



A short story by  
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*"If one does not meet the criteria of a good and faithful citizen, they are then to be considered an enemy of the state. An enemy of the state has no rights and must be eradicated for the welfare of the state"*

The Good American Definitive Act, 2026

**G**ood god, man!" Roger almost screamed as he came crashing through the doors into the autopsy room where I was working. "What have you done?!"

Roger was the hospital administrator and a friend of many years. He was in his late fifties but looked seventy, whatever seventy looks like. Suffice it to say he looked old for his age. He was overweight and on half a dozen medications. His face was flushed and he was having a hard time breathing.

"Have you had a check-up recently?" I asked him calmly looking up from the microscope on the table before me. My name is Albert Ruston. I'm what passes for a doctor at this small border-town hospital.

"Aw, go to hell smartass!" Roger yelled back. "There are Border Patrol and Homeland Security upstairs looking for you and they have a warrant for your arrest for unAmerican activity."

I tried not to show my panic.

Trying to understand how things ever got to this point is mind boggling. Well, it is mind boggling for those who, for so many years, believed in the basic goodness of this country and that the growing violent fascism would soon pass because “the people” wouldn’t tolerate it.

For the rest of us such naivete would be laughable if the situation wasn’t so terrifying. Those of us old enough to remember the McCarthy Era thought Joe McCarthy was bad. He’s a pussy cat next to these guys. A friend of mine refused to teach creationism. We haven’t seen him for three weeks. A US Department of Education (DOE) “certified teacher” is covering his classes. I’m hoping he skipped the country but I’m afraid he didn’t. I’m sure he would have talked to me about it first since we’ve both toyed with the idea.

Standing up for your beliefs is a good way to end up with your name in the box. The box? Around college campuses there are comment boxes. You are encouraged to report any unAmerican behavior. That includes statements or ideas in a faculty lecture. Not giving in to the Christians and disagreeing with a Dononite are the two fastest ways of getting your name in the box and off your office door. Many of my intellectual friends have resigned and disappeared. They were replaced by DOE certified teachers.

DOE teachers. Now there’s an oxymoron if I’ve ever heard one. These so-called certified teachers are political appointments. They generally have no teaching experience and no academic qualifications. They are party members and will gladly indoctrinate anyone in accordance with the current government thinking. Of course, government

thinking is another oxymoron. Heaven has forbidden the use of facts.

The Romanov family, the last Russian emperor, only had one Rasputin. The USA has dozens. Sadly, I have the same thing in the medical world, or what passes for medicine these days. We don't really get to practice medicine. The United States has, for the better part of a decade, been ranked the worst medical provider among "developed" countries. All medical decisions are made by the insurance company. If I say a patient has a broken leg, I must prove it. Even then "the Board"; i.e. insurance company; can deny that the patient has a broken leg and I am not allowed to treat them for a broken leg. If I do treat them, that's fraud. Most people don't have insurance so they must go to an underground practitioner or try home remedies. If you get caught providing free health care, you go to jail.

I'm always looking over my shoulder and afraid my next uninsured patient will be a government plant. They love to catch us treating people for free. Usually the inspector, who is generally an uneducated young person who is contracted by The Board, will try to get a bribe. If you do bribe them, they may pocket the money and turn you in anyway. That, they've been taught, is the way business works. Screw the other person before they screw you.

I helped a friend turn the tables on an inspector once. She was caught giving free care. The inspector let her know he was open to a bribe. She called me. I gave the patient money to pay for their treatment then my friend played the good citizen by turning the inspector in for taking bribes. When the inspector tried to make his case the patient had actually

paid for the services. You usually don't get away with this type of skullduggery. I haven't any idea how we pulled it off, but I'm certainly glad we did.

My cousin is currently in Europe, or so I think. Before the Good American Definitive Act he had been quite vocal in his opposition to the way the Dononite administration treated education. He went off on a speaking tour, which is not uncommon. Just after he left his academic chair was filled with a DOE appointee. I just heard his wife and kids went to visit family in New Zealand. They don't have family in New Zealand, but I won't tell. What do you want to bet none of them comes back? At this point I don't think the government is pursuing people overseas.

Janet came crashing through the doors. She was the physician I helped. "You have to get out of here!" She leaned against the door as though keeping the intruders out. "They are acting like they're looking for a terrorist. What the hell did you do?"

"I don't know!" Then it hit me. "Oh! Shit!"

"Oh shit what?" both asked simultaneously.

"Oh, I forgot that I took care of a little Mexican boy who broke his arm."

"You what?!" Roger demanded

"The boy's village was miles down a dirt trail from the nearest medical help," I explained. "It was a compound fracture so I fixed it."

"You helped a Mexican boy?" Roger looked like he was going to pass out.

“Yes!”

“Which side of the border were you on?”

“Who gives a damn,” I spit out the words. “The boy needed medical help and I gave it to him.” I paused. “You never took the Hippocratic Oath did you?”

“No,” Roger spit back. “I work in a government regulated industry, just like you, and we don’t do those things.”

“Like show compassion? ...”

“Well, they’re really pissed,” Janet interrupted. “And I suggest we figure out a way of getting you out of here.”

“I love you, buddy, but I could lose my job,” Roger said backing toward the door.

“You sniveling little . . .” I put my hand up to stop Janet’s tirade. “Well, Albert could end up in jail.”

“Plausible deniability,” I said. “Roger, go on back upstairs and play the good-American hospital administrator. If you don’t know what’s happening down here you can’t lie.”

Roger looked relieved and quickly got out of the room. I didn’t feel bad that he didn’t want any part in my attempting to escape. He had a family and the consequences for his family if he were found guilty of unAmerican activity would be catastrophic. Janet and I are both single and, by Dononite definition, guilty as charged. We help people for free.

The autopsy room is two floors below ground level. There are two stairways and a bank of elevators. Those are the only ways out.



A short time later the Homeland Security officers, who were given responsibility for enforcing the Good American Definitive Act, entered the autopsy room in their brown shirts, black ties and brown trousers bloused over boots with a super-high gloss. Janet had a cadaver on the table with its body cut from throat to groin and laid open.

“Gentlemen,” she said sternly, “we may not be able to save this person with sanitary procedures but your barging in here could contaminate our samples causing us to miss the reason this person died.”

The macho Homeland officers looked at the open cavity of the body on the table and took a few steps backwards.

“Have you seen Dr. Ruston?” one of them demanded. They weren’t accustomed to being polite and this doctor, this dark-skinned female doctor to make it worse, had just reprimanded them. You don’t reprimand Homeland Security.

“One physician,” she pointed to herself. “One lab assistant,” she pointed to the woman across the table. “One deceased male, age 52,” she pointed at the body on the table. “Do you see anyone else?” Janet made a point of raising her bloody gloved hands indicating the remainder of the empty room.

“Would you like to ask those in the cooler waiting for their turn on the table?”

“Your bad attitude is being noted,” snapped one of the officers.

“The fact that I have a very specific *government* dictated time frame in which to finish this autopsy, and you are going to make me late, is also being noted.” Janet picked up a circular saw. “Now I have to take a look inside this poor man’s noggin so you need to put on protective gear or clear the room.”

The five intruders had been working very hard to not look at what Janet was doing, so the idea of her suddenly taking a circular saw to this person’s head was a bit much for them. Janet actually would have to give these guys some credits because in a group of medical students seeing their first autopsy, they’d normally lose at least one out of five. The Homeland officer, who was obviously in charge, nodded toward the door. The other four wasted no time in complying.



**M**ost occupants of a body bag do not get claustrophobic. I don’t generally have a problem with close places, but between the smell and the chill of the cooler I was rapidly reaching my limit. I don’t



believe in angels but if I did, Janet, looking down at me as she unzipped the body bag, would qualify.

“Hey, Bertie,” she laughed, “how ya doin’?”

I sat up in the back of a hearse. A Mexican-American man was driving. We were well out into the country. He looked in his mirror and waved.

“Hola!”

“Buenos noches,” I replied. “y gracias! Mucho gracias!!”

“No hay problema, no problem,” he said with a thick Spanish accent turning his attention back to the road.

“That is Senior Jesus Hermanez,” said Janet. “I learned that the boy you helped is his nephew.”

“Oh, really?”

“Si,” Jesus said glancing again in the mirror. “he was born in the United States but Homeland deported him with his parents. I figure that it won’t be long before they come for me. I’ve been an American citizen for over thirty years, but they don’t care. I’m not white.”

Jesus pulled the hearse to the side of the road.

“I don’t think I can get this up that road,” he said pointing toward the rutted dirt road that went off to our right.

“This is fine,” Janet replied. “Really! It isn’t that far and you need to be getting back.”

I thanked Jesus again and gave him a big hug.

“In these dark times we must stick together, amigo,” he said climbing back behind the wheel and heading the hearse back toward town.

“So where do we go from here?” I asked Janet.

“Just up the road, maybe five or six miles.” She laughed hysterically at the face I must have made.

We did walk along the rutted road in the dark for the better part of an hour. The night was cool and the sky was amazing. We were far enough away from city lights that the Milky Way filled the sky. The desert around us was full of life and from time to time we could hear an animal scurry along.

“Home sweet hide out,” Janet laughed pointing to an adobe hut barely visible just off the road.

I followed Janet inside. She lighted an old oil lamp and put it on the table which was the only piece of furniture in the hut except for two chairs and a bed.

“This was my family’s last place off the reservation,” she looked around sadly. “We didn’t have much back then either, but we had a good life. We were subsistence farmers. We raised or gathered our food, had a cow for milk, a couple of horses for transportation, and would gather and press agave to sell for things we needed from town. Then the government came and took away our land and sent us penniless to the reservation all in the name of ‘American progress.’”

“That’s horrible.” That’s all I could say. No other words could express the shame and disgust I felt as a white

American. It hit me that the land had been taken from them.  
“Who owns this place now?”

“I do,” replied Janet. “I bought it after I got out of medical school and had a bit of money. I was going to build a house on the land and give it to my parents. They died before I could build the house.”

“I’m so sorry!” More and more I found myself apologizing for the American people or our government. I was really getting tired of being so ashamed of the evil and violence perpetrated against innocent people in the name of American progress, which is just a euphemism for ‘more-money-for-the-super-rich’.

“I have a cousin coming from the reservation in the morning,” Janet continued. “He will take us to a better hiding place where we can decide what we’re going to do.”

“What do you mean ‘we’?”

“I figure that sooner or later they’re going to realize that I’m Native American, either before or after they figure out that I helped you. Either way I wouldn’t last back there much longer than Jesus. I’d be a fool to go back.” She pointed toward the bed. “We’d better get some rest. Hope you don’t mind sharing.”

“Do Indians carry cooties?”

“Damned white man,” Janet poked me in the ribs.



**W**hen I opened my eyes it was morning. Light was flooding through a small glassless window and Janet was sleeping with her head on my chest. It had become quite cool during the night and shared body warmth made sense. The fact that it resulted in having a beautiful young woman cuddled up to me wasn't my fault. Just an added perk.

Janet's head popped up as we both heard approaching horses. She jumped out of bed, into her shoes and was out the door before I could realize what was happening. I could hear her greet an unseen person as I hurried to follow.

"Tonto!" Janet squealed.

"Damn it, cousin, you know I hate when you call me that," came the reply of the large, handsome man on a tall chestnut horse. He wore trousers made of a coarse tan material and an off white, V-neck shirt that almost appeared like linen. He had a brightly colored belt tied around his waist and a bandana holding his long black hair back from his face. To say that he was a majestic presentation of the Native America warrior would not do him justice.

"Then get down off that beast and give your cousin a hug," Janet demanded.

The man was sitting on a simple horse blanket. He swung his right leg up over the great horse's neck and slid to the ground. I stood there wondering how in the world he got up on that massive animal in the first place. I've seen some big horses in my day, but this magnificent animal was barely smaller than a draft horse.

Once the man had given his cousin a great bear hug, Janet turned him toward me.

“This is my colleague and good friend, Dr. Albert Ruston,” said Janet. “You can call him Bertie.”

“Only Janet gets away with calling me that,” I laughed as I extended my hand in friendship.

The man laughed good-heartedly as he shook my hand. “That’s my cousin.”

The man’s name was Mahx, and somehow I knew immediately that we were destined to become fast friends. He and Janet would frequently start speaking a language I didn’t recognize. I assumed that it was their native language. They always apologized. I didn’t mind. These two people, whom so many Americans would consider stupid savages were both tri-lingual. Janet was a fine physician. Mahx had been an engineer before returning to the reservation to care for his aging parents.

“We need to get going,” said Mahx. He looked sadly at the old adobe house. “I get really, really angry any time I’m near here.” He walked over near the house and got down on his knees. Janet followed. I felt awkward because I didn’t know what was going on and didn’t know how to properly respond.

As Janet returned, I said, “I’m sorry. I didn’t know what to do.”

“That’s okay,” she smiled. “You did fine. We were just paying our respects to our ancestors.”

Mahx had two “ponies” with him. A beautiful palomino, who obviously knew Janet, shook its head and pranced a bit as she approached. She jumped effortlessly to where she was holding the horse’s mane with her left hand and her stomach almost to the horse’s back. From that position she gracefully swung her right leg up over the horse’s back and used that leg to pull herself into a sitting position. She made it look effortless. That left me getting to know a chestnut that appeared to be almost as big as the one Mahx was riding. The horse looked at me as I stood by its side and reached up to take hold of its mane.

Mahx and Janet laughed. It was not a mean laugh so it actually put me more at ease.

“Relax,” Mahx said. “We’ve been doing this all our lives. Take the horse to that bolder over there and use it to climb on. She’ll cooperate. Her name is Nizhóní yee. She’s Tsoh’s mother.” He patted his horse who threw its great head into the air.

“Her name means ‘lovely’ and his means ‘great,’” Janet translated.

As we rode, Janet told Mahx about how I helped her when she was almost caught giving free health care and how they were after me for helping the Mexican boy who was actually an American citizen.

Mahx listened in silence. As she told our stories his body was more and more bowed as though bent down by the weight of the sorrow we all felt.

In a voice choked with emotion he said, “I don’t know what we are going to do. Things just get worse. They have taken

the only descent land we have and leave us with nothing. Now they're fracking near the source of our only water. They're using our drinking water to flush their wells. They use the water we need to stay alive to get their precious oil. They are killing us!"



**M**ahx and Janet were obviously at home on the back of a horse. Me? Not so much. The horses didn't need any direction. They moved easily around the creosote and side-stepping prickly pear and other low-lying cactus. We zigged and zagged our way across a large plain toward a line of mountains. We were heading south and west but I didn't know our starting point so I had no idea where we were.

From time to time I would hear Mahx and Janet speaking in their native tongue. Later I would learn that a small portion of their discussion was about me but most was about our options.

After a few hours of riding I noticed a thick line of vegetation against a line of high hills. I could make out some old cottonwood and a heavy stand of Mesquite. There was water there and I was guessing that it was the Rio Grande.

"Are we heading toward Mexico?" I asked Mahx.

"Naw," he smiled, "but almost."

“Almost?”

“I’m sure you’re familiar with the phrase ‘flying under the radar.’” He paused but didn’t wait for an answer. “Well, we’re so close to the radar it can’t see us.”

I obviously gave him a puzzled look because he laughed.

“We’re on reservation land but our canyon is so close to their radar that it can’t see us. It goes right over us toward Mexico. We are in such a remote, difficult to reach area that is across the river from equally inhospitable terrain in Mexico that we get pretty much left alone. Border Patrol watch along roads just outside the area.”

“Why do you stay so hidden? Are you being hunted?”

“Not yet.” Again Mahx laughed. “We are part of a group that practices Sitting Bull’s definition of a warrior. Do you know his famous quote?”

“I’ve read it,” I proudly replied. “It sure isn’t what most white people would expect.”

“Warriors are not what you think of as warriors,” Mahx stopped his horse and faced me as he quoted the great chief. “The warrior is not someone who fights, because no one has the right to take another life. The warrior, for us, is one who sacrifices himself for the good of others. His task is to take care of the elderly, the defenseless, those who cannot provide for themselves, and above all, the children, the future of humanity.”

There was no response I could make. Mahx knew that. He appreciated my silence as the three of us sat in contemplation.



“We were so angry that we were ready to go to war,” Mahx continued, nudging Tsoh to continue our journey. “A wise old man pointed out that that would make the better armed and numerically superior rednecks very happy. It would give them an excuse to kill ‘Injuns’. But if we stayed underground and kept our existence a secret, we could move around with impunity and care for the people.”

“We found that we couldn’t limit ourselves to just the tribe,” Janet added.

“And while some of us physically protect people, we also have attorneys, medical people and others providing necessary services. We are all warriors,” Mahx said with an emphasis on ‘all’.

“I come down to provide a clinic every couple of weeks. We move the location every time.”

“We have white people,” Mahx grinned, “who cross into Mexico at legal crossings and bring back as many drugs as they can get through customs. Old hippies who marched for civil rights in the 1960s love to help. I don’t know what we’d do without them.”

Before they could finish telling me all of the wonderful things the Sitting Bull Warriors (SBW) were doing we arrived at the entrance to a narrow canyon cut by the river. We went from brilliant light to almost darkness. We rode at the water’s edge for at least a quarter of a mile and then turned what I figured was north. The trail was actually a stream which climbed quickly into a more open canyon. The mountains around us were rough and jagged and lined with cliff dwellings.

“Hector Broadwater, a tribal elder, discovered these ruins many years ago,” Janet explained. “The reservation has a large portion of the river and this canyon is almost in the middle. Broadwater didn’t tell anyone because he figured the US government would somehow take even more of our land. When they formed the SBW he led the young warriors to the canyon. It has been our secret home ever since.”

At the north end of the canyon is a spring that runs year around. It is only a trickle at certain times but there has always been some water. The stream was lined with Cottonwood, Mesquite, Sycamore, Willow and Canyon Grape.

Since there was yucca and even juniper within easy walking the SBW made much of their own food like their ancestors who lived in this canyon. The desert through which we had come had lots of Creosote, the native American pharmacy. Their local staples were supplemented by friends bringing supplies by boat. They would load supplies in a rubber boat or canoe on either side of the river upstream. Once they floated into the canyon they were out of sight. They would off-load their cargo at the foot of the hidden canyon and then float out of the canyon. Just a regular raft or canoe trip. No one was the wiser.

When someone did go from the canyon to town, they would follow the river down to a small river camp and then go into town. The river camp was always busy with people putting in or arriving from upstream. There was a small store and a campground.

Depending upon what type of activity they were planning some SBW members would go to a US customs border

crossing upstream several miles, cross legally into Mexico, then use roads and trails in Mexico to make their way back to the canyon. This enabled them to be out of the country when the SBW had a clinic or gave away food and medicine.

Again, their hippie friends and people wanting to resist the Dononites and the illegal Good American Definitive Act were a big help. They knew nothing about the canyon but they would collect money and about anything else the SBW needed to care for people disenfranchised by the US government.

Life in the canyon was peaceful and comfortable. The dwellings were a good one-hundred feet above the stream. The SBW had built a couple of adobe huts by the stream. One was near where the canyon narrowed to go down to the river. A couple of warriors stayed there and kept watch on the entrance to their world. The other was near the work area where they kept supplies brought in by boat.

The dwellings were adobe walls built into areas that had been naturally eroded. Most of the rooms were no more than eight to ten feet squares, and there were very few places where they were more than one room deep.

There were twenty-three families and a handful of bachelors living in the canyon. Everyone had their job. Actually everyone, except the few children, had two jobs. Everyone participated in the hunting and gathering. Then they had their SBW job – distributing food and medicine, working at a clinic and so forth.

At first Janet lived with Mahx's family while I stayed with the bachelors. Fortunately, that ended after a few weeks.

We got put to work right away. I'm no hunter so I got a quick education in edible plants and sent out with small groups to gather seeds and roots. Each week we would go to a remote Mexican village or isolated house on the reservation where Janet and I would have a clinic.

I was soon feeling comfortable on a horse. That was our transportation to the clinics. We'd carry a couple of bags of medicine each.

My first clinic was an eye-opener. We rode into a small ranch near a town on the edge of the reservation. The house was adobe with a living room, kitchen and two small bedrooms. The family had moved the furniture in the bedrooms to give us room to examine patients. The living room was the waiting room and the kitchen turned into our surgery.

All day old pickups would ferry people from the village. We had as many white people there as natives. They were almost all seniors who got a ride from the city. They were all people who had no money and no insurance. A lot were people whom Medicare had denied or the co-pay was going to be more than they had.

Through a carefully protected grapevine they would learn of a clinic. After making their way to the village, SBW members would ferry them one or two at a time to the clinic. I knew things were bad from my experience at the hospital but I didn't realize how really bad they were until this first clinic. Janet and I each saw over thirty people and did two minor surgeries on the kitchen table.

We were running out of antibiotics and were about to panic when a white Ford Transit was seen coming down the dirt road. Our worries changed. We didn't need tourist. The van which we expected to drive by – that we were hoping would not notice us – pulled into the drive and up to the house. A couple in their seventies climbed out. Everyone stayed out of sight. One of the warriors went to meet them.

“Hola!” the woman called.

“May I help you?” the warrior asked.

“I hope so,” said the man. “We’re looking for a woman who calls her cousin ‘Tonto.’”

“There’s no one by that name here,” the warrior said politely.

Janet looked at me, “only Mahx, and now you, know I tease him with that name.”

Stripping off her exam gloves, Janet walked out to the visitors.

“Do you know Tonto?” she asked.

“Yes,” came the reply. “Can we talk?”

“Sure,” said Janet.

“Your cousin only allowed us to drive back here because you are evidently running out of some vital supplies that we happen to have.”

The man opened the side door of the van. It was filled with bags and each bag contained all sorts of medications including pain killers and antibiotics.

“It was a good day at the border,” the woman smiled, “There must have been a couple hundred of us old farts collecting for the cause.”

“We were passing them to your cousin when he learned that you were running low out here,” added the man. “He trusted us to bring them straight here.”

“Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!” is all we could say as we looked through the bags. “You have no idea what this means.”

Looking sadly around them they both responded, “I think we now have a good idea.”

We invited the couple in. We could see the shock on their faces. They looked at the bloody sponges and dressings in a bucket next to the kitchen table and then at our make-shift operating table; aka kitchen table; that a helper was washing.

“We thought we had a good idea,” said the man glancing over his shoulder at the bloody bucket. “This is like a front-line field hospital.”

“We’ve got to do more,” exclaimed the woman. They explained that they had never been so poor they couldn’t get what they needed, but many of their nomad friends have almost nothing. The border crossing they use is relatively busy and the US Border Patrol are accustomed to Americans crossing multiple days for dental work and medicine.

They told us that they have a good sized group that loves to help. They would try to increase the amount they bring out but they must be careful. They did ask if we could help some of their poor nomad friends. After that we would meet them

at a spot well out in the desert. The nomads would camp together. No one would pay any attention to them. We treated their sick and they kept us well supplied with medicine.

We saw patients at the ranch clinic until well after dark. The family wanted to have us stay in their bedroom. We wouldn't take their bedroom but we did stay in their barn. Janet and I lay down in a pile of hay. No hanky-panky. Too tired. Janet snuggled up against me and we were soon asleep. That was one of the best night's sleep I've ever had.

Shortly after that first clinic Janet showed up outside the bachelor's quarters. She led me to a room at the end of the cliff. It had a marvelous view of the valley below and the mountains surrounding us. We stood looking out at the panorama when she said "this could be ours . . . if you would like."

"I can't think of anything more perfect," I said.

Our new home was 8x10. We actually had a little window. We had our own fire pit against the back wall so the smoke could rise into the cavern above. At first our bed was a pile of soft vegetation over which we threw some blankets. I immediately set out to learn how Janet's ancestors made furniture.

That first night as we lay together Janet giggled and whispered, "isn't this a lot better than trying to find a private place?"

No doubt. But with it came an unspoken commitment which neither of us would ever think of breaking.



I was now a tribal warrior. It was quite an emotional day for Janet and me when the news came that I was officially registered as a member of the tribe.

“See,” I said to Mahx, “this means that the government will be as shitty to me as it is to you.” It was supposed to be a joke but none of us laughed. Mahx just replied, “you got it, brother.”

In the social-political climate of the US being an adopted Native American was like converting to Judaism in Nazi Germany. It seemed that the harder we worked to care for the poor and disenfranchised the meaner the Dononites became.

They couldn’t know about us because we made no overt financial or social difference, but you’d swear it was tit for tat. The Havisupai and Hualapai tribes near the Grand Canyon were “relocated”. The courts sided with the tribes but the Dononites said the court had no jurisdiction. No one was surprised when the uranium mining companies moved in as the tribes were moved out. The Blackfeet reservation of northwest Montana had their reservation boundaries redesignated to permit oil exploration in their sacred Two Medicine area.

Back in the city Jesus didn’t last a year. He was deported even though he was a long-time US citizen. The government took his business. He was sent to Mexico penniless. Janet



and I went to see him in Mexico and took some supplies and money to help he and his village.

My friend, Roger, resigned as administrator of the hospital. He was shamed and accused of unAmerican activity because an African American was put on the surgery schedule ahead of a white American. Broken financially and emotionally he committed suicide less than a year later.

We had numerous clashes between SBW warriors and Dononite fanatics. They started entering the reservation and harassing merchants and families. The official tribal police were helpless because a Dononite judge would order them to release anyone they arrested. As a result the SBW began to patrol.

The SBW were able to send the gangs home humiliated enough that the only ones to enter the reservation were very drunk or very stupid. This, of course, isolated the reservation.



**J**anet and I spent over three years in the hidden valley. The Dononites were getting onto us. Well, they were figuring out that there had to be some free clinics because there was a drop in uninsured people showing up at emergency rooms and almost no non-whites. We trained some of the SBWs to be paramedics. These people would

often be the first line of care and would bring cases requiring our care to a safehouse or clinic.

Most small towns had lost their hospitals by this time. It wasn't because there wasn't a need nor was it because they couldn't get staff. It was because small-town hospitals don't make sufficient profit. In modern medicine the Hippocratic Oath has been replaced by the tenants of medical capitalism. By the time you started having enormous loans for your medical care, a tremendous big mortgage, school loans because public schools were pretty well gone, and taxes out the wazoo, you were pretty much like man in the song "Sixteen Tons".

"Sixteen Tons" was a country song written by Merle Travis in the early twentieth century about the life of a coal miner in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky.

*"You load sixteen tons, what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt. Saint Peter don't you call me 'cause I can't go. I owe my soul to the company store."*

The song was true then and it's true now. The only difference is that it is pretty well true of everyone in the United States except the extremely wealthy. I had a medical colleague whose wife suffered from diabetes. The insulin cost so much that he worked two jobs and made monthly payments. I wonder if the powers that be would have allowed him to make payments if he hadn't been a member of the medical community.

A closet liberal bought a small-town hospital near us shortly after it closed. He opened it up as retirement condos. He made it appear as though he was making money. In reality

the place was partially condos for those who couldn't afford housing, long-term care and free hospital. He moved money around in circles to give the impression of being paid for the rooms. Janet and I and a couple of our paramedics provided the medical care.

We came about as close to getting caught there as anywhere.

A Dononite couple moved to town. They worked for one of the big insurance companies and started trying to sell people insurance. No one in town had enough money for insurance. When they started trying to get a 'condo' in the old hospital they became suspicious. They showed up one day when we were doing surgeries on the third floor and came waltzing in on an operation. Talk about surprise. Of course they immediately took off and we knew that the first thing they would do would be to turn us in.

Mahx had the horses saddled and waiting by a back door as soon as we finished with the surgery. The patient was loaded into a van and taken to a safe house to recover. The police were pulling up as we lit out across the desert. The man who owned the hospital disappeared and showed up in the valley a few weeks later on his way to Mexico. The last any of us heard the feds had turned everyone out of the hospital even though they weren't squatting and were there perfectly legally. That type of compassion and social consciousness just wasn't allowed in the United States anymore.

Over the three years we had all sorts of people stay in the valley who were on the run. They weren't running because they broke a law. They were running because they had attempted to be compassionate or stand up for someone's rights.

We had an attorney who had fought for the water rights of a Native American tribe. He was a white man who represented a tribe in court who were trying to stop an oil company from drilling in a location that was taking the tribes water and putting a pipe through tribal land, polluting the only remaining water source.

A Dononite judge told him that he had no right “defending” the Indians. When he pointed out that the tribe was not a defendant but actually the complainant, the judge threw him out of court. He was beaten by some Dononite goons outside the courthouse and almost killed in a drive by shooting. He fled to the reservation and they sent him to us.

Then there was the man who was sentenced to eight years in prison for giving food and water to an asylum seeker. The asylum seeker had presented himself to a border crossing and was told to go away. He was starving and thirsty. The American gave the asylum seeker food and water before he went back across the border. The man was arrested because, according to the Border Patrol, the asylum seeker was on US soil illegally therefore the compassionate act was illegal. He escaped before going to prison and the SBW brought him to us.

How can people live in peace when they are daily confronted by the three symbols of hatred: a Confederate battle flag, a Swastika and the American flag. It makes me think of a quote which has erroneously been credited to Sinclair Lewis, but it’s still a good quote.

*“When fascism comes to America it will be carrying a flag and holding a cross.”*

You can almost always pick out where the bigots and haters live. They'll have the American and Confederate flags flying out front. How can there be a happy ending when such evil proliferates?

We have no idea how they found the hidden valley. The most likely way is that someone infiltrated one of the groups with which we interact and followed us. They might also have just stumbled across the valley or spotted it from a plane or drone. It doesn't really matter. Today they showed up and we have a standoff. Because of the narrowness of the entrance we have been able to keep them at bay, but it's just a matter of time before they use helicopters or planes.

"This is Indian land," Mahx called out to the invaders. "We are governed by Indian law. We have done nothing wrong either by Indian or White Man law. Our healers do not receive money from your Medicare or Medicaid, so there is nothing illegal about providing their skills for free. We have provided food and supplies to anyone in need. There is no evil in that.

Is it now unAmerican to be a compassionate human being? Is it now unAmerican to share with those less fortunate? Is it now unAmerican to help your brother carry a heavy burden? These cliff dwellings were the homes of our ancestors and they are still on Indian land which you ceded to us by treaty. Will you break yet another treaty? We are not leaving. You will have to kill us to remove us."

"That can be arranged," called back the Homeland Security Officer.

**El Paso, TX.** The US Border Patrol and Homeland Security announced the successful conclusion of a joint project to locate and apprehend a Native American terrorist cell that called themselves the Sitting Bull Warriors. The government cornered the terrorists in a box canyon near the Mexican Border. There were no survivors. No Border Patrol or Homeland Security personnel were injured in the raid.