "*but* you do now." He paused a moment for his words to sink in. "I've got her fully funded. We just need your blessing."

"Well, you've got that, Ms. Holiday," Kachina had to sneak a look at Terry Northrup who was acting like a young boy on his birthday.

"Oh, thank you, Dr. Corn!" exclaimed the young woman.

"Can we start by being Liz and Kachina?"

"Yes, of course," the young researcher beamed.

"That was a good move," Kachina said to Terry when they were alone.

"Whatever do you mean?" Terry smirked.

"A female researcher?!"

"Yes," Terry added almost triumphantly. "And in truth," Terry continued, "she really is my brightest. When they were passing

out brains, this girl went back for seconds. And honestly, a short time ago I would have sent you my brightest male student. Not bad for a reformed chauvinist!”

“Not bad at all,” Kachina laughed as she looked at the young woman across the room who was already pouring over what little information and documentation available.

Terry excused himself to go check on some of his students. Kachina took Liz to meet Carlo. They would start formulating the plan.

Makawee was looking for Jason. She couldn’t find him in any of the expected places. Finally, she asked one of Northrup’s students.

“Oh, the guy in the wheelchair?” said one of the students.

“Yes.”

“Last time I saw him he was working at the cemetery.”

Makawee really wondered why she was surprised. She had told him that he would be working there but she couldn’t help wondering what happened after their talk and how he got to the dig.

Jason was sitting in an open grave carefully dusting dirt from a skeleton with a brush. One could see him chewing on his tongue as he concentrated on the task before him.

“How did you get down there?” Makawee asked.

Jason looked up with a startle, then smiled. “Just dropped in.”

“Hmm. Sure.”

“I might have had some help from a couple of your diggers.”

“That sounds more like it. I just wanted to check on you.”

“If you can get someone to help me out of here, I’d like to tell you what I’ve learned.”

Makawee grabbed a couple of strong young people who lifted Jason out of the grave.

“I gave the walker idea a try,” he said as another student brought his wheelchair. “It didn’t go well. I’m afraid the physicians were at least partially right.”

“I’m sorry it didn’t go well, but why do you say they were partially right?”

“Because. I am able to stand, if I have some way of keeping my balance. There is no way for me to make my legs move without me falling over. So, they’re right about me not walking or using my legs.”

“That’s too bad, so I’ve got to ask why are you in such a good mood?”

“Because while I was trying the walker thing I realized how strong my upper body is.” Jason struck a body builder pose.

“That’s great,” said Makawee even though she didn’t know what it meant.

“It’s more than great,” Jason replied, “It’s the answer!”

“Don’t keep me in suspense,” Makawee teased.

“It made me think of a picture I saw of a man who walked on his hands because he had no legs. He refused to be confined to a wheelchair. I’ve got legs, so I can’t do that, but I can use my upper body.”

“Okay, I think I’m catching up with you.”

“Lady, you’re really going to have to move to keep up with me from now on!”

“Wonderful. How are you going to pull this off?”

“I found a wheelchair on Amazon that is made for sports and also allows me to stand up.” Jason went on to describe the standing wheelchair that uses a new type of technology which not only improves the versatility of the wheelchair, but also increases the range of daily activities of the user by enabling them to stand independently without help from others. “It’s going to cost me \$250 a month for the next year but that’s worth it and it’s on its way!”

“That really is wonderful news! How are you going to celebrate?”

“I already did.”

“You what?”

“I got down in that grave and did some real archeology knowing that the next time I want to come work in your cemetery I’ll be able to come up the hill by myself. The ability to stand up with this chair also means that I can work at the sieves, or at a lab table, or anywhere I want. No more wasting my time being angry with the system or feeling sorry for myself. I have places to go and things to do.”

“Wow!”

“And I have you to thank for it,” he was suddenly very serious. “I owe you”

“Oh, no. You don’t go there. You don’t owe me anything. With the trauma you’ve experienced and the lack of support, I’m amazed that you went back to school and that you came on this trip. I think you were subconsciously searching for this answer

but you were so overwhelmed that it took our conversation to make you stop and think clearly.”

“Okay. Anyway, thanks for getting me going in the right direction.”

“Right. So, you have two choices. You can go back into that grave with my ancestor, or you can come along with me and use your computer skills to help us solve a mystery.”

“I don’t know,” Jason looked over the edge of the grave. “I hate to leave him. I think he smiled when I brushed his ribs.”

“Oh, you definitely need to come with me.”

They both laughed.

Jason and Makawee made their way to the offices where Carlo and Liz were hard at work. Kachina entered right behind them. When she learned of Jason’s computer skills, she asked him if he would check out their computer system to be sure they weren’t trying to re-invent the wheel. After introductions and some small talk Jason rolled his chair to a nearby computer terminal to check out their system while Makawee headed off to check on her other students.

“Okay,” said Carlo bringing Kachina up to speed. “here’s what we’ve got so far. Liz will research the junior officers; find out everything possible about them. In the meantime, we’ll do DNA analysis on the remains. If she finds any living relatives, she will go to Spain to interview them and hopefully obtain DNA samples.”

“Hopefully there is some documentation somewhere that will give us their identity,” Liz added. “It might be as easy as Brother Andrés journal or as complicated as working

backwards from the mission to the ship which transported the men to the New World.”

“Sounds like a lot of leg work.”

Suddenly Jason swung his chair around to face the other three. “Okay. Sorry. You can’t talk about something that is so up my alley without me butting in.”

“What do you mean?” asked Carlo.

“I’m a computer science major who is seriously thinking of changing majors.”

“Oh!?” said Carlo still not quite sure of what Jason meant.

“Almost everything is in a computer somewhere,” said Jason noticing Carlo’s confusion. “Most modern documents and even books written before Guttenberg are now available on the computer. Discoveries are documented and finds are catalogued on computers. Isn’t that partially why you asked me to check your system?”

“Are you one of Dr. Northrup’s students?” asked Liz.

“Almost,” Jason replied. “I am a student at Fort Lewis.”

“I’ll share my stipend with you if you can help me find these guys,” said Liz. “I’m not really very good with computers. They end up bullying me around.” She gave Jason a smile that was so sweet and sensuous it caused Kachina and Carlo to give each other a look.

I have always felt that the terms nerd and geek are derogatory, but lacking any other single-word description to nicely describe two highly intelligent people who are socially awkward and are seriously focused; which is evidenced by their lack of taste in clothing; I have to admit that Liz and Jason are nerds and Liz’s look was evidence that nerds have nothing against sex.

Liz was a freckle-faced carrot-top redhead. Apart from her family, no one had probably ever called her beautiful. She was such the definition of an academic nerd that it was doubtful that anyone had ever called her pretty, although that might be mostly due to her appearance. Her hair was thick with enormous fluffy pig tails tied to the side with scrunchies that gave the appearance of ear muffs that had slipped. Her dark frame glasses may have allowed you to see her eyes, but they covered much of her face. She wore a pleated skirt that hung to just below her knees with a white blouse and a pullover sweater that looked like it had come from an ugly Christmas sweater party. When she laughed or smiled she had a tendency to pull her bottom lip under her two front teeth.

Kachina took a moment to look at Jason. She realized that in many ways they could not have been more different. Although he was quite intelligent, Jason had also been quite athletic. Climbing, the sport that put him in a wheelchair, was just one of his athletic pursuits that were dangerous and required significant strength. At the same time, with or without a wheelchair, Jason would never have been a Chippendale. Despite having just come from excavating a grave, Jason's hair looked like he had just seen a barber and his clothes were the epitome of style. Nevertheless, what most caught Kachina's attention was that Jason and Liz were staring at each other. It made her want to leave them alone.

It was getting to the point of being embarrassing as Jason struggled for words and Liz looked at him with the most beautiful doe eyes. Thankfully Terry Northrup ambled in about that time.

"Ah, Ms. Holiday," Terry said cheerfully, "how goes the preparation?"

“We’re doing fine,” Liz responded pulling her gaze from Jason. “I just asked Jason to help me with the computer. I’ll share my stipend with him.”

“No, ma’am, you won’t,” said Terry feigning scolding. Liz wasn’t up to speed yet and looked like she was going to cry. Kachina and Carlo were certain that was because she was still mesmerized by Jason. Terry, realizing that Liz was taking his teasing the wrong way, quickly added, “if you feel his contribution is valuable, his expenses will be covered.”

“Oh!?” Liz stood speechless.

“I told you that all of your expenses will be covered,” Terry gave a fatherly smile. “And I am serious about you not using your stipend. Do you think you will need any other staff?”

“Oh, no,” Liz was trying to process what Dr. Northrup was saying. “I just think we would make more progress and faster if I had help from someone who isn’t bullied by a computer. Jason overheard us talking and came up with a couple of time-saving computer ideas off the top of his head.”

“You’re not in my department, are you?” Terry asked.

“No, sir.” Replied Jason. “I took a few classes and am seriously thinking about changing majors.”

“So you’re an undergraduate.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I’m not twisting your arm, but think about this. If you were in my department, I would be able to get you time and credit for this project. The university can be unreasonably sticky about taking time off from classes even to do research. They could make you reapply and all sorts of other stupid things. I can’t help you avoid that if you’re in someone else’s department.”

“Is it a big deal to change majors?”

“Not in the least,” said Terry. “Especially if you have the department chair on your side.” The professor chuckled at his own humor before continuing, “Your advanced computer science hours will eat up all of your elective hours, but that shouldn’t be a problem.”

“Sounds good to me.”

Liz stood beaming. Jason looked like he had just won the lottery. Terry looked like another ton of guilt and baggage had been lifted from his shoulders, while Carlo and Kachina stood looking at each other in total amazement wondering what they had just witnessed.

Besides witnessing a budding romance and the transformation of a reformed white male chauvinist, Carlo and Kachina would later realize that they had been present for the first meeting of the future dynamic duo of ethnohistory. Tracking down the history and ancestry of these junior officers would be the first of a long and lustrous career of connecting the dots of archeological mysteries.



Chapter 13

I must admit that romance and the name Rusty Gerber have never been known to go together. At least not well. Most of the girls with whom I have become very close have no romantic interest in me at all, and kissing them is like kissing my sister. There was one girl who thought she had grabbed the brass ring, but she disappeared without explanation. I'm sure she realized that I am totally contrasystemic and decided to cut her losses. The thought of her sitting on a boulder on a hill in the middle of the desert watching the sun go down made me laugh out loud.

“What’s so funny?” asked Makawee who was sitting next to me mesmerized by the sunset before us.

“Oh, nothing really,” I sort of lied. “I was just thinking about how my current lifestyle would affect some of the people I’ve known.”

Makawee gave me a quizzical look and turned her attention back to the magnificent light show playing out in the distance. There was enough cloud cover above the mountains that was situated just right to reflect the setting sun thus creating the most magnificent red and yellow sky. It was like the sky was on fire.

I glanced at the profile of the beautiful young woman next to me. I had felt, somehow, closer to her since our time together when she got hurt. I wrote that off as just the emotion of the situation, but the feeling not only kept with me but started growing. I found myself always looking around to see if Makawee was going to be at a gathering or meeting. Looking at her I finally admitted to myself that I was both physically and emotionally attracted this young woman. I was at the point I was being forced to face the fact that I was falling in love.

Makawee must have felt my gaze and turned to me. “What?”
“Nothing,” I smiled. “Just admiring the view.”

“Me?” she blushed, or at least I think she did. Between the time of day and her dark skin it was really impossible to tell.

“You know,” she went on, “we often come very close to missing the spectacular because we’re so intent upon the awesome.”

“What do you mean?”

“Several years ago some friends and I were standing on a bluff, not unlike this one, admiring the setting sun. Just like we’re doing. When we turned around, we were faced with the biggest supermoon I’ve ever seen. It was gone in a matter of minutes, so we were very lucky we turned around when we did.”

“I can relate to that,” I said softly, afraid she would hear and afraid she wouldn’t; afraid she wouldn’t get my meaning and not knowing what to do if she did.

“Then you know that you are my supermoon as I revel in my new and most awesome life.”

I was speechless. I just sat and looked.

“Bet you didn’t see that coming,” she teased as she leaned over and kissed me gently on the lips.

The next morning, I was awakened by a wet nose against my cheek. It definitely wasn’t Makawee. She was curled up beside me with her head on my shoulder. The nose belonged to Butch who, along with Kohana and Janie, was standing over us trying to figure out why we were still laying there. The sun was well up.

Makawee started to giggle. She was getting dressed under the blanket.

“We’re not that far from the village,” she laughed. “Someone could come over that ridge any moment, and we . . .”

“I got the picture,” I said as I hurried to pull on my trousers and looked around for my boots.

“What are we going to tell people?”

“I haven’t the foggiest idea.”

We rode quickly to the corral where we left Kohana and Janie, and hustled up to the dining tent for some coffee.

Lucky for us there was no one there who knew us well enough to wonder what was going on. We got some coffee and warmed up some traditional cornmeal tortilla which we found in the kitchen and filled them with beans and cheese.

We were sitting looking out over the village as we ate our breakfast.

“I had a dream last night,” Makawee started.

“Oh, really!” I said in what I thought was my sexiest voice.

“No,” she grinned and gave me a playful jab in the ribs. “that was real. I’m talking about a dream.”

“Oh,” I said feeling a bit inflated by her equating our nocturnal activity to dream-like.

“It was the katsina at the kiva,” she said, suddenly looking off into space. “We were standing on a ledge of a cliff dwelling and she was pointing at a large kiva.”

It is impossible to tell you how I felt. Makawee didn’t know about the Hidden Canyon Village. I had the same horrible, selfish feeling that I had when we weren’t telling Kachina.

I leaned over and kissed Makawee on the cheek. “I do want to hear all about it, but right now I have to run and find Kachina, Felipe or Istaqa right away. I’ll explain later. Please just trust me.” I took off at a run toward the office.

Kachina, Carlo and Terry were still sipping their morning coffee as they studied some documents spread out on the table in front of them. Liz and Jason were busy at a computer terminal. Istaqa entered the room right behind me.

“What’s got you moving so fast?” Istaqa teased as we entered the office. “Chasing or being chased?”

“I need to talk to you, Kachina and Carlo in private right away,” I gasped trying to regain my composure.

“You look serious,” said Carlo.

“It is. Very!”

The three stepped outside with me.

“Makawee just told me about a dream she had last night.”

“You two . . .” Kachina was grinning.

“Yes, but tease me later,” I blustered. Kachina almost took a step back. “I’m sorry, but in her dream Makawee was with the katsina. This time they were standing on the ledge of the Hidden Canyon Village. I don’t think I can handle keeping that a secret from someone else I love. It about killed me hiding it from you, Kachina.” I slumped onto a nearby rock.

Kachina was the first to get to me and gave me a big hug.

“We all knew the day would come when we would have to expand the group of those who know about Hidden Canyon,” said Istaqa. “I’m all in favor of including Makawee, but right now I’m more interested in hearing about her dream.”

Makawee was passing near the office and spotted the four of us. When she saw how distraught I was she ran to me. “Are you okay?” she asked as she got down on her knees in front of me holding my hands.

“He’s just a man in love,” Kachina laughed. Makawee just blushed. “He told us about your dream.”

“Yes,” said Makawee. “When I told him about it he jumped up and ran here. What’s this about?”

“Evidently,” Carlo explained, “you described a place that only a half-dozen living beings know about. Rusty was upset because we’ve all been sworn to secrecy about its existence and location, and he was faced with lying to you.”

“He couldn’t do that,” Kachina continued. “We were just telling him that it is okay to tell you.”

Makawee, still on her knees in front of me holding my hands, “is that what made you run?”

“Yes,” I confessed. “You described a spot the four of us know well on the ledge of the Hidden Canyon cliff dwellings.”

“You mean the ones Kachina said didn’t exist in her dissertation?”

“You actually read my dissertation?” Kachina exclaimed.

“Of course,” Makawee smiled. “it was not only excellent and exciting, but I really wanted this job. So did you find this after your dissertation?”

“No,” it was Kachina’s turn to confess. “I lied in my dissertation to protect it. We are afraid that if it becomes public knowledge, we’ll have everything from art thieves to government agencies trying to take it away from us.”

“Boy, I can relate to that!” Makawee exclaimed. “So you were upset because you couldn’t tell me?” She looked right at me.

“Yes, and I’m so glad we have told you.”

“So,” Makawee’s face was suddenly a broad grin, like a child who finds the gift which they most wanted under the Christmas tree. “when do I get to see the Hidden Canyon?”

“Since the Hidden Canyon Village is obviously an important part of the katsina’s message,” said Carlo, “I think we need to go up tonight as soon as we can get done with our work.”

“I have a class tonight,” Makawee said.

“And I know just the person to cover it for you,” said Kachina.

“Terry?” Carlo asked.

“Terry,” Kachina replied.

With Terry teaching Makawee's class, we were able to get away fairly early. We had cleared our calendars for the next two days to give us plenty of time.

Makawee was understandably excited and became the giddy schoolgirl with every new experience as we made our way to the hidden canyon. Once we had entered the canyon you could see her sitting as high as possible in her saddle looking for that first glimpse of Hidden Canyon Village.

When we arrived at Istaqa's lodge we took Makawee straight up the rise so she could see the village. She was laughing and crying and blubbering something about it being the most fantastic thing she'd ever seen. If we all hadn't gone through the same emotional high we would have laughed. Actually, we found ourselves joining her and reliving the overwhelming awe of the experience.

"And I feel this way every time I see it," Kachina said putting her arm around her friend.

It was hard to get Makawee focused enough to unload our supplies and tend to the horses before we hiked up to the village. We tried not to take too long, not just because Makawee was so excited but because we didn't have a great amount of daylight left. Butch ran ahead leading the way.

Walking straight to a spot on the ledge near the large central kiva, Makawee said, "this is the spot. This is where the katsina and I were standing. She was pointing at that kiva."

We sat quietly in the kiva until we knew that we had to leave so we had enough light to make the trip back to Istaqa's camp. Comparing notes and thoughts, we had learned nothing. We had scoured and examined every inch of the kiva. There was nothing about which we did not already know. Yet we knew that the Katsina was telling us something.

We returned to Istaqa's camp and prepared our evening meal in silence. We talked a bit after dinner, but each of us was inside our own brain trying to make sense of Makawee's dream and find something we didn't know that we knew.

As we were spreading out our sleeping bags Makawee and I evidently looked lost. We wanted to be near each other but we were afraid that the others might think that inappropriate. It was Istaqa who finally handled the matter.

"Would you two just go over there and lay down together."
The four laughed.

"Just keep it to a good night kiss and maybe a bit of smooching," Felipe teased.

"Baabaa!" Kachina exclaimed with a shocked look.

"Oh, come on granddaughter," he said. "Your mother wasn't born of the Virgin Mary."

That brought gales of laughter. Carlo was laughing so hard that he was having a tough time breathing. I could almost feel Kachina blush, while Istaqa was bouncing around chanting in Keres. Makawee and I were feeling sorry for Kachina but happy that the limelight was off us. As we looked for a nice place to put our sleeping bags, we could hear Kachina reprimanding her grandfather in Keres with him literally giggling through the scolding.

We returned to the cliff village as soon as it was light enough to climb the trail. Again, we stood on the ledge where Makawee met the Katsina and sat inside the kiva looking for clues or hoping the Katsina would give us another.

Carlo, Kachina and Felipe returned to Kawaika Village just after noon, and Istaqa returned to his camp while Makawee and

I roamed the cliff village. She had to look in every nook and cranny. It was an exciting and fun day.

We went to my cabin for the night. I took Makawee to work at the casino the next morning and then rode the horses to the Kawaika Village. Makawee would catch a bus from the casino when she was done. Of course, my secret hope was that she would want to go back to my cabin when the day was done.

Butch and I went to check the progress on the kiva. The last time we had been there it was still mostly covered with sand, dirt and debris. When we arrived this time the kiva was surrounded by students all carefully removing debris. Even this they would sieve just to be sure that nothing was missed. One could now see the roof, the vents and, in some places, the small portion of the kiva wall that protruded above the ground. The crew had carefully constructed a bridge across the top so they could put a ladder into the opening without risking damage to the roof.

Kachina, standing on the ladder that disappeared into the kiva entrance, waved at me. Carlo was holding the ladder. Terry was standing at one end of the bridge near where Istaqa and Felipe, along with some other tribal members, were drumming and chanting. I could smell the smudge and, finding a smudge stick still smoking, I took a moment to get on my knees and use my hands to move the smoke toward my face. I knew that smudging was important to my Kawaika friends and so was happy to follow the practice. What I didn't know was that Kachina could see me from the ladder and smiled approvingly. Terry looked over at me.

“Do you believe in that stuff?” he asked once I had finished.

“I wouldn't say that I believe that it physically cleanses me,” I replied, “but to participate in the act makes you think about

what it means. It makes me more mindful. Besides it means a lot to my friends, so I have no problems.”

As I started toward the scaffold over the kiva I noticed Terry bending down and waving the smoke toward his face. I looked back toward the ladder. Kachina was still there watching us. She could see Terry. She gave me the thumbs up sign.

Kachina and I were standing at the foot of the ladder.

Compared to the one we built, this kiva was enormous. I had learned that it was fairly typical for one that seemed to be a community center. There was a bit of debris but, for the most part, it was just dusty and smelled musty. The earth and sand covering had actually sealed the chamber, so it was just as it had been left. Carlo, Istaqa, Felipe and a couple of grad students were walking carefully around the room. Carlo was scribbling notes and drawing diagrams in his notebook.

Kachina had noticed that he had brought a new notebook just for the occasion and smiled as she watched her mate trying to make notes, draw pictures and take everything in at the same time.

Above us there was a call. “Permission to enter?”

We looked up. It was Terry.

“Come on down,” Kachina called.

“Oh, my god!” Terry repeated time and again as he looked around. “This is phenomenal. This is wonderful.”

“We’re undoubtedly the first people in here for a good three hundred years,” Carlo was saying to the students.

Felipe and Istaqa took sage smudge sticks from their bags and lighted them on the fire pit near the vents. One had a blue sage stick and the other cedar. Blue sage is traditionally used for cleansing a space of negative energy while cedar is often used

to clean old energy from a new house and safeguard the new resident from negative influences.

As Felipe and Istaqa chanted, the rest of us stood quietly and respectfully. I was thinking that Kachina was probably the only one to really understand what was happening, but I sneaked a glance at Terry and saw tears in his eyes. He may not have understood the words, but he knew what was going on, and this was most likely the first time he had been in a kiva that wasn't filled with white people taking pictures and looking for artifacts.

The room was a good fifteen to twenty feet across with a bench going almost completely around it. Only the recess near the vents was without a bench. The chamber was completely empty. Even the fire pit had been cleaned. We couldn't help wonder what that meant, if it meant anything at all special.

Terry became very excited about a hole in the floor near the north side of the room.

“Do you know what this is?” he said addressing me. He knew that I was probably the only one in the room who didn't know and he was obviously dying to tell someone about it.

“What is it?”

“This is a Sipapu. It is dug at the northern point of the kiva as the place for ancestors to emerge from the underworld,” Terry paused as he studied the hole. “I've never seen one that wasn't filled with dirt and junk.”

“Isn't this curious,” Kachina interrupted. “there's a floor vault and a raised vault. We need some ancestors to explain that to us.”

“Some say they are foot drums for ceremonial drummers,” Istaqa offered.

“I know,” said Kachina, “but why two different types.”

“You could be over-thinking it,” Felipe smiled at his granddaughter. “it might be as simple as one was here when they first built the kiva and the other was added later and, whatever style it was, was the easiest or most popular at the time.”



Chapter 14

Liz and Jason had returned to Fort Lewis College – a small, public college of about 4,000 students with an excellent reputation – in Durango, Colorado. Since 1911 the college has a mandate to provide a tuition-free education to all Native Americans who qualify. As a result, it awards about sixteen percent of all baccalaureate degrees earned by Native Americans in the United States and a strong indigenous studies program in their Archeology/Anthropology Department.

Liz - Elizabeth Anne Holiday – was, as Terry Northrup had said, the brightest student in his department. A Mensa who did her undergraduate degree at University of Chicago, Liz turned down Chicago's prestigious graduate school to attend a school closer to Native American culture. She is fluent in Spanish,

French and is learning Shoshonean, the language of the nearby Ute Tribe.

Jason Banning was the consummate athlete and outdoor enthusiast who picked Fort Lewis College because of its proximity to outdoor adventure sports venues. He only went to college because his parents thought it was necessary, so he picked computer science, thinking that it wouldn't be any harder than a smart phone. He soon learned that he was wrong, but he also learned that he enjoyed an academic as well as physical challenge. He is still an undergraduate because of a mountain climbing accident on Mt. Eolus in the Needle Mountains north of school when he was a sophomore.

Being quite experienced, Jason didn't expect Eolus, a Class 3 climb, to be much more than a day hike. Nevertheless, Jason was a very technical climber and did not take chances. He went with rope and helmet. Mt. Eolus is a strenuous 14er (meaning over 14,000 feet high) named after one of the Greek gods of wind, Euros. Just getting to the point where you start climbing is a serious workout.

As one might expect, the mountain is known for what climbers call exposure as well as considerable risk for rockslides. The fact that he was wearing a helmet probably saved his life. His climbing party was caught in a rockslide. Jason went over the ledge because he was hit in the head by a large rock. When they got to him it was probably easier to say what wasn't broken, but he was alive and air-lifted to Centura Health Hospital in Colorado Springs which specializes in spinal injury. After months in traction, numerous surgeries and more months of recovery, Jason returned to Fort Lewis College. That's when he took the archeology class and began to rethink his educational goals.

Since the term was almost over when they met, Jason immediately made the switch to archeology. Good to his word,

Dr. Terry Northrup, department chairperson, arranged that the two could devote full-time to their project. Liz ended up rethinking the area of her masters thesis and was actually able to turn their work for the Kawaika into one of the best masters theses the college had ever received. Jason was able to get class credit.

Jason was probably Liz's first real romantic boyfriend. She tended to be a bit of a tom-boy, so a good number of her friends were males. There was just never any romance. Fortunate for both of them, despite significant differences they were a matched pair.

I know that sounds contradictory, but it is the best way I can explain it. Of course, when their romance began it was ninety-five percent chemistry and five percent common interest, but their love really began to blossom as they discovered how they thought alike, shared many likes and dislikes, and just enjoyed each other's company. Liz was working as a dorm counselor, so she had to stay there until the end of the term. At that time she moved in with Jason. But they were soon asking if they could find a place to live and work near the Kawaika Village. They didn't really need to be near the village, but they wanted to be. To them it made more sense, and Kachina, et al., had to agree. Besides, there was no reason for them to stay on campus. They were now an inseparable couple. Wedding plans had been made for the end of the next term.

Those of you who remember the Delvey incident know Jeannie Wilcox and her brother, Mark. They own the Mercantile in Dead Horse. Jeannie has always been a soft touch. She and Tracker Tillman started the Memorial Foundation which is going stronger than ever. The foundation, you remember, is the group of people who help me continue to

make good use of Tracker's gold that I inherited. But, as you know, that's a well-kept secret.

Mark is letting Liz and Jason live in one of their cabins. Terry Northrup insisted that Jeannie and her brother will be reimbursed. There was no doubt in my mind that Northrup was financing Liz and Jason out of his own pocket. It might have been as obvious as I thought or it might be that I've been there and done that. What am I saying? I'm still there doing that. Terry Northrup seemed to be finding it as rewarding and exhilarating as I do.

Actually, physically working in the Kawaika Village office made it a lot easier and did probably save considerable time. Liz was extremely good about keeping Kachina and Carlo abreast of their progress.

The most difficult part of their task had been getting the names of the junior officers. Brother Andres' journal had actually been a significant help. He had mentioned the junior officers two or three times each. He didn't always give their full names, so it took some work to figure out which family name went with which given name. They finally came up with Luis Garcia, Pedro Lopez and Manuel Rodriguez.

At first trying to connect these three to Capitán Pedro de Málaga seemed a dead end. Little or no academic attention is given to junior officers so all of the archived documents they could find gave locations and numbers, but no names. They decided to try tracking de Málaga since commanders were often named. They found reference to his small company but it just showed his name with three officers and twenty-five soldiers. However, in tracking de Málaga they found that he had spent some time working for a mine owner named Francisco de Castro along New Spain's northern frontier. Unlike further south,

in central Mexico, the northern frontier was desolate and dangerous and the mines were worked by a transient population of Spanish miners, slaves from Africa and Indian migrants from the south. This required a strong militia to protect the mines thus bringing Spanish military personnel to the area.

After Castro died in 1643, an inventory of his property was taken and in the records of San Joseph del Parral they found the names of sergeants, lieutenants, captains and even generals who had commanded the militia. Among those was Pedro de Malága, Luis Garcia, Pedro Lopez and Manuel Rodriguez. The dates put the four of them together in San Pedro de Guanaceví.

Nothing, however, in those documents gave any indication where these men had come from or where they went. Malága family history had shown that Pedro had sailed from Seville to New Spain in 1601, but the other three were not with him. A bit of digging found that the Archivo General de Indias, located in Seville, Spain, has the original records of passengers to the New World kept by the ship captains, and the Servicio Nacional de Microfilm had all of the records for 1509 to 1701 on microfilm. That was the break through Liz and Jason needed.

They found that Luis and Manuel had traveled together to Havana in 1595. The records showed one Luis Garcia of Bilbao and a Manuel Rodriguez from Galicia. Pedro Lopez of Cadiz had sailed to Havana in 1596. Liz and Jason spent a short time trying to make the connection between Havana and New Spain (Mexico), but without success. Records of ships and passengers between Havana and New Spain were rare and not very complete. For the most part the only thing that was tracked was loot, slaves and crew.

They decided that it was worth the risk assuming the connection since these were the only men by these names between

1590 and 1605. With that they headed off to Spain.

Spanish Roman Catholic parish records have been fairly well kept since 1300 and many can be accessed on computer. For Liz and Jason it was a matter of finding the individual, getting their parent's names and then tracing the descendants of the parents to someone living today.

That sounds a lot easier than it actually is, even with relatively good parish records. Some of the possible descendants wanted to be paid for their spit. In most of the cases Jason and Liz were able to gain cooperation by making a big deal about the public media that would happen if they were, in fact, related to one of these officers. Their claim to fame. The few who were stubborn about being paid settled for the equivalent of about \$50. Thankfully, those were very few.

While Liz and Jason combed through old church records and tried to talk families into giving them DNA samples, Terry Northrup was working on the DNA of the remains at Kawaika Village and preparing to do the testing and matching.

Terry was doing a genealogical DNA test. That is a DNA-test used for genealogical research that looks at specific locations of a person's genome in order to find or verify ancestral relationships. There are three main DNA tests. Each of the tests looks at a different part of the genome. Terry elected to use what is known as the mitochondrial (mtDNA). This DNA test is much more difficult to get a match since it follows either the female or male lines, but it is generally used to identify archeological cultures and migration paths. He would like to have used the autosome test but that is only really good back about six generations. The mitochondrial test is good for male

or female lineage. Terry was hoping that that would give him a bit of an edge.

One advantage of having the department chairperson on the job is that they know how to get thing funded. Even though Fort Lewis isn't a large research institution, the department chair had to know her way around a fundraiser. Terry got very creative. He turned the DNA testing into a class. The students were excited because it not only gave them valuable experience but they knew they were contributing to the Kawaika Village. He had so many student who wanted to take the class that he had to close registration but not without promising to find another project. Actually, as he got into the project, he learned that their location and the limited access most academics have to such services gave him the ammunition to get the college to build a lab. It could be used by several different departments and could cover the expense by making services available.

Liz and Jason's trip to Spain went extremely well. It didn't go quickly but it went as well, if not better, than anyone could have hoped. In time they were able to track down the names and addresses of a modern relative of each of the junior officers. After that it was a matter of visiting those people in A Coruña, Bilbao and Cadiz. A Coruña is in the far northwest corner of Spain on the Atlantic Ocean while Bilbao is on the Bay of Biscay near the French border. Cadiz, on the other hand, is on the southern coast of the Atlantic Ocean not too far from the Straits of Gibraltar. When all was said and done the two had covered hundred and hundred of miles in Spain, traveled to all of the major Spanish cities, and seen the inside of more churches, government buildings and offices than any other tourists.

They returned home very happy with a job well done and a bag full of vials of spit.

It takes several days to get the results of a DNA test. Of course, we all know that a day waiting for something important is much longer than a normal day. The entire staff and volunteers at Kawaika Village were sitting on the proverbial pins and needles. Have you ever noticed how, in such situations, the people in the office or house seem to move quietly and speak softly as though afraid that any mirth or raised voice might scare off that for which they wait? That was the situation around Kawaika Village.

It was almost four-thirty on a Friday afternoon when Kachina took time to sit down at her desk. She was anxious to get away. The tension of waiting for DNA results, a bus-load of unruly teenagers, and several hours on her knees studying the personal belongings of one of the people buried in the cemetery made her anxious to get finished and get away. She and Carlo were going to meet Makawee and me at Istaqa's camp. This would be the third, or maybe the fourth, time we scoured the cliff village's central kiva trying to figure out what the Katsina was trying to tell Makawee.

Now, I know what you're thinking. Why spend so much time on a dream? Perhaps it is because to date we have done well heeding the directions of Katsinim. Whether or not the dream was the work of a Katsina or, as most psychologists believe, a reflection of things which the dreamer has experienced, seen or otherwise incorporated into their memory, the fact remains that taking heed of such experience has been the right decision and actually saved the team many hours of hard work.

Kachina was just about to hit 'shut down' on her laptop when she decided she should check her email one last time. There was an email from Terry Northrup.

The screams that emitted from the office building brought everyone within ear-shot running. Sometimes it isn't easy to tell the difference between a scream for help and a scream of joy.

"They match! They match!" she was jumping up and down yelling as Carlo entered. He read the message on the screen.

"Just wanted to let you know asap," it read. "We got a match on all three. And to make it better the matches were all people from the towns our documents said the men listed as home. Details when I get there Monday. T."

Carlo gave Kachina a big hug. "Wow," he said, "wait until the others hear. You've done it again."

"This wasn't my doing. This was a team effort and mostly the work of Liz, Jason and Terry."

Since everyone they could think to tell, except for Jason and Liz, was probably going to be in Hidden Valley this evening, the two excitedly went about loading their saddle bags and heading off to Istaqa's camp. Carlo asked one of the staff members, who was equally as excited, if he would mind going into Dead Horse and telling Liz and Jason. They deserved to know immediately.

"Tell them that Dr. Northrup will have details for us on Monday," he instructed.



Chapter 15

The jubilation at camp that evening filled the hidden canyon with singing and sounds of joy and excitement. Felipe and Istaqa started drumming and chanting. Soon the rest of us had joined in and, dancing around the fire, the canyon was filled with our song.

While the revelry went well into the night, we were all on the trail to the cliff at first light.

Our routine was well established. We would go to the spot where Makawee had seen the Katsina and spend time looking for any possible alternate. Istaqa and Felipe would do a cleansing smudge while we all sat quietly trying to clear our minds and be open to anything nature or the Katsinim would tell us. Then we would go into the kiva.

Inside the kiva we would sit in a circle all facing out. Each of us would concentrate our focus on the area in front of us, almost as though it was an object of meditation. We found that this worked best. Whether it was light, frame of mind, focus or just luck, by rotating so that we each spent time focused on the entire room we had noticed many details that we had previously missed. It was no different this morning.

As it happened it was Carlo who was facing north on the third shift. We had been focusing for about five minutes when Carlo stood up and walked over to the vault in front of him. He stood looking at it without a word, then turned to the rest of us.

“Kachina, do you remember Terry Northrup in the village kiva?”

“Yes,” Kachina snickered at the memory. “He was so excited.”

“What excited him most?”

“The sipapu,” she answered. “He wanted to tell everyone about it.”

“Yes, he was really excited, wasn’t he?”

“Yes.”

“Where’s the sipapu in this kiva?”

Silence.

A sipapu is always at the north end of the kiva. It isn’t what one might call a required feature, but none of the five scientist and shaman around me had ever seen a kiva without one. It made sense that it would be an important feature in a community’s central kiva because the central kiva was definitely the focal place of communal spiritual activity.

We all stood up and started looking around for the sipapu; dragging or running our toes through the dirt of the floor. There was no sipapu. It had been replaced with a vault.

“Would it be okay if we try to move this vault?” I asked Istaqa and Felipe.

The two shaman gave it some thought and decided that it would be okay. We all began tugging, pulling and pushing without any luck.

“I wonder if this thing is somehow attached to the floor,” asked Carlo.

“If I were trying to hide something below it,” said Makawee, “I wouldn’t make it easy for just anyone to move.”

“Good point,” said Felipe as we all spread out looking for keys or levers.

“There’s a raised stone over here,” reported Kachina dusting dirt off a stone that was about three inches above the others. It was on a direct line with the west side of the vault.

“Bingo,” came Istaqa’s reply as he pointed to a corresponding stone on the east side of the room.

“Let’s try depressing them at the same time,” said Kachina.

Kachina and Istaqa stepped on the stones. Carlo gave the vault a push and it moved easily.

“I’ve never heard about anything like this in other kiva,” said Carlo excitedly.

“Neither have I,” Istaqa and Felipe replied in unison.

“They sure went to a lot of trouble to hide whatever’s under there,” remarked Makawee as Carlo and I started brushing hundreds of years’ worth of dust, sand and dirt from under the vault. Soon we had exposed a round stone disk in the floor.

Close inspection by Carlo and Kachina found that there were hand holds in the disk and soon it had been removed, exposing a hole in the floor big enough for a person to easily pass through.

Carlo pulled out his flashlight and peered into the hole.

“I can see the floor. It looks like the remains of a ladder. I can’t see anything else.”

“I wasn’t expecting anything like this,” said Kachina.

“And we aren’t prepared to be going down tunnels,” added Istaqa.

“If I might make a suggestion,” said Felipe. We all looked at him expectantly. “I suggest that we go back to camp and get what we need to explore the tunnel, rest and eat, and return. I know we’re all excited to see what’s down there, but rushing is a good way for someone to get hurt.”

“It also isn’t good archeology,” added Makawee.

It seemed like eternity to all of us, but we were actually back and ready to go within a few hours.

I was as excited as the next person, but I was the one who spoke what I’m sure everyone was thinking.

“I know we’re all wanting to go down, but we all know that someone needs to stay up here just in case they need to go for help.” My statement was met with a mumble of agreement.

“I’m the only one here who’s not an archeologist or indigenous, so it makes sense that I be the one to take the first watch.”

“But this is your land,” Kachina was trying to show compassion while accepting my offer.

“You know what I think of that private property crap,” I laughed. “I only put up with that, and I admit I use it, because that’s the way the white world works. Three of you are related to these folks and the other two deserve to go before me.”

Makawee started to object to the idea that she and Carlo deserved to go before me, but I held up my hand.

The next decision was in what order would they descend. The decision was that Istaqa should go first because he had guarded the village much of his life. Carlo should go second because it was his observation that led to the discovery. Felipe should be next because he is a shaman with Kachina and Makawee behind him.

With the rope securely tied off, Istaqa rappelled into the dark.

“I’m at the intersection of three tunnels,” Istaqa called up. There is the remains of a ladder down here and I can see what appears to be a structure just at the extent of my flashlight. It looks quite safe.”

The others descended in order leaving me standing peering down into the dark. I could hear them talking and deciding which way to go first. Butch and I sat down to wait.

Occasionally I could hear them call to each other, but I couldn’t make out what they were saying.

“There’s a city down here,” Makawee called up to me. “I can’t wait for you to see it.”

“Wow! That’s exciting.”

“It is so big that we can’t see it very well with our puny flashlights. We’ll be coming out soon.”

We hadn’t actually thought about how we were going to get out of the hole without a ladder. In the end, Makawee actually climbed the rope with me helping when she was in reach. The

two of us made it easier to get Kachina out. With three of us up top we easily pulled Felipe up. With each new person to help lift, we were able to easily and safely extract all five from the hole.

They were understandably excited and it was hard to listen as all of them wanted to talk at the same time. I gleaned that they had gone a short distance down each of the three passageways and had discovered two gigantic rooms. They said that there were huts built against the wall down all of the passageways. There was a nice stream with beautiful clean water. Kachina figured that it was the underground portion of *iiná yí'ááh* (“life giver”), the spring that she mentioned in her dissertation.

Carlo said that it was impossible to tell how the builder’s ladder system worked, but he suggested that we might want to drop down the pieces for a scaffold. The scaffold could hold steps so that we’d only have to use a ladder for the last portion of the ascent/descent. In any case, we were going to need a lot of supplies and equipment to be able to properly explore this underground city.

It was Kachina who suggested that Makawee take me down so that I could at least get a glimpse of what they had seen. It was beyond any expectation. I recognized the cave as a volcanic lava tube. This whole part of the continent had a great deal of volcanic activity in its geologic history, so it was no surprise. What it did mean is that there a good chance that the mountain contains miles of these lava tubes. The tribe had obviously discovered this and put them to good use. The only thing that made me a bit sad was that, despite how nice it was, the residents had to have been there to hide. There would have been no other reason to live in an albeit magnificent cave system instead of their beautiful cliff homes.

I shared my observation about the lava tubes as we talked around the camp fire.

“You mean like at Lava Beds National Monument?” asked Carlo.

“Yes, and Craters of the Moon along with others,” I answered. “There’s a good chance that those passageways run all through the mountain.”

“So it looks like the tribe had a good place to hide if the Spanish got into the valley,” said Kachina. “The entrance was well hidden and, assuming they stored food down there, they had food and fresh water. Clever.”

“Exploring this place is going to be a major project,” Makawee knew she was stating the obvious. “It isn’t going to be easy to pull it off and keep the site a secret.”

“They did,” Istaqa laughed.

“I’ve been thinking about what we need,” said Carlo. “I really think we’d be better off building a scaffold up to the entrance hole and then a ladder. We’re going to need light, and should probably set up a camp.”

“How do we get that type of stuff up there?” ask Makawee.

“The same way our ancestors did,” replied Kachina.

“What?”

“We use travois, just like our ancestors.”

“We can bring things by truck to the junction of the trail,” I offered. “The six of us are about the only ones who use the road west of the village now that we have the new road.”

“We’re probably going to need help,” Makawee noted.

“I know most of the crew at the village would love to help, but it isn’t fair to ask them to keep something like this a secret,” Carlo was staring into the fire, obviously contemplating their problem. “Besides, it’s too great of a risk that they would accidentally reference it, and that would be the end of the secret.”

“I can get some help from members of the tribe who will keep the secret,” Kachina said.

“And I know several people from the county whom we can trust,” I added.

“Our biggest problem,” Carlo noted, “is going to be getting time away from the village without people wondering what we’re doing.”

“There’s no rush and no time-line,” said Istaqa.

“That’s true,” agreed Carlo, “but I’m already anxious to go back and get started.”

We all laughed.

By the time we all went to bed we had a fairly good idea of how we were going to explore this archeological mega-find without drawing attention.

I would get the materials needed for the scaffolding and camp. No one would think anything about me buying such things. Carlo would get safety gear and lights. We were going to have to use a generator unless we could figure a way to get solar into the cave. I planned to ask Bobby Jordon and a couple of people from the Memorial Foundation for help. Kachina and Felipe would recruit a few young people from the tribe whom they know will keep the secret if it means keeping the government off the reservation. While we would try to coordinate our time in the cave, we knew that there would be

times that not all of us would be available. We decided that there would never be fewer than three people in the cave and that Istaqa would always know who was there.

Getting materials to the cave was slow, back breaking work. Five young men from the reservation were an indispensable part of the work team. I got help from Bobby Jordon, Doc Barton, Mark Wilcox and Carl Wilson. Bobby Jordon, as you will remember, was the young man whom I allow to work the southern portion of the ranch and live in Tracker's old double-wide. Doc Barton is a tribal member as well as a member of the Memorial Foundation, so I knew I could count on him. Mark was a member of the foundation as is Carl Wilson, the assayer who helped with Tracker's secret mine, helped me with the Wellington sisters and is a foundation member.

It took several weeks but we were able to build a scaffold almost to the ceiling below the entrance hole. From there we had a short ladder so that we could close up the entrance. Being perhaps more than a bit paranoid about government claim jumpers and grave robbers – often being difficult to tell the difference – we left some archeological tools in the kiva. The purpose was to explain all of the footprints in the kiva if, by any catastrophe, someone found their way into the cliff village and the kiva.

We built a basecamp near the scaffold. It was the easiest place to supply and water was nearby. After we felt more comfortable in the cave we decided that we would spend the night when we were there to work. That way we didn't waste a lot of time trying to get back to Istaqa's camp before sunset.

Like most cliff dwellings, the village faced south. That gave the village more sun in the winter and shade in the summer. The

one piece of equipment that went up and down with us was our Jackery solar powered generator with 1002-watt hours and taking only 2 hours to fully charge. We sat up a charge station at the edge of the cliff to keep it fully charged. We thought about running a cable from the solar panels on the cliff to the cave but when we calculated the voltage drop from running even a 1-gauge wire that distance it was 42.81%. In other words, if we could use 1-gauge wire, which is unrealistic since it is 50mm² in diameter, we would have to have a gang of solar panels on the ledge just to charge the Jackery down below. The wire alone would cost us almost \$10,000. We decided that we'd just carry it up and down.

Our first few peregrinations into the cave's labyrinth were to map, make very cursory notes and mark places where we would want to start our serious study. The passageway to the west of our base camp led to a ledge about ten feet above the stream. To the east the passageway was lined with small dwellings and curved around to come back and meet up with the passage that led north of base camp. These both ended up in a good sized chamber filled with dwellings.

Once mapped we realized that the main living area for the tribe consisted of nine passages and smaller chambers south of the very large cavern that we labelled the Main Community Area. The Main Community Area is a chamber that is at least 280 feet east to west and twenty to forty feet north to south with a ceiling of well over twenty feet. We determined that this was a community area since it wasn't lined with lodges and shelters, and there was a large great kiva at the widest point.

This great kiva was, as would be expected, completely above ground. It was made from a combination of stone and adobe. It had wainscoting behind the benches that went completely around the room. There were two raised vaults on the east and

west of the fire pit, and the Sipapu north of the fire pit. The roof was a traditional cribbed roof that was in excellent condition for its age.

There were the remains of a bridge over the stream. The smaller chambers west of the stream all had the remains of a variety of containers indicating that they were store rooms. We found three chambers north of the Main Community Area. One was a large chamber and passageway that showed no signs of use. That was probably due to the fact that the only way to get there was either through a very narrow passage necessitating wading in the stream or through the burial chamber, which was the chamber farthest east. The opening between the burial chamber and the northern passage had been sealed with a brick wall. The opening from the Main Community Area to the burial chamber was closed by a large stone that could be rolled in front of the opening.

The explorers almost didn't go through the narrows into the chamber beyond. When they did they were astonished by the mural Shandiin, Peetra and Tawadza had painted. Kachina and the others spent hours studying pictures they took of the mural. It didn't take them long to figure out that the mural was a sequence; a story of the artists' lives. They would never know that it was done by children, but they did follow the sequence of events which were just about what Kachina and Carlo had already figured out. It linked the Kawaika and the Hidden Valley villages. The only thing that could have made the mural more important in Kachina's life would have been to know that one of the artists was a grandmother of hers.

At the east end of the main community area, near the entrance to the burial chamber, we had noticed that the tunnel continued in a southeastern direction. We had

only ever gone a short distance, always turning back because there were no signs of living areas.

One weekend, when we had three days to spend in the caverns, we decided that it was time to explore this passage. We all agreed that most likely it just went off into the mountain, but, being the curious types, we wanted to know for certain.

Felipe had returned to the reservation to take care of some business. Istaqa agreed to be the one to wait. He was more interested in studying some drawings in the kiva anyway, so the four of us packed up and headed down the tunnel.

We were aware that we were descending and occasionally there were steps. The steps told us that the residents used this passage, so we kept pushing forward. We used a pedometer to keep track of approximate distances. A little more than a tenth of a mile there was light above us. It looked like a vent.

As we looked closer, we saw climbing holes cut in the side of the ascending tube. Kachina insisted on climbing it. It was barely big enough for a person to pass through and soon all we could see was Kachina's headlamp shining against the wall above her.

"It opens into a cleft of the mountain and there are more climbing holes," Kachina called down. "It looks quite safe, so I'm going up a bit further."

Carlo started to object but stopped. He knew that it wouldn't do any good. "Do you want me to come up part way to be your back up?"

"No, it isn't far."

We stood in the dark tunnel looking up at the small patch of light above us.

Suddenly Kachina called to us. "This is amazing," she yelled.

"It's a lookout and I can see the reservation."

Each of us took a turn climbing up the narrow vent. As I said, the vent opened into a shallow cleft. At the top of the cleft one could look east out over the desert and, sure enough, see the reservation in the distance. There looked to have been a well worn bench at the cleft opening. It was as close to straight down as it could get; inaccessible from below unless you were one hell of a good climber with the right equipment. Nevertheless, there was no signs of a fire. That would have been like a beacon. We figured that the person on guard would sit quietly in the recess of the cleft. We could only assume he was watching for Spaniards.

This was an exciting find making us eager to push on. Our compass readings were telling us that this was heading toward the Kawaika village. Perhaps our imaginations were getting away from us, but we couldn't help envision this as a back door. We wondered whether that was the purpose of the lookout.

Without warning there was a deafening rumble as rock rained down on us. The ground shook violently and the passage was filled with blinding dust. It lasted but seconds, but they were terrifying seconds. I could not see the other three even though they were only a few feet away. I could hear them yelling. We were all calling one another. We were all alive, but we couldn't see each other.

On the few occasions I've taken a cave tour, the guide inevitably turned out the lights to show the visitor what absolute darkness is like. This was not a cave tour but it was absolute darkness. On a tour there is no fear or panic because you know the lights will soon be on. It is a bit embarrassing but my first reaction here was pure panic. I could feel Makawee take hold of me.

"Are you alright?" she asked.

"Trying not to panic," I replied sheepishly, "but I'm not hurt. How about you?"

"I'm fine," she assured me.

A flashlight came on. It was Kachina and she was shining it on Carlo's leg. There was a blood-stained tear in his trousers by his knee.

"I don't think it's as bad as it looks," Carlo was saying as Kachina started first aid. "It doesn't hurt very much. I think I just skinned it badly when I fell."

"What happened?" I asked. "I mean other than the roof suddenly falling on us."

By this time all but Carlo had flashlights in hand and I was shining mine on the pile of rock that blocked our exit. The stones were almost all the same size and wooden uprights could be seen in a couple of places.

"I tripped over something," said Carlo. "It felt like a root."

"I don't want to jump to conclusions," said Makawee, "but those uprights and your tripping makes me think we just survived a booby-trap."

"I think you're right," offered Kachina. "if we had been going in the other direction all, or at least some, of us would have been buried."

We all sat and stared. Makawee and Kachina were right. The uprights definitely indicated human construction while a cave-in, after tripping over something on the floor, might not be a coincidence. Logic, therefore, would indicate that, if this was indeed a booby-trap, it was here for a reason and the only reason we could think of was that it was here to stop invaders from gaining access to the cavern village. That would mean

that there must be an opening farther ahead. It would also explain the lookout we had found.

As the four of us continued to follow the tunnel; now being super-careful to watch for triggers; Istaqa felt and heard the cave-in. He grabbed a backpack and lantern and hurried down the tunnel after us. When he found the cave-in he knew that he was going to need help fast.

The Kawaika village was the closest place to get help. Even then it took time and Istaqa did not know that we were not hurt. As he rode toward the village he thought about whom he might find there who could be trusted with the hidden valley secret. He didn't feel that he could take time to look for the right people, but he had all of the time between the canyon and village to think it through. He knew that he wanted strong young people who could move a lot of rock fast.

Liz Holiday was in the office and there were four tribal members in the lunch tent. Liz insisted that she wanted to go.

“Can you ride a horse?” Istaqa questioned. “I mean ride at a run?”

“Maybe not like you guys,” Liz said emphatically, “but if I can't keep up you can leave me behind.”

Within minutes six riders were racing westward from the village. Liz was not about to admit that she had never been on a running horse. She quickly learned that she could lean forward and hold onto the horse's mane. She didn't need to guide it. It was running along with the others. By the time they reached the turn north, Liz was feeling much more confident. She still had to admit that she was happy when they slowed to a canter.

Istaqa helped her down when they stopped to rest and water the

horses.

“You are a brave and determined one,” Istaqa smiled. Liz just blushed. “I could tell that you had no idea what you were doing, but you’ve kept up. That’s quite impressive.”

“Thank you!”

“Let’s walk the horses for a while so we don’t waste time,” Istaqa addressed the group.

As they walked Istaqa explained the Hidden Valley cliff dwelling and why it was kept secret. He told them about discovering the caverns. “That’s why the four of them were in a cave,” he concluded his explanation.

“And we’re going to try to dig them out ourselves?” asked one of the braves.

“For right now, yes,” replied Istaqa. “There’s no way to get any equipment in there even if we wanted to.”

It took all of Liz’s determination to pass through the cliff dwelling without stopping. When they entered the kiva and descended into the cave she was filled with awe and wonder.

“That a lot of rock,” one of the young men commented as he stepped up to the cave-in and started moving the large rocks.

Of course, the four of us on the other side had no idea that there were already people trying to dig us out. Realizing that the only reason in the world to have a booby-trap in this tunnel is because there was some way for an enemy to get into the cave system. That meant that, ahead of us, was a way to the outside. With that realization, our fears and anxieties turned to anticipation as we scurried down the tunnel filled with the expectation of a way out and another archaeological discovery.

There was no doubt that we were descending. The terrain became steep enough at times that we were sincerely thankful for the ancestor's steps. According to our compass readings, and trying to mentally superimpose our tunnel onto a topographic map, it seemed that we should emerge a short distance north of the Kawaika Village. That realization made us concerned that we would be entering the village about the time Istaqa was heading toward the tunnel. We had lost all concept of time but were aware that when we got out we still had to get word to Istaqa who would definitely be assuming that we were trapped. For that reason we hustled along the passage.

One can only imagine, and I would be hard-pressed to believe that anyone could truly imagine, the emotions – terror, anger, confusion – that are experienced when the hopes and expectations of escape are suddenly confronted with the reality of entrapment.

Talking about our tremendous find and how it had been so clever of the Kawaika, having totally forgotten the panic and fear we had experienced only a short while before, we came around a corner and were confronted with another cave-in.

We stood in silence; the shock, the return of the feelings of fear and panic.

“I'm sure everyone realizes that the rescue is going to come at the other cave-in,” I finally broke the silence. The others just looked at me expectantly. I was stating the obvious, so what could I add? “Would we be best off heading back and maybe even remove a few stones ourselves?”

As I share our experience, I realize that not once did any one of us say ‘we're trapped.’ Only now do I have the luxury to wonder whether that was because we were so certain of being rescued or whether we were afraid to face the truth. Perhaps,

using the thought process and logic of our much younger selves, we were believing that if we didn't mention being trapped the reality of the situation would not include entrapment.

The four of us made our way back to the cave-in and began removing stones, all the time wondering how soon it would be before there were people on the other side. Did we have sufficient food? How long would our air last?



Chapter 16

Adriel sat in the mountain cleft looking out over the pre-dawn desert to the east. He had been here all night with K'akana and was happy to see the far sky looking lighter. That was the sign that his watch should be over soon. This is a very important assignment for the two warriors. They not only had responsibility for watching the entrance to the corrals below but they had one of the best spots for watching

for Spaniards.

Navajo and Zuni were coming up from the south to take refuge from the returning Spanish army. Everyone knew that it was just a matter of time before they came and this watch was of great importance. A few people stayed with the horses in the small valley below. There was a small valley hidden from view near one of the volcanic vents. Some young people had discovered it. At first it was just a place of interest.

More important was the cliff village. Teenage hunters had discovered the hidden valley and the giant cliff several years before. It too was little more than a neat place to explore until the refugees from the south started to show up and telling stories of the Spanish return. Adriel's father had taken part in the attack on Santa Fe. They had hoped that would be the end.

Knowing that it was just a matter of time, the tribe decided to begin preparing the cliff as a defensive position. They knew of their ancestors and even current tribes that had built villages in a mountain cliff. Soon there was a village developing. The village by the river continued to be important because there was little space for corn and squash in the hidden valley.

The connection between the lava vent and the cliff village came by accident. The men who were digging the sipapu for the cliff village kiva discovered the caves. At close to the same time, young people exploring the caves near the volcanic vent up to the lookout came upon the ladder into the kiva. The circuit was complete.

“Adriel!” came a voice from the vent they used to access the cleft. “K’akana! Dyaami and I are here to relieve you.”

Oh, what a beautiful sound, thought Adriel taking one more quick look out over the expanse of desert below. That’s when he saw them. A column of Spaniards in the distance. They were

coming from the southeast and were headed straight toward the village.

“The Spanish are here,” yelled Adriel. “The Spanish are here!”

Soon all four men were straining to see. In the far distance, like an army of locust ravishing everything in their path, they could see the plume of dust put up by the advancing invaders. Adriel and K’akana scurried back through the tunnel to warn the villages.

The chief and his trusted advisors already had a plan. Knowing that if the Spanish had returned to Santa Fe, they would soon be pushing north toward them. The first thing was to evacuate all non-warriors to the cliff village. Each person would carry a bag of food and supplies. Some of the braves took positions on the bastions the previous Spanish had built. The main part of the presidio had become the village garbage dump so it smelled pretty bad, but the bulwarks were still good. From there the braves could command the river. Others went as far up the mountain as they could. They commanded the now vacant village below.

Tsushki noticed that the Spanish stopped and made camp several hours ride northeast of the village. No one below could see or hear them. The two lookouts spotted a person on foot moving stealthily toward the village. Passing the information down to the warriors, the spy was soon apprehended.

The spy turned out to be a Tohono O’Odom who was taken as a slave to scout for the Spanish. He had thought many times of running away but he had neither weapon nor supplies. He had gone with the Spanish in exchange for them leaving his village in peace. They broke their promise. His mission this evening was to gather information about the village defenses. The elders sent him back to the Spanish with some outlandish stories about the warriors in the village.

There happened to have been a number of horses in the small valley below the lookout. The tribe had sufficient time to take quite a few more to the hidden enclosure while braves made their way to the corral via the tunnels.

The Spanish officers spent that night going over their plan and getting the men ready. They were certain that they had the element of surprise on their side. Their plan was to sneak up during the night from the north and the east, catching most of the village asleep and trapping the rest between the river and the mountain. It was fool-proof European military strategy wasted on a bunch of heathens who wouldn't appreciate it. Or so the Spaniards thought.

The army began to move toward the village during the middle of the night watch. The Spanish moved through the desert amazingly quietly. They waited just outside the village for the sky to become light enough to attack. The villagers, rationalized the Spaniard commanders, should still be asleep. The northern unit was the first to attack. As soon as the eastern unit was aware of the attack, they moved in.

Once the Spaniards had moved past the hidden entrance, warriors exited the valley and moved against the Spanish from behind. Those Spaniards who were near the village were met with a wall of arrows. They were soon trapped in the very village they came to destroy. The Spanish leaders and those toward the rear of the columns were left to fight for their lives. The Spanish leadership was soon dead and discipline was gone. Most of the soldiers surrendered, a great many broke rank and ran while a few fought to the death.

When the battle was over the tribe was faced with the dilemma of what to do with all of the prisoners. The refugees, along with several of the Kawaika who had lived in the village when the first Spanish arrived, pushed for executing them. The

compromise was to allow them to live in the village as slaves or walk back to Santa Fe.



Chapter 17

Having never set a booby-trap of any sort, nevertheless one that drops stone on the trespassers, we had no idea how deep the wall might be. If we had stopped to give it some thought, which was far beyond our emotional abilities at this point, we would have realized that more than likely it wasn't very deep. This particular booby-trap was designed to warn and provide a barrier. It didn't need to be deep because they didn't need to worry about the intruders digging through the wall the trap created. Any intruder would know that there would be warriors on the other side, therefore any attempt to crawl through would be suicidal.

The rescuers were afraid that we might be under the rock, so they were digging desperately. Since those of us who were trapped knew that we were in a restricted tunnel, our biggest fear was oxygen and CO₂. Even in the giant chambers with the high ceilings and lots of natural ventilation the concentration of oxygen can be as low as 17% as compared to 21% outside. A cave also naturally has many times more carbon dioxide than outside air.

We were understandably frightened as we pulled rock away from the cave in, so the tears of joy and relief flowed freely when we heard voices.

Once we had established communications, we could coordinate our efforts. Our biggest danger now was pushing a large rock onto a person on the other side. Soon there was a hole in the wall. We wasted no time shimmying through.

“What happened?” Istaqa asked once we had returned to the cave camp and had a chance to sit down and relax.

“It was a booby trap,” explained Carlo as Kachina finished first aide to his skinned knees. “I tripped over what I thought was a root.”

“We’re lucky that we were headed out,” I said. “If we had set it off coming back to the main cavern, we would probably have been buried.”

“It was definitely meant to stop the Spanish from coming in a back door,” added Kachina, “but we couldn’t get to the back door. There was a cave in there as well.”

“Another booby trap?”

“Most likely.”

“I want to go back to the far cave in and get some compass readings,” said Carlo.

“Are you crazy?”

“No, those were booby traps,” Carlo exclaimed. “The rest of the tunnel is as strong and sound as it is out here. As long as I look for any more traps I’ll be fine. We really need to find that back door. It could be critical in the future.”

“How’s that?”

“What if some snoopers would stumble onto it? It needs to be secured. It can also be a safety exit as we work down here, not to mention how finding it may answer a lot of questions.”

Istaqa gave Liz and the four young men a tour of the cave city. Kachina, Carlo, Makawee and I stayed at the camp, rested and planned a safe way to determine where the back door might be located. We could hear Istaqa telling about his life protecting the secret of the Hidden Valley and asking our new conspirators to help keep the secret.

The easiest method to find the back door was to take a series of compass readings. From that we could get a general heading. The problem is, of course, that we need to have some idea where we’re standing when we take that reading.

“I don’t know if it would work,” Makawee spoke up, “but we can get a GPS coordinate standing on the cliff. Starting there we can calculate the coordinates at various points leading to the cave entrance with a compass and tape measure. The coordinates directly under the cave entrance will be the same as those above. We can then use the same technique through the tunnel.”

“After we have collected all of the coordinates, we put them on a topo map. This gives us a map of the cave superimposed on the above-ground features. We have to assume that the tunnel goes straight outside from the cave in. We can use the last

coordinate and the generally heading to that point to lead us to the most likely spot where the tunnel might exit.”

“That’s brilliant!” I exclaimed.

“You’re prejudice,” Makawee laughed.

“No,” said Kachina. “that is brilliant.”

When Istaqa, Liz and the others returned we explained our plan.

“You guys are crazy,” Liz said. “You just escaped from that tunnel.”

“We’ve been through that,” Carlo insisted. “It was a booby-trap and I tripped it. Now we know to watch carefully for any more.”

The four young men were much more excited about the idea.

I’m sure that none of us thought about how long it was going to take to get our base location plotted and then move methodically to the tunnel using a tape measure and compass to get the numbers necessary to plot the new location using the previous location.

Okay, I’m sure there is someone out there who is going to tell me that there’s an app for that. Remember we don’t have a cell signal on my ranch or in most of Lewis County. In any case our method did work. It just took us a good two days.

Once we had superimposed the underground coordinates onto the surface, we were ready to move out and look for the back door.

Of course, no one wanted to stay home, so eleven of us headed north. That many people and their gear doesn’t leave town without being noticed. We also ended up with five pack horses.

Terry agreed to mind the store. We said that we were going to check out a tank that supposedly has some hieroglyphics and ground mortars. We had learned that Terry is up for about anything and has no aversion to live-in-a-tent and dig-in-the-dirt archaeology, but he is never thrilled about a long horseback ride.

Oh, he loves our horses. He said that is an archaeological milestone for him because, having spent time with us, he was able to experience the connection between the tribes he has studied and their horses. That is a very important thing if you want to truly understand a group of people. He just doesn't like climbing up on them, worrying about falling off them, smelling like them and that sense of deformity he always experiences after spending any amount of time sitting on them. He much prefers to walk along beside the horse discussing Michael Shanks' views on post-processual archaeology. In this case he just offered to watch the office.

Our starting point was about five miles north along the east side of North Table Mountain. We figured that we could get there before noon, set up camp, have some lunch and be out looking by early afternoon.

In truth, many canyons are hidden most of the day; i.e. they are so small or narrow or shallow that the sun must hit them just right to even see them.

There are a number of such canyons on the west side of the Castle Dome Mountains in KOFA National Wilderness. I spent a lot of time camping by them and enjoyed watching them appear and disappear again as the sun moved across the sky.

We noticed at least three such canyons along the east side North Table. Two of them were only a couple of degrees off our projected heading. We started exploring the closest.

It led us well back into the mountain, getting deeper and deeper as it went. We were thinking that might be a good prospect until we turned a corner and stood looking at a solid wall. It had taken us such a long time that, by the time we got out, it was too late in the day to explore the second.

We returned to our camp. Eight of our eleven are Kawaika so we ate particularly well. As the last glimpses of sunlight dropped behind North Table Mountain we sat around the fire sipping Ah-geh and listening to Istaqa tell ancient Kawaika stories. With Makawee snuggled up next to me, staring out into the desert, I could visualize the story and the life of the original affluent society. Everything they needed for a rich full life was here.

I remember first seeing the desert. I immediately fell in love. Yes, it can be intimidating, but I soon learned that it provides everything one needs for those who love it and call it home. I quickly learned this when I moved to the desert. That was my first attempt at escaping from civilization.

My van had really high clearance, all-terrain tires and 400 watts of solar power charging two 120 Amp hour lithium batteries. I would go far into the desert and stay until I was forced to return to modern chaos for food and water.

There were a few tanks and wells for livestock and abandoned homesteads where I could get water. I'm not a hunter. While the desert has a wealth of delicious plants, it was usually running short on things like coffee that drove me to town.

Sadly, the Bureau of Land Management keeps closing public land areas because of human abuse. As frustrating as I find this I realize that they have no way of knowing who is going to care for the land and who is going to trash it. Unfortunately, the typical government solution is to deny it to everyone.

This is what finally drove me to buy my ranch. It is my own little piece of heaven where I can live in peace and pretend the destructive invasive species known as homo sapiens doesn't exist. We all know how that turned out. I didn't escape people, quite the contrary, but I have a wonderful life in my beloved desert and now have someone with whom to share it.

I realized that it was quiet. Istaqa had finished his story and, as the fire became a pile of glowing embers, we all sat quietly lost in our own thoughts. Makawee had fallen asleep. Butch crawled into the sleeping bag and lay down along my legs. I pulled the soft flannel bag over us, laid my head against Makawee's and drifted off to sleep. Life doesn't get any better.

We were all up at first light and had breakfast by the time the sun was above the horizon. We were all anxious to explore canyon number two. It too turned out to be a dead end but we were able to get out with plenty of time to explore number three.

We decided not to take time to fix lunch but let everyone snack on trail foods that we all carried.

We understandably had high hopes for canyon number three. It was well hidden, became a bit wider as we went west into North Table, and was heading right toward our cave coordinates. You can imagine our disappointment when it too was a dead end.

"Obviously we made a mistake in our calculations," Felipe said as we sat just outside the entrance to canyon number three.

"Of course, that is a possibility," I replied, "but there's also the possibility that the tunnel did not continue straight on the other side of the cave in."

“We probably should have just dug through from the inside,” commented Kachina.

“We could have done that, but that could take a lot longer, there might be other booby-traps that were tripped leaving us facing more cave ins and honestly this seemed easier,” snapped Carlo.

“It’s not your fault,” Kachina tried to smooth his ruffled feathers. “Besides this is only day two. Do you have any idea how many holes I dug before we found Kawaika Village?”

“I’m sorry,” Carlo apologized. “It just seemed like . . .” His voice trailed off. “I’ve got an idea. Let have three or four people go up on the lookout. They should be able to see us and can radio directions.”

Considering that our two obvious options were to either continue blindly searching or go dig out the farthest cave in. The idea of sending someone up to the lookout was really a good compromise.

Felipe and three of the young men headed off to the lookout. It was a good ten to twelve miles. That’s a good half days ride and it was already mid-afternoon. If all went well they should get to Istaqa’s camp before dark and go on up to the cliff village in the morning.

In the meantime the rest of us continued searching from this side. After a while the little slit in the mountain hidden box canyons began to all look alike. We worked our way north and finally decided to call it quits so we would not have to make dinner in the dark.

I don’t know what time the four in Hidden Canyon started up to the cliff village, but there was a squawk on the radio by nine o’clock in the morning.

“Hey, you guys!” came the voice of one of the young men, Jimmy. “You guys going to stay there all day?”

“Can you see us?” asked Kachina.

“I can’t make out faces but you guys are probably the only group of people camped out in this desert right now.”

“Great!” Kachina exclaimed. “We’re evidently a good distance.”

“Yes,” said Jimmy. “You’re probably just a bit less than halfway to the village from here.”

“We’ll be on the move soon.”

Buttoning up camp as quickly as possible, the seven of us started north at a slow canter.

“Just don’t get any closer to the mountain or I’ll lose you,” Jimmy coached. “I’ll yell at you when you need to turn toward me.”

Despite how anxious we were we didn’t want to tire our horses, so we slowed to a walk. It was about an hour before Jimmy called to tell us to turn west, toward the mountain. We all studied the mountain wall ahead of us. We could not make out any opening, no hidden valleys. It appeared to be almost solid rock.

“Can you see an opening?” Kachina asked.

“No,” Jimmy responded, “but I can see a small valley almost right below me. I’ll get you on a line where the valley is directly between us. If there’s an opening, it has to be around there somewhere.”

I’m sure the others were sharing the same sinking feeling I was experiencing. Jimmy would occasionally adjust our course slightly, but it still seemed to lead toward a solid wall of stone.

Finally we were at the base of a high cliff. Istaqa volunteered to stay with the horses while the rests of us spread out to examine the mountain wall. Could it be as small as a hole?

Butch and I climbed up to walk as close to the mountain side as possible. Jeff, one of the diggers, ran on farther north of me. I noticed that he did a double take as he jogged along and suddenly stopped and walked slowly toward the mountain. The next thing I knew he had climbed up on a boulder and was waving at me.

I relayed the signal to Makawee who was the next closest person to me and saw her pass the signal along. Having been sure that the news got passed on, Butch and I ran to meet Jeff near the mountain wall.

“Look!” Jeff exclaimed as I drew near, “I almost went right past it.”

“I couldn’t see what he was talking about until I got right up beside Jeff. Then, turning to study the mountain, I saw what appeared to be no more than a crack. As we got closer, we found that what looked like a crack was the north end of a very thin wall. Almost like an arret laying on its side, the wall ran north and south, and the north end had a knife edge. That edge was so close to the mountain wall that it was barely wide enough for a horse to pass through. In fact, the top was actually leaning against the main body of the mountain forming a type of narrow window cathedral arch.

Istaqa, who had stayed with the horses, gathered the horses, and picked up the other four as he made his way toward us. Soon all six of us were standing looking at the beautiful natural phenomena.

There was one thing certain. This was as hidden as any valley could be and you couldn't see it unless you were right up on top of it. In fact, even then you had to look twice.

Istaqa lead the way. We rode single file for some time with the trail, which seemed like it followed a sidewinder, being barely wide enough for us to pass. The trail was ascending. Well up the narrow passage were the remains of a tall gate. After pictures were taken we removed part of the gate to get through, laying it carefully against the canyon wall. I'm not sure what type of wood it was but it had been covered with ocotillo. Even some modern natives use ocotillo, the original barbed wire, for fence.

The gate seemed to open into a very deep hole in the mountain. We could see a ledge just above us. Letting my imagination go free, I could imagine the pain of trying to get past that ocotillo gate only to have a line of warriors with their arrows trained on you standing on that ledge. After a few paces the narrow passage opened into a meadow that rose gently in a box canyon.

The meadow was probably not a hundred feet wide and got narrower as it went north. The east side of the canyon was the west side of the high wall one faces as they look at the mountain from the desert. The west side of the canyon was also a wall of stone. Well up the wall we could see Jimmy leaning out and waving at us. The meadow was filled with grasses along with some juniper and a few spindly pinyon pines. At the top was a small tank being fed by a trickle of water coming from the mountain.

At the south end of the canyon just around a corner from where we emerged was an opening with a large overhang. The remains of an adobe building were against the mountain wall and under the overhang. Next to it was a tunnel into the

mountain. I'm no geologist, but it didn't take much imagination to see that at one time far back in geological history this was a bend in the lava tube tunnel. Being thin at this point, erosion probably broke down the exterior wall leaving this sheltered area and removing the top of the tube creating the open trail we had ascended.

A short distance up the tunnel we found a cave in. A bit of simple math told us that we were on the other side of the cave in from our last coordinates calculated inside the cave.

We let the horses graze in the meadow while the rest of us started removing the cave in. It didn't take long before we recognized it as a booby trap like the one we triggered. We hadn't been removing rock long before we heard the four on the other side.

As we got almost to the ground, we found bones. They were the bones of a large ungulate. This poor animal was going the wrong way and not as lucky as us when it triggered the booby trap. This was more evidence that the cliff village and cave city were never found by the Spanish.

This, of course, left us with the question of why this marvelous village was abandoned. Actually, there are a number of villages in this part of the country that were abandoned. We can only guess as to why. It could have been because of a conflict or perhaps the population got too great. Put population growth with several years of bad harvests or dwindling wildlife and you have a good reason to move on.

Most of the original affluent society lived in small family groups. Before farming they would live together sharing in the hunting and gathering. Sharing made the work lighter on everyone.

Agriculture was both a blessing and a curse to early humans. Many academics will point at the development of farming with pride and tell us that's how we got where we are today. Some of us look around at where we are today and see farming as the curse that brought us here. Sadly, farming created the haves and the have nots, which did not exist before. Before we knew it we had an Animal Farm (book by George Orwell, 1945) where the pigs told the others that everyone was equal but the pigs were more equal.

Despite what white Europeans like to think, humans lived without government, religion and economics for the first 93 percent of our existence. These things have developed in the past six thousand years. What people of European ancestry have a problem understanding is that most of the native people in North America were actually more advanced than the invaders. This very stronghold was a good example.

It was sad to think that something happened that was bad enough to cause it to be abandoned. Of course, we also must remember that most native people don't believe they own the land or that villages and cities are permanent. They assumed that places like this go back to nature. This reality put people like Istaqa and Felipe in a difficult position.

We stayed at the back door as long as we could. Then Felipe and the three young men with him went back to Istaqa's camp while the rest of us returned to where we had been camped and left all our equipment. We would meet back at the Kawaika Village office the next day.

The burial chamber in the cave proved that the Kawaika village by Coyote tank was older. Of course, the way in which the bodies were buried was the most striking. The bodies were wrapped just as they had done before and placed

with personal belongings into shallow recessions dug in the cave floor. They were then covered with branches and finally rock. One end of the chamber had been blocked off. The other entrance had a large stone that could be rolled, sealing the chamber.

Kachina had spent most of the afternoon “peeking”; that is, moving as little as possible; at skeletons in the shallow graves to determine the sex and approximate age of the deceased. She had to uncover most of the skeleton. Sutures, those squiggly lines on a skull, can give an approximate age. By the time one is in their early twenties the suture lines are completely fused closed. After age forty, the sutures are barely noticeable. The joint where the fourth rib meets the sternum is another fairly accurate age determine. Scientists actually have accurate tables that base age on the amount of cartilage converted to bone at this joint. Kachina was happy with determining relative age at this point.

Determining gender was much easier. She had the skills and experience to differentiate between male and female at a glance. A woman’s sub-pubic arch is u-shaped as opposed to the male v-shape. A woman’s pelvis is also larger to allow for childbearing, as well as a wider sub-pubic angle and sciatic notch. Kachina could tell if a woman had given birth by looking for pock marks on the inside of the pelvic bone; scars left from ligaments tearing during childbirth.

Most of the skeletons were of older people with a couple of infants. It did not give the appearance of a community that was in any conflict. It was more like a cemetery of a community in peace time. It was a stretch, but one could make the argument that this was evidence that the cliff village was never attacked. Put with other evidence, one could argue that it was probably never discovered and the inhabitants might well have lived out the Spanish occupation in peace.

Some of the graves had drawings scratched on the cave wall above the grave. This was not usual, but one must realize that these were not usual times for the Kawaika. Kachina made rubbing of these carvings so that she could get help interpreting them.

She had just been telling Carlo, who was listing personal item and putting the graves back together after her, that the skeleton she had just inspected must have been an important man, perhaps a chief, since he had a lot of things buried with him and an eagle motif carved above his grave. She was moving to the next grave when she gasped and began to cry.

Within moments Carlo was at her side. Besides Carlo just being that type of compassionate person, Kachina was not the type to cry easily. When he got there, Kachina pointed at the pictograph above the grave.

Carlo looked with disbelief. There on the cave wall was a drawing that looked almost identical to the birthmark on Kachina's right shoulder; a stick figure that looked like a dancing Katsina. Felipe had told Kachina that it was a blessing from the Katsinim and that all the females in their family line had the same birthmark.

"Do you want me to do this one?" Carlo asked, still holding his shocked wife.

"No," replied Kachina. "It was just a shock. The tears are tears of joy. It is almost like opening a door and having everything you believe confirmed." Kachina started carefully removing stones. "I know it isn't hard evidence but if this is a female, I feel that I will have made one of the most important connections of my life. There is just too much coincidence."

Carefully the two opened the grave and uncovered the skeleton. Tears began to roll down Kachina's cheek but she was

grinning. Carlo gave her a squeeze. Before them were the remains of an elderly woman who had had children.

“This could be my great grandmother ten or twelve generations back,” Kachina said holding tightly to Carlo and looking down at the remains before them. “And I have found her and she can tell me so much about who we are.”



Chapter 18

Throughout the time I've owned the ranch and the Kawaika Village has been excavated, we frequently rode around the edge of a scree field, along South Table Mountain, going from the village to the Hidden Valley. None of us gave it any thought.

A scree field is a slope of loose pebbles and small rocks. The scree forms as a result of freezing and thawing of the rock on the mountain above. Water gets into cracks in the rock wall. The water expands when it freezes. Every time it thaws the water is able to seep deeper into the rock eventually splitting it apart. Gravity takes over and the chunks of rock fall onto a pile at the foot of the mountain or cliff and becomes a scree field.

Perhaps my brain was in Sherlock Holmes mode that day. You know. One of those days when everything you see causes you to ask why.

Carlo, Felipe and I were taking supplies to the cavern camp and were taking the short cut past the scree field.

I was in the lead so everyone came to a stop when I stopped and looked up.

“What’s up?” Carlo asked, pulling his horse to a stop along side of me. “Is there something up there?”

“No,” I said, “that’s just it.”

“Sorry,” he said, “you lost me.”

Felipe followed my gaze. “He means that the lack of anything up there is puzzling.”

“Okay, you two,” Carlo laughed. “I know you’re not Kawaika, Rusty, but I swear that you think just like Felipe and Istaqa. I’m not a country boy, so you’re going to have to explain what that means.”

“I bet you know what that is,” I said pointing toward the scree field.

“It’s a scree field, and you’ve taught me to give them a wide berth.”

“Good. So, what is a scree field?”

“Rock that falls off the side the mountain.”

“Top marks.” I pointed at the top of the cliff, “is that where this scree comes from?”

“I would assume,” replied Carlo.

“So why aren’t there any jagged edges or other signs of erosion and fracturing?” I asked.

“I don’t know.”

“Could be because this stone didn’t come from there,” Felipe added. “Look at it. It is actually a different color.”

“That doesn’t make sense,” Carlo was beginning to see what Felipe and I were talking about.

“As many times as we’ve ridden by this field, none of us evidently ever looked up,” I said.

“I can’t believe we missed it,” exclaimed Felipe. “That’s embarrassing!”

I glanced at the old shaman. I was prepared to laugh and tease him a bit, but I realized that he was serious. He was looking up at the mountain above us and was seriously embarrassed that he had not been observant enough to notice the difference. I realized that that is an important part of his life as a shaman and one of the gifts of nature which humans gave up when we decided that we either are not a part of nature or that we are superior. How often does the dog bark at something new or different, not because it is an overt threat but because it is different and worthy of investigation. Even plants are aware of change and difference. My urge to tease passed immediately and I found myself sharing the old man’s consternation.

Carlo was sitting quietly watching the two of us. Being married to the shaman’s daughter, he was now accustomed to such sudden periods of introspection and listening to nature.

“When you were working on the kiva back at the village, what was the hypothesis you had for it being almost totally covered with stone and gravel?” I asked Carlo.

“I figured that the tribe buried it in an effort to hide it.”

“Do you suppose they’re hiding something here too?” I asked. “There is no reason for a scree field to be here. It doesn’t match

the stone above and there are no other scree fields on this mountain. That leaves us with either a freak of nature or someone has put it here on purpose.”

“You’ve definitely piqued my interest,” Carlo exclaimed.

“You’re an archaeologist,” Felipe teased. “Everything piques your interest.”

“That may be true,” Carlo laughed, “but we definitely need to investigate this a bit more?”

“How do you do that?” asked Felipe.

“I’d guess he’s talking about good old-fashioned dig-in-the-dirt archaeology,” I replied.

“What?”

“Digging,” I said. “I think he’s talking about digging that scree field away from the mountain to see what’s behind or underneath it.”

“And who’s going to sell that idea to my daughter?” Felipe laughed.

Carlo looked at his father-in-law and smiled. “I think if your daughter was here, half that scree field would already be moved.”

Felipe thought about that for a moment and then laughed. “I bet you’re right. She wants to know the whole story.”

Standing and looking at the scree field and mountain wall, the seven of us; four archaeologists, two shaman and me; could hardly wait to find out why this pile of rock, which didn’t match the rock above, was here. Considering that the only way it could have gotten here was by human intervention, along with the nearby history of the Kawaika village, the only

reasonable conclusion was that it had to do with the village. For Kachina that left only one choice, and that was to pull the rock away from the mountain to see what was behind or under it.

We all had the same thoughts and concerns as we stood looking. Is whatever we find under this pile going to expose our secrets? One doesn't think about how what might seem like a simple secret can turn into an all-consuming project. The connection between the village, the hidden valley and the Spaniards was turning our efforts at protecting the Hidden Valley village into a complex nightmare of intrigue.

"We really only have two choices," Carlo was the first to speak. "We either take our chances and look behind the rock, or we walk away and pretend there's nothing here."

"True," said Terry. "If there is a connection here between the villages, you really want to know and understand it." He was speaking to everyone but most especially Kachina, Felipe and Istaqa. "Sometimes we have to take risks."

"You're right," Kachina almost whispered as though to speak out loud would bring the attention of the whole world. "Everything we've done and discovered to this point has pushed closer and closer to exposing the Hidden Valley. But I can't make this call."

"But ..."

"It must be Istaqa and Baabaa's decision." Kachina looked at the two shaman. Her eyes were filled with tears. "I'll do whatever they say."

"This could contain things that are very important to our history," Felipe said. "We have dealt with the white man's destruction of our culture and history for hundreds of years and

we still survive. I would look, but Istaqa has spent his life protecting the Hidden Valley. I will defer to him.”

Istaqa stood silently looking at the scree field before them. One could almost feel the battle going on inside him.

“If I say ‘no’, I am denying our children knowledge of their past,” he finally said. “That was never my intent. Quite the contrary. I wanted to save it for them.” He paused. “Like Felipe said, this wouldn’t be the first time we’ve had to deal with the white man. We need to take the risk.”

It didn’t take long to start digging. Kachina and the other archaeologists decided to forego the Harris Matrix; i.e. mapping and marking the area in quadrants for future reference. That didn’t make sense since we were looking for either a hole in the mountain or a hole in the desert floor. Nevertheless, one never knows what they will encounter in such digs, so we did survey the area just in case our exploration uncovered the unexpected – which you always expect in archaeology. We could fall back on using GPS and live topo maps if needed to identify a location.

We had joked about Kachina clearing half the field herself. She tried to turn the joke into reality, but most of the labor was by a group of teenage boys from the reservation.

It probably took a lot less time to dig away all that rock and stone than it took to carry it here. The consensus among the archaeologists was to start at the top center. That would be less dangerous but still dangerous enough. A scree field; and I believe even a human-made rock pile like this; is really the territory of the Mountain Goat and Big Horn. I know there are back country hikers who think it’s okay to cross a relatively

small and somewhat flat scree field. I disagree. It doesn't take much of a scree field to twist ankles and break bones.

By starting at the top center and moving down and out, they figured they had a greater chance of encountering whatever is down there much quicker. If we were to start digging from either side, they figured that one of Murphy's Laws would make sure that whatever we seek is on the opposite side.

Because we would be working on such unstable ground, we created a shelf that ran from side to side on which to work. It was placed so that the stone being moved was no more than chest high. At first the diggers just threw the stone behind them creating almost a constant mini-landslide. By the end of the first day, we had gone down enough that throwing stones and rocks over your shoulder was no longer feasible. At that point we broke out the baskets which were passed along from diggers to individuals waiting with a wheelbarrow off the scree field.

Kachina and Carlo were with the diggers, encouraging, giving direct and helping them while Makawee and Terry each positioned themselves at the end of the walkway to oversee the transfer from basket to wheelbarrow. I did whatever I was told while Istaqa and Felipe watched from a nearby pile of spoil.

Even though we were looking for some sort of opening in the mountain or valley floor, we could not dig without watching for artifacts. This slowed us down, but I think the workers sensed our excitement and worked exceptionally hard. I was impressed.

Often one of the diggers would start singing and chanting old Kawaika songs and, in no time, everyone would join it. There were many times; especially just before a break or days end when everyone was getting tired, and we all needed a pick-me-up; some of those carrying baskets of rock would actually sing

and dance down to the waiting wheelbarrows and back. I couldn't help stopping and admiring them.

Until I started hanging around Istaqa and Felipe I had never seen natives dancing other than at a powwow. It was the same step which the elders use at a powwow grand entrance. The only difference is that the elders shorten their steps in the grand entrance making it more majestic, while these young men stepped out with great enthusiasm and seemed to float up and down the walkway. It certainly helped everyone finish a hard job in good spirits.

It doesn't sound like much, but we were able to dig a single quadrant on our matrix; five meters on each side and a little over one meter deep; about nine-hundred and fifty cubic feet, in a little over six hours.

It was the morning of day three, and we hadn't found anything. We weren't surprised but it's still back-breaking work and some sort of reward is always appreciated. After all that digging, we calculated we were still about five meters or just over sixteen feet from ground level.

I was standing to one side listening to Carlo, Kachina and Terry talk about what they should do next if we hit ground level. The consensus was to start moving away from the mountain wall.

No decision was made because no decision was needed. There was suddenly an excited cry from the trench.

"I've hit wood!" one of the boys called out, holding his Mattox in the air. "I've found something."

As close as we were, so many people were running to see the find, the three archaeologists had a difficult time getting to the young man. In the excitement Kachina had had the presence of mind to grab a bag of small tools.

When the three arrived, with me bring up the rear, the young man was sitting with his feet wide apart and just above what looked like an extremely large header for a door. Only a small portion of the structure could be seen because, as instructed, the young man stopped immediately when he realized he had encountered something other than rock and stone.

Kachina and the others were praising the young man on acting quickly and properly while Kachina was moving him over to get to the beam. All she had to do was hold her hand out behind her back and one of her colleagues had the appropriate tool waiting for her.

We all watched, glued to Kachina's every move and gawking to catch a glimpse of the prize. I had one of the best seats in the house. Somehow, I ended up laying on my side to Kachina's right holding a basket. By the time my basket was about full, her two colleagues were calling "there, look there", "it's got to be a header", "that's a hell of a big header," and so forth. Kachina ignored them and slowly and methodically cleared the debris away from the wood.

By noon we could see several feet of header along with the west king and jack stud. The wood was very rough and had obviously been hewn with an adze. Kachina was digging back under the header when she encountered the adobe brick wall.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "The opening has been bricked up."

"This is wonderful," Terry shouted above the chatter and jubilation around us.

"Quiet please," Kachina said. I think she surprised herself at the forcefulness of her voice. There was instant silence.

"Great work, everyone!" she began. "I do want us to take time to celebrate, but you all know there's still a good way to go."

A murmur went over the crowd. “Who’s ready to take a look at this thing?”

Of course, she got a unified shout of affirmation. Everyone was so psyched by our discovery that no one was willing to take time off.

“Okay,” Kachina said speaking only to Terry and Carlo. “we need to go down and away from the mountain at the same time. We haven’t seen any signs of artifacts and I don’t expect any. Do you? This sure looks like someone – most likely the tribe – bricked this gate and then covered it like they did the kiva. Since it has all the looks of being the same work as the wall at the presidio, I’m going to hypothesize that it was a part of the same event and we’re going to find something related to the Spaniards inside. So, I’m in favor of using the tractor at the village to help these guys pull debris away from the wall so they can get to the fun part sooner.” She smiled.

“I’m cool with that,” said Terry while Carlo gave her a thumbs up.

The rest of that day the tractor; a Kubota B26 with both loader and backhoe; moved rock and debris away from the door with Raymond Haaland at the controls. He expertly used the backhoe to pull the debris away from the mountain and then the loader to move it down the slope he was creating. By dinner-time he had a good ramp built to the walled entrance and the others were finishing up removing the last of the rock and sweeping the door frame. While the frame looked very Spanish, there was no doubt that the wall was Kawaika masonry.

“I think we need to wait until morning to start digging around the frame. It’s probably going to be an easy job, but you all know how easy jobs can turn hard,” said Carlo.

Everyone nodded and/or mumbled agreement except Kachina. She was standing about five feet from the wall studying it. She had heard what Carlo said. She knew that he was as anxious as she was to see what was on the other side. She also knew that he was right.

After a few moments of silence, she put up her hands as though in surrender and said “you’re right. Good archaeology and safety first.”

Quite a crowd gathered around the sealed door as the four archaeologists studied the frame and the mountain wall to be sure they were doing the right thing. The diggers had had a lottery to see who would be the two to start the short tunnel. Others had brought wood and tools and were building the frame for a door. We also had an old generator and three long runs of ten-gauge power cord with several high-power lamps, a couple of strings of light bulbs and a variety of stands on which to hang the lights.

Carl Wilson showed up to be sure that whatever’s on the other side is safe. He was also talking to the men who were building the door frame and giving them pointers on shoring and timbering. He had a load of timbers in the back of his pickup with the explanation “if whatever you find behind that wall is human made, it will most likely need a lot of bracing.”

Everyone wanted a chance to dig a bit of the tunnel, so it was an amazingly quick job with one of the diggers finally calling “we’re through.”

Immediately the crew that had built the door moved it into place under the close supervision of Carl. It fit snugly up against the king stud on one side and the mountain on the other

acting both as a shelter and shoring. When Carl was satisfied that it met his approval, he gave the okay to enter.

You could feel the anticipation and suspense suddenly surge. We were going to see what the tribe had so carefully sealed and buried.

The entry order had already been decided. Kachina was the first through, followed by her grandfather, Felipe, and Istaqa. Carl would be next.

It wasn't planned but he stayed in the entrance for a while to give the three Kawaika a few minutes alone. We had no idea what we were going to find. It was quite compassionate of Carl to think of the possibility that it might be a very emotional moment for them.

Carl went in to check for safety as the rest of us moved the generator and electrical gear into place.

When the lights came on, we were looking at a Spanish gold mine that had to date back to at least between 1610 and 1680. The tools were mostly Spanish with a few Kawaika tools. There were no bodies or any sign of fighting or violence. It was as though the miners had walked out to dinner and never come back.

After Carl had a chance to closely examine the timbers, he advised us not to do any exploring until he could get a crew in to reinforce the shaft.

"I'm surprised we didn't find a bunch of dead miners," said Carl. "that timbering job wasn't the best in the first place."

We all tried to get as many pictures as possible before Carl ran us out.

Carl had a crew at the mine the next morning. His crew, with Carlo to help them understand the archaeology, were able to make the shaft safe within a week. They were able to reinforce the walls and ceilings with modern materials in such a way that it didn't damage or distract from the original and ran a line of lights down the ceiling powered by our generator.

Kachina, Carlo, Terry and Makawee spent all the first day in the mine. I acted as the gofer and helped drive in the markers. As soon as we had a section marked they would move in, take pictures, make notes and collect any artifacts.

The mine wasn't over fifty to sixty feet deep. None of us know anything about gold mining. We did, however, know that quartz can be an indicator of gold and we knew quartz when we saw it but we didn't see anything that we thought was gold.

Carl came by after he closed his office. As we walked toward the back of the mine Carl looked closely at the wall but didn't stop. He told us that gold is frequently found with silver, quartz, calcite lead, tellurium, zinc and sulfides like pyrite. He had noticed a lot of sulfides and quartz. That's undoubtedly what kept the miners digging.

When we got to the end of the mine he said, "alright, here we go." He pulled out a hammer and picked around a bit. "Yep, there's a vein in here, but they just stopped mining it. I wonder why they just walked away?"

"I'd guess Indians," laughed Carlo.

"Indians?" Carl replied.

"Well, I'm just guessing," said Carlo, "but we've found both Spanish and Kawaika tools. We know that the Spanish used the indigenous people as slave labor. We know that the Kawaika were never obsessed with gold like the Spanish. So, this would

most likely be a Spanish mine. We know from the Bastion that the Spanish were forcing the Kawaika to get them gold and, according to Br. Raphael's account, the fight broke out over the gold. Whether or not that is absolutely accurate, we do have the results of that fight in the presidio and the bodies at the university lab. So, I'm going to go out on a limb and say that when the Spanish were dead there was no reason to work in the mine."

"One of the indicators that the mine was sealed by the Kawaika is that the wall here and in the presidio are identical in material and style. Since we know that the wall in the presidio post-dated the Spaniards' death, we can safely assume that the same is true here," added Terry.

"That makes sense," said Carl, still poking around at the vein of gold.

Carl collected a bag full of samples. "I'll take these back to the office and let you know what I learn."

Carl stopped by the Kawaika Village office a few days later.

"Well, there's no doubt that that is gold," he began, "but I can clearly state that it is probably not high-grade ore." He used the charades sign, the first two finger on each hand, to put "high-grade ore" in quotations.

Being totally ignorant of mining terminology, none of us noticed his conspiratorial smile but we did notice the emphasis on the term 'high-grade'. We just didn't know what it meant and why it was so important.

“So, how do you determine the grade of an ore?” Kachina asked.

“To determine grade is actually a formula. The average grade of the hole, or mine, is the sum of the products of each sample by its assay value divided by the sum of the sample lengths. This average is then multiplied by the volume of the prism which is divided by the volume-per-ton factor. That give you a tons percent or tons dollar.” Carl just smiled.

Kachina, Makawee, Terry and Carlo just stood looking at the assayer.

“Okay,” Terry finally said, “I’ll plead ignorance and ask what the hell you just said. Would you put it in plain English s’il vous plait?”

After a quick double-take; Carl wasn’t accustomed to Terry’s humor; he laughed and said, “it’s a formula that tells the miner if the mine is worth the effort. You see, as an assayer I use various techniques to determine the precious metal in the ore. That’s really all. In this case I can now authoritatively say that there is gold in that ore. By applying that formula, I can help the miner decide whether the mine is worth the money and the effort. The quality of the gold is going to be determined by the refining. A low quality mine is nothing more than a low-grade mine, meaning that it’s going to take a lot of time, work and money to get the gold out. Does that make more sense?”

“Significantly!” Terry exclaimed.

“I’m sure you knew it was gold when you saw it,” Makawee said. “Why all the analysis, low-grade, and so forth? What do we need to know?”

“Oh, I had my reasons,” Carl again gave his conspiratorial smile. He’s obviously been a part of our Memorial Foundation. “Let me make my recommendations.”

That caused a bit of confusion, but all agreed.

“I recommend that we make this one of those rare times that a white man saves an Indian’s ass,” Carl was grinning.

“What do you mean?”

“You’re worried about some stupid bureaucrat deciding to take over and giving this land to some big mining corporation. Well, I can make that much less likely by certifying that this mine is not worth the effort. It’s low-grade ore and a low-grade mine,” he laughed as though he was pulling a fast one.

“You see, a miner would understand what I said. Most bureaucrats aren’t miners. They hear the term low-grade and figure the place is worthless. They don’t go any further. Technically, I’m one of those stupid bureaucrats. They’ll listen to me.”

“If you do that, we can make it just another part of our excavation,” exclaimed Carlo. “We could actually show it as an example of the Spanish obsession with gold and how they enslaved the locals for that obsession.”

“Yes,” replied Carl, “There are scads of defunct, worked out, worthless gold mines in this state alone that are costing the government a fortune because they must clean up the environmental mess. This would just be one more, so they’re not going to be anxious to get involved with it.”

“That’s great,” exclaimed Kachina.

“I think it is a good idea to leave it sealed,” said Carlo. “It shows the Kawaika’s lack of interest in gold.”

“Oh,” added Terry, “the wall is an artifact in and of itself. It’s a great example of Kawaikan masonry.”

The group was gaining steam coming up with ideas about the future of the mine when Carl interrupted.

“It sounds like you’ve got a good handle on things,” he said, “but I’d also suggest that you get some of that gold out of there before you open it to the public. Remember I said it was a low-grade ore, not low-quality. Gold is gold is gold. Gold still drives the coin of the realm in this country and I’d like to see the tribe get some benefit from that.”

“But the tribe doesn’t own the land,” Kachina pointed out.

“And you don’t think Rusty is not going to turn around and give the tribe that gold?” Carlo said. Carlo and Carl were the only ones in the room who knew that I finance much of the excavation. Carl was the only one who knew about my mine. I have the means of selling the gold without drawing unwanted attention to the Kawaika Village.

“We can’t ask him to do that!” Kachina protested.

“You know Rusty,” Makawee said. “No one will need to ask him or even hint.”

“For sure,” Carl agreed. “You can bank on it!”

When I heard about the mine, I never thought about it actually belonging to me. It didn’t take long for us to figure out that I could put the Kawaika gold with mine and then just give the money to the tribe. I had already done all the proper paperwork and the contents of the mine did legally belong to me. There was no reason to tell the world about gold in the mine and there was nothing illegal about not going public.



Chapter 19

The truck and horse trailer sat by the barn packed and ready to go. I didn't have a fancy horse trailer with family compartment. Makawee had helped me turn my trailer for five horses into a trailer for three with a stall for tack and supplies, grain and hay on the roof, and the remaining stall for us. We installed a small 12-volt camp fridge, five gallon fresh water tank (the horses have their own water) and a composting toilet to make us self-contained and able to stop for the night anywhere. We put a nice awning on the side of the trailer so we would have a place to sit and use our camp stove in foul weather.

The trailer was an old 35-foot gooseneck that Doc had helped me acquire. With new tires, new brakes and suspension, 1200 watts of solar on the roof and our remodeling, it looked like new. Well, maybe not new, but we were proud of it and thought it looked pretty sharp. Hooked to my 2019 Ford F450 with the 6.7 liter Power Stroke diesel, the rig was about sixty plus feet long.

When it came to painting it, I was just going to give it a coat of white tractor paint. That's the common name for paint that is used on work vehicles and can withstand up to ten-percent sulfuric acid and straight diesel fuel. Tough stuff. Makawee would have nothing to do with that plan. It did get a coat of tractor paint, but the bottom quarter was done in browns like the mountains around us with the rest being a very, very light blue to represent the sky. She had let a group of kids from the reservation paint traditional Kawaika pictures, symbols and patterns on the blue among a mass of okra-red handprints made by friends. The red handprint is a modern-day symbol of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movement and represents all those women who have been silenced. A few of the handprints had the names of missing native women and the date they were lost. One of the extremely talented youths painted a male and female Kachina on either side of the door into our quarters. We were probably most proud of them.

In the morning we would load Kohana and Janie into the trailer and head north to South Dakota and the Pine Ridge Reservation where we would ask Makawee's parents for their blessing. We had left Penny and the others with Doc and were taking Kohana and Janie with us so Makawee can show me around the reservation in style. Besides, it was hard enough to leave Penny behind.

Makawee was understandably excited. This was her first visit home since she took the position at the casino. She also

confessed that she had never envisioned going home with a mate. She had told her parents that I was coming but she didn't mention getting married. I'm sure her mother could read between the lines. Since it was such a great distance, we were prepared to spend some time. That's why we built a bedroom in the trailer.

We were sitting on the cabin porch swing with Makawee chattering like an excited squirrel, shifting from admiring our trailer to telling me what she was going to show me in Dakota to telling me what she wanted to share with her parents. It was fun listening to her and sharing her happiness and excitement.

It didn't seem like over a year since Makawee had arrived. So much had happened in our lives and the life of the community around us.

The museum had become quite a hit. Casual visitors traveling through the area on their way somewhere else were stopping and extending their overnight stays to two or three days. It took two days just to visit the village and participate in one of Makawee's hands-on programs. Her scheduled camps, internships, and volunteer digger programs were always full. Floyd Mason reported that revenue at the casino was way up since Makawee came.

Researchers and students kept both the museum and village busy. Makawee turned a corner of the museum into what she called a teaser about the Kawaika Village; enough information and artifacts to make visitors determined to visit it.

After an academic peer-review paper by our four archaeologists about the new discoveries and how they appeared to link the village with Brother Andrés' journal was picked up by non-academic publications the village was swamped by researchers,

curious academics and visitors. We felt it essential to build a new visitor center, turning the original into space for researchers to work.

Terry had come up with the idea of a roof over a large portion of the village. It would protect the site, increase the time available for digging and help control the almost constant stream of visitors. Construction is underway and should be finished by the time we get back from South Dakota.

Chuck was buying more busses and we are having to make visits and tours much more organized. The end result is a whole new employment opportunity for the tribe. We didn't limit employment to the tribe, but most of the county people already had jobs. Those from the county are mostly teenagers trying to make some money when they aren't working on the family ranch. Makawee soon had an entire cadre of Kawaika to do programs.

We had to start charging admission because visitor really were costing a lot of money. It was quite nominal and people from the county and reservation still get in free. Between the small admission fee, our share of tuitions, and gold from the South Table mine, I rarely needed to contribute from my mine.

Kachina complained of being more of an administrator than archaeologist. Terry declined an invitation to be the administrator. Because of his affiliation with the Kawaika Village, especially the DNA of the officers, Fort Lewis had become a research hub. It wasn't going to compete with University of New Mexico or other big state universities, but he was proud of their programs. He told Kachina that it was the first time in his life that he was truly happy and content with his position. Most of the research students and other academic affiliations the village had were with Fort Lewis and UNM. Having a lot of

experience giving away money anonymously I knew that many of the Fort Lewis students were funded by Terry.

Liz and Jason had headed back to Fort Lewis. They had been married by Istaqa and Felipe at a grand gala held at the village. One look at Liz's parents and Makawee said, "I don't mean to sound rude, but as soon as I saw her parents I knew where Liz got it." They were a lovely couple who gave a whole new meaning to 'nerd' or 'geek'. Everyone fell in love with them.

Jason's parents were so proud of their son that they could hardly contain themselves. They thought that Liz was the best thing that ever happened and that Makawee walks on water. I don't know how many pictures they took of Jason standing next to the grave he had started working in after his 'enlightenment' but they took enough pictures with enough of us that Jason was getting quite embarrassed.

Jason finished up his undergrad degree in archaeology. Liz got a position as a PhD candidate at UNM. Terry teased her about not giving UNM his letter of recommendation unless she agreed to consider teaching at Fort Lewis after she finished.

Dead Horse became more than a one-horse crossroad. A gas station with computerized pumps opened up in town. People found it hard to believe that Mark Wilcox was happy to see them come. They didn't understand that it is hard to make a profit selling gasoline. I guess they got the idea when they saw him at the new station filling up his old truck.

The town also got a Dollar General and two tourist stores. Of course, as a result, the Dead Horse Diner and the Mercantile became places to visit.

As Makawee and I sat lost in the beauty of a high desert sunset, the distant mountains where the Kawaika Village is located suddenly turned gold. Alpenglow is a meteorological phenomenon where, under the right conditions, the setting sun will turn mountains on the eastern horizon, opposite the sun, anything from pink to a bright gold. Most of the time we see reds, pinks and yellows. This brilliant gold was a special treat for us which I took as a good omen for our trip and our life together.

After the usual oohs and awes, we sat silently admiring this short lasting natural light show. As it began to fade, Makawee almost whispered "Montaña de Oro" – mountain of gold.

"Si. Montaña de Oro!"

"You have to feel sorry for those old Spaniards," Makawee said softly.

"How so?"

"In their obsessive search for shiny metal they completely missed the real Montaña de Oro and the magnificent riches of the nature around them."

"Isn't that pretty much the story of modern humans?"

"Yes, and that's sad," Makawee said cuddling closer and putting her head on my shoulder. "That's really sad."

EYAHNE S'A-AUK'IINISHI

