

TO DISMISS WITHOUT PREJUDICE

A Novel

By Steve LaFontaine

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Chapter I

A striking Native American girl of eighteen years strolled down a series of covered walkways leading to the front entrance of Coulee Dam High School. A colorful summer dress accented her full figure and revealed her shapely legs and shoulders. Her black hair gently fell to her shoulders. Her brown eyes and facial skin were beautified by make-up. Full of pride, her face shone with a provocative and confident smile.

It was an early Friday morning in 1962. The late spring day was already warm. The sun shined brightly, quickly warming the green and mountainous landscape of this part of the Great Pacific Northwest, and it heated the Grand Coulee Dam at Coulee Dam, Washington.

Carrying her leather purse over her shoulder, Suzanne Redwood turned a corner, and she headed towards the school gymnasium, a two hundred feet down a concrete walkway. Sighting other classmates - male and female, Suzanne paraded past them as smartly as possible, oblivious to their prying stares and glances.

As Suzanne neared the gym entrance, her eyes radiated with excitement and anticipation. Smiling broadly, her eyes searched for her best friend, Trixie Spearman, who was also a Native American and a large but pretty girl.

Though not as lovely as Suzanne, Trixie was pleasing to the eye with long black hair and brown eyes. She had high cheek bones, a curvy body and long legs. She was wearing a blue summer dress, which exposed lots of her soft skin.

Suzanne sighted Trixie standing alone, leaning against a brick wall of an old classroom a few feet from the gym. Quickening her pace, she moved towards where Trixie was standing. Trixie was waiting with other high school seniors for graduation practice to

begin, as senior graduation was a few days away.

Then a short, gray-haired man - Mr. Highsmith, the testy high school principal - appeared at the weathered gym doors. Dressed in an old brown suit, he loudly announced that graduation practice would start thirty minutes late. Cries and moans of protest and derision greeted the pompous proclamation of the little-liked principal, who immediately stomp back into the gym.

Trixie Spearman has been Suzanne Redwood's best friend since childhood. They both were born and raised locally on the Colville Indian Reservation, which bordered the Columbia River in the in North Central Washington State. Both were members of the Colville Confederated Tribes. Both their Native American parents worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the local Indian agency located near Nespelem, Washington. There was nothing really special about their parents, except they were hard working people, who hoped their offspring would have better lives than their own.

There also was nothing really special about the town of Coulee Dam, Washington, except for the gigantic Grand Coulee Dam built adjacent to the town in turbulent waters of the Columbia River. Located far from any urban area, Coulee Dam was nestled between the mountains of the Colville Indian Reservation and the farm lands of the Columbia Basin. It was a small town of four thousand residents. The town people considered themselves westerners and rugged individualists, but they also had their idiosyncrasies and dark sides. Nearby were the small towns of Grand Coulee, Elmer City, and Electric City. The Town of Nespelem was located 16 miles North of Coulee Dam.

Coulee Dam and the surrounding towns had their Nob Hill, its middle class housing and its concomitant economy housing projects, left over from the building of the Dam. Its residents ran the spectrum of the social-economic classes of America. There were loggers, farmers, workingmen, federal bureaucrats, day laborers, small shopkeepers and a few doctors, preachers, school teachers, and lawyers. It had its town drunks, and those who caused endless scandals in the community and its hypocritical pillars of the community, who were forever condemning the lives and actions of those who were indiscreet about their lives.

Sighting Suzanne Redwood striding towards her, Trixie pondered aloud what Suzanne was elated about this bright morning. She speculated that Suzanne must be excited about some boyfriend. Lately, that's all Suzanne talked about. Like most eighteen-year old young women, Suzanne had excessive expectations about romance and the possibility of marriage.

Trixie knew that it couldn't be any of local boys attending Coulee Dam High School. Suzanne considered them too immature

and unrefined. It had to be one of Suzanne's college boyfriends, of which she had several. As Suzanne approached, Trixie returned an approving smile. Delighted with Trixie's response, Suzanne came to an abrupt stop before Trixie.

"Suzanne. What are you so pleased about this morning?" Trixie exclaimed. "Is it one of your college boyfriends?"

Smiling, Suzanne stared deeply into Trixie's eyes and answered ecstatically, "I'm going out with Clayton Shaw tonight."

"Clayton Shaw!"

"He's a sophomore attending the University of Oregon, and he belongs to an exclusive college fraternity," Suzanne proclaimed.

"I know that he's a college sophomore," Trixie said defensively.

"Well! I only was saying...."

"And Clayton only graduated from Coulee Dam two years ago," Trixie announced. "I believe the year was 1960 if I remember correctly." Suzanne could rarely be objective about handsome college boys, especially if they were Caucasian.

"I didn't mean to suggest that you don't know who is Clayton Shaw," Suzanne conceded.

"I didn't take it that way."

"Everyone in the town knows who is Clayton Shaw," Suzanne bloated.

"Yeah. The highly touted small-town high school quarterback who couldn't make it in big-time college football," Trixie daunted, trying to force Suzanne back to reality.

"Clayton was never really serious about college football."

"That's what his father says," Trixie responded.

"He always wanted to concentrate on his studies. Clayton plans to become a lawyer," Suzanne said, smiling unabashedly.

"You never mentioned Clayton Shaw before," Trixie said, "He is really a gorgeous guy." Suzanne and Trixie seldom kept any secrets from each other. Apparently Suzanne was afraid of mentioning him to Trixie out of fear of looking foolish if her relationship with Clayton did not work out.

"Clayton is handsome."

"How did you ever meet Clayton?" Trixie started a series of questions.

"Clayton came home from college during spring break in March. I met him when I was doing some shopping in town," Suzanne explained.

"Well. What else happened?"

"He pulled up in his white convertible and asked me to take a ride with him. I agreed," Suzanne explained, "We went driving up in the mountains. There was still snow covering the terrain and the forest."

"Did Clayton and you have a good time?" Trixie inquired, looking into Suzanne's eyes for any regret or shame.

"Of course, we had a wonderful time together."

"Suzanne. Why didn't you ever tell me about your outing with Clayton?" Trixie asked.

"I don't know why."

"I thought I was your best friend. "

"I do have my secrets. A woman needs to have secrets," Suzanne pleaded. She was becoming irritated at Trixie's questioning.

"Maybe something happened up in the mountains that you're not telling me." Trixie said smugly. She wanted to continue teasing Suzanne about the magnificent Clayton Shaw.

"No. Clayton Shaw is too much of a gentlemen to take advantage of me," Suzanne protested mildly.

"All men are gentlemen for starters."

"But Clayton is so sweet and considerate. And he's so mature." Suzanne was taken aback at Trixie's sordid suggestion, and she didn't appreciate Trixie's attempt at levity.

"Well. Where are you and Clayton going tonight?" Trixie asked. She desire to learn everything about Suzanne's coming date, as she was excited as Suzanne.

"Clayton called me from college and invited me to a party. He'll be home for the Memorial Day weekend," Suzanne replied.

"Where's the party?"

"He's throwing a party at his parents' house," Suzanne answered, "His parents won't be home this weekend."

"Where are his parents going for the weekend?"

"Mr. & Mrs. Shaw are planning a weekend in Seattle." Suzanne was beginning to resent Trixie's game of twenty questions, but she gave in to her thirsty need to brag about manly Clayton Shaw.

"Are you the only date Clayton is taking to the party?" Trixie grinned at Suzanne. She knew that her pointed question would bound to make Suzanne annoyed.

"Of course! I'm his only date for tonight," Suzanne protested.

"I only wanted to ask."

"Trixie! Are you jealous of me?"

"You know that I'm your best friend. I'm just a little concern about your welfare," Trixie said adamantly.

"Please don't worry about me."

"But you hardly know anything about Clayton Shaw."

"You don't know what you're talking about," Suzanne said defensively.

"Clayton has the reputation of being a womanizer in college,"

Trixie retorted.

"Trixie! How do you know?"

"His ex-girlfriend, Betty Harmon, told me all about him," Trixie stated loudly. "Betty wants nothing to do with him."

"Clayton has already told me about his tragic relationship with Betty Harmon," Suzanne battled.

"Tragic relationship?"

"Trixie! Betty just didn't want to change. She couldn't accept Clayton's high social status."

"Gee, I really feel sorry for Clayton," Trixie said sarcastically.

"Nothing is going to happen tonight," Suzanne insisted.

"Well, I'm concerned for you."

"Clayton comes from a fashionable family," Suzanne added, "His father is doctor, and his mother is involved in all kinds of social and church activities."

"It makes little difference," Trixie frowned.

"But Clayton was raised to have good taste and class."

"Suzanne. You're infatuated with Clayton. You're blinded by your infatuation for him."

"I'll never be blindly in love with any man until he is able to prove his love for me," Suzanne announced dispassionately.

"You certainly sound in love to me," Trixie replied.

Ignoring Trixie's statement, Suzanne sighed and said, "Anyway, I deserve to have a little fun before I graduate from high school next Friday."

"I'm not saying that you shouldn't go to Clayton's party." Trixie immediately knew that it would be futile to persuade Suzanne not to attend the party.

"And I think attending a party with a classy young man is a good way to have fun. It will be a good graduation gift," Suzanne added.

"Then you don't plan to attend the senior class party on Saturday afternoon?"

"I simply don't have anything in common with my classmates," Suzanne said unconvincingly.

"Suzanne. That's a bold statement."

"They can be so silly and immature, I certainly wouldn't enjoy myself at their party," Suzanne imparted.

"You always did like older males," Trixie asserted..

"Trixie. It's the nature of things."

"In what way?"

"Girls always prefer older men."

"And you especially like old men who attend college and belong to college fraternities."

"I do like older men," Suzanne responded, "But not more than four years older."

"And you do like Caucasian boys too."

"I'm not a racist," Suzanne announced.

"Suzanne. Have you ever dated a Native American?"

"I like men who are college bound." Suzanne knew her unexpected comment would bound to irritate Trixie, who always vigorously defend Native Americans and their culture.

"Well. The Native American boys aren't that bad," Trixie defended. "Some of them are pretty cute."

"I'm not saying that Native American boys aren't good-looking." Suzanne looked fiercely at her relentless tormentor.

"Most of them come from upright and fine families," Trixie argued, knowing Suzanne had already made up her mind.

"But I still like men with a future," Suzanne mocked innocently.

Their internecine dialogue was the most that Suzanne and Trixie ever argued before. Throughout their brief lives, they had always been supportive and protective of each other. But they both realized that soon they would be living separate lives with different ambitions and expectations. Graduating from high school, a passage of rite, and the new life that graduation meant had put additional strain on their friendship. Hoping for the best, they both recognized that their youthful friendship would soon grow old. New friends would replace old friends. Friendship was always temporal, especially among youthful friends.

Trixie continued to debate, "And I don't think you have ever attended a Native American party."

"You know I don't attend parties where there is drinking of alcohol," Suzanne reminded, "My parents forbid the drinking any kind of alcohol."

"Oh, I forgot about your prohibitionist parents," Trixie admitted, "But you don't have to drink alcohol at their parties."

"I just didn't want to attend their parties."

"Suzanne. You just don't want to party with Native Americans."

"Trixie! I didn't say that."

"Then what did you mean?" Trixie asked, thinking about how Suzanne had changed over the years. As soon as Suzanne discovered her beauty and intelligence, she started to differentiated herself from her other Native American classmates. She wasn't the same girl that Trixie had known and loved in grade school. As they went through school, Suzanne grew ambitious and obsessed with improving her position in school and the community. She only hoped that Suzanne would eventually realize how vulnerable she

was as a Native American woman.

"I just want to meet and marry someone who has money and social class," Suzanne announced.

"Suzanne. Who is talking about marriage?"

"I am."

"Well, I don't care about money or social status," Trixie declared.

"Well, I do. I don't want to be poor."

"And I definitely plan to marry a Native American," Trixie announced.

"I merely want to avoid some foreseeable problems," Suzanne said seriously.

"What kind of problems do you mean?"

"For one thing, Native American men drink too much."

"Your father doesn't drink alcohol," Trixie pointed out. "There are a lot of other Native American men like your father."

"I haven't met any Native American men like my dad," Suzanne rebutted.

"Suzanne. You just haven't looked."

"That's not a fair remark!"

"I realize that you're still a young woman," Trixie conceded.

"And for two, I don't want to spend the rest of my life on an Indian reservation," Suzanne asserted.

"Well. I like living on the Colville Indian reservation," Trixie said.

"Trixie. Don't get the wrong idea about me."

"You have to learn to accept things as they are."

Losing her patience, Suzanne said bluntly, "Crying out loud. I'm not a snob or social climber."

"Sometimes I wonder."

"I'm not secure as you think," Suzanne said somberly, "I do have my fears and anxieties."

"Suzanne. You have beauty and brains," Trixie analyzed aloud, "You'll bound to be successful."

"Thank you."

"I really don't want to argue with you."

"Trixie. You and I have been such intimate friends."

"I'm going to miss you a lot after we graduate," Trixie admitted. She realized reluctantly their friendship would never be the same after graduation.

Suzanne wanted to change the subject, and she said, "What have you decided to do after graduation?"

"I'm still trying to make up my mind," Trixie replied.

"Lately, you have been very quiet about your plans."

"For sure, I don't plan to attend college like you," Trixie answered, "I'm not college material."

"Trixie. You must have some career plans."

"Well. I plan to attend a vocational school in Portland, Oregon."

"What do you plan to study?" Suzanne asked.

"It's between studying to be a secretary or a practical nurse,"

Trixie answered, "I favor becoming a secretary."

"Trixie. You're much more talented than that. You should set higher goals for yourself."

"Like marrying a rich man," Trixie smiled. Suzanne and her both laughed in unison at the response.

"I'm the first person to admit that I can be Draconian," Suzanne admitted.

"Which college do you plan to attend?" Trixie asked.

"I've narrowed it down to the University of Oregon or the University of Washington," Suzanne divulged proudly.

"It must be a tough decision for you," Trixie stated. She had always admired Suzanne for being a talented student, and she was proud that Suzanne planned to attend college. She was convinced that Suzanne would do well at college.

"I need to make a decision by early June," Suzanne said,

"Suzanne. It seems an easy decision to me."

"Why is that?"

"Since you're in love with Clayton Shaw, you must be planning to attend the University of Oregon,"

"I'm not in love with Clayton," Suzanne said emphatically.

"Sure!"

"But I must admit it would be convenient to attend the University of Oregon," Suzanne smiled, "If you know what I mean."

"That wasn't too hard of a decision," Trixie giggled.

"At least, I'll be close to Clayton."

Looking across the concrete walkway, Trixie saw three Native American young men leaning against a five-foot high concrete wall. They were laughing and joking about some unknown subject.

One of the Native American boys was Michael Dodd who was muscular and tall. Leading the joke-telling, he had a loud, annoying laugh that could easily be heard a hundred feet away.

The other two Native American boys were Michael's school high buddies. With the reputation of being a hood, Allen Tupper was tall and strong, and he was an avid weightlifter. From a lumberjack family, he was proud of his hard working blue collar family. He was wearing faded blue jeans and a threadbare white shirt with the top buttons left unfastened. His provocative dress was meant to intimidate his classmates and teachers, whom he believed were committed to living uneventful and mundane lives.

Wearing black-framed glasses, Ralph Cragmont was an unlikely



long-distance runner, who excelled at the two-mile run. His stocky build made him an underrated athletic. He had a habit of wearing blue slacks and matching blue shirts, which made him appear drab and unstylish. Consequently, he was an ordinary looking Native American boy of eighteen years.

Still looking at the threesome, Trixie speculated, "Gee, I wonder what Michael, Allen, and Ralph are laughing about."

"Who?" Suzanne responded, trying to ignore Trixie's comment.

Trixie pointed to where the three young men were standing. They were derisively laughing at a sex joke that Michael Dodd had just told. Their bodies jerked and shook as they hung their heads to regain their composure.

Ruffled, Suzanne glared at the laughing trio, not knowing whether she was the butt of their joking. She was always little paranoid about what the other Native American students thought of her. She tried her best to simply ignore Michael and his comrades, and she kept her pretty head turned towards Trixie. But the indecipherable voices and accompanying laughter and snickering were maddening to Suzanne. Losing her patience, she finally blurted out, "Oh, when is graduation practice going to begin?"

"It should start in about fifteen minutes," Trixie replied.

"Let's get away from Michael Dodd and his buddies," Suzanne ordered.

"If you want."

"I don't like being near Michael Dodd."

"Michael isn't that bad."

"He's always making fun of someone," Suzanne exclaimed, "And I'll not be the object of his satirical contempt this morning."

Trixie and Suzanne ambled down the walkway out of hearing of their putative detractors.

Stopping at a crossway, Trixie said innocently, "I can't see why you dislike Michael Dodd so much."

"I don't dislike Michael Dodd. I simply don't care for him," Suzanne said smugly.

"Michael...."

"I've heard what he has been saying about me," Suzanne interrupted.

"Michael doesn't mean any harm."

"I don't like people talking about me behind my back, especially when I'm the object of his vulgar jokes."

"He doesn't tell vulgar jokes about you," Trixie responded.

"Michael Dodd is always telling lewd jokes about women," Suzanne asserted.

"You must admit that he's entertaining."

"Entertaining but obscene," Suzanne countered, smiling seductively, "His vulgarity is a sign of ill-breeding."

"His father, Mr. Dodd, is a very fine man."

"Trixie! Quit the pretenses," Suzanne fired back.

"Did I say something wrong?"

"Mr. Dodd can't possibly be the father of Michael Dodd."

"Suzanne! That's just idle gossip."

"Mr. Dodd was fighting for this country's survival in Europe at the time Michael was conceived, and he was still in Europe fighting World War Two when Michael was born," Suzanne stated bluntly.

"Mr. Dodd has always maintained that he came home on leave during the 1943," Trixie maintained.

"He could be lying."

"Why would Mr. Dodd lie?"

"Trixie. Don't be so naive!"

"But I trust Mr. Dodd."

"Mr. Dodd is a White man with blond hair and blue eyes," Suzanne said, "It's obvious that Michael looks like a Native American."

"But Michael's mother was a Native American. God rest her soul," Trixie pointed out.

"I know that. But Mrs. Dodd was a mixed-blood Native American."

"So she was a mixed-blood Native American!" Trixie exclaimed.

"No child of Mrs. Dodd and Mr. Dodd could possibly look like Michael," Suzanne maintained.

"It does happen."

"Trixie. It's a matter of genetics."

"Suzanne! Please don't talk down to me."

"My mother told me that Mr. Dodd never came home in 1943," Suzanne announced. With that statement she knew that Trixie was checkmated.

"Michael Dodd is still a handsome and intelligent young man," Trixie offered, "and he has a good personality."

"Why don't you marry him if you fascinated so much with him?" Suzanne was growing impatient with Trixie's remarks. Trixie had never before so boldly challenged her, who had always been quite subservient to Suzanne.

"Michael is too sophisticated for me. He's going places," Trixie admitted reluctantly.

"Yeah. Every weekend to the A & B Tavern."

"Michael is too young to go into taverns."

"I've heard about his wild parties and drinking," Suzanne offered, "If you want to live that kind of life, it's up to you."

"I don't feel comfortable around Michael," Trixie conceded.

"You overrate Michael Dodd."

"Maybe I do. "

"He has no royal Native American blood," Suzanne stated.

"Yes. I know about your royal Native American blood." Trixie immediately realized her remark was unintentionally cutting.

Cringing, Suzanne made a face of disapproval at Trixie, and she said,

"My great grandfather, Naboth, was one of our great war chief."

"We're all descendants of great chiefs," Trixie remarked.

"Trixie. It's not the same as being a direct descendent of Naboth."

"Sometimes you can be impossible."

"But like some people, I don't need hide my ancestors," Suzanne battled.

"Suzanne. I'm not trying to belittle you."

"But there is one sure thing. I'd never marry Michael Dodd,"

Suzanne promised without hesitation.

"But Michael has a lot to offer a girl," Trixie teased.

Suzanne made a face at Trixie, and she said, "Michael would never fit in with my family."

"My mom and dad sure like him," Trixie said.

"Trixie. It's not a matter of being popular."

"I don't pretend to belong to a socially prominent family," Trixie said to Suzanne.

"Quit making me out to be a snob and social climber," Suzanne protested.

"I was only talking about myself," Trixie responded.

"Trixie. I wish you wouldn't be so humble."

"I thought humility was a virtue," Trixie exclaimed, still feeling socially deficient to the pretentious Suzanne Redwood.

"Then you should marry Michael Dodd," Suzanne commented.

"I've never thought Michael was humble."

"You can teach him humility."

"Suzanne. I already told you that I don't feel comfortable around Michael."

"I don't see why."

"He has a lot more in common with you than with me," Trixie replied. She didn't intend to be so blunt with Suzanne, who could be so impossible at times.

"I didn't deserve that." Suzanne sighed and shook her head in disbelief and reproof.

"I meant no slight to you, but I'm speaking the truth." Trixie attempted to apologize.

"Trixie. I can't see how Michael and I have anything in common."

"Well. You both are Native Americans," Trixie stated, "And you both are going to college."

"The similarities are only skin deep," Suzanne analyzed aloud.

"You both are pretty smart."

"And I don't envision Michael Dodd making it through college," Suzanne predicted.

"I think Michael is smart enough," Trixie remarked. "He has a B-plus average in school." Trixie had always admired Michael. He had always been a charismatic leader among their common friends, and he showed remarkable ability at mathematics. She did concede that Michael had a habit of being lazy about studying, but he managed always to do well on his tests.

"Let's quit talking about infamous Michael Dodd," Suzanne finally said out frustration, thinking that Michael appeared to have gained a staunch supporter in Trixie Spearman.

"Okay, Suzanne."

"How much time until graduation practice?"

"About five minutes."

"Well, Trixie. Who do you plan to marry?"

"There are a lot of good-looking Native American boys out there," Trixie answered, "One of them is bound to like me." Thus far, in her short life, she had few boyfriends. Most of them were uncomfortable with her height. But lately she had noticed a change in their attitudes towards her, which greatly please her.

"I'm sure you will be very popular with the boys," Suzanne said to Trixie, whose meekness was beginning to bother Suzanne.

"I wish I had your good looks and intelligence."

"There is more to love than just being attractive and brainy, " Suzanne remarked.

"Well. I do worry about getting married."

"I wouldn't worry about getting marriage," Suzanne said, "It will find you."

"Thanks," Trixie said gratefully.

Still joking and laughing, Michael Dodd glanced up and saw Suzanne Redwood and Trixie Tupper plodding down the walkway away from him and his steadfast companions. Their absence would make it easier for him to mock Suzanne in front of his appreciative friends. A little fearful of Suzanne, he didn't want her to hear his detracting comments. It was not the first time that Suzanne was object of his scorn. Her pretentious behavior made herself an easy and unavoidable target.

"Miss America is gone," Michael lampooned. Allen Tupper and Ralph Cragmont joined in Michael's boisterous laughter.

"Miss High Society herself," Allen jeered.

"Look at that pretentious puss," Michael said gleefully.

"Suzanne must have thought we were talking about her," Allen spoke aloud.

"She wants nothing to do with us," Michael added.

Ralph Cragmont thought about the pretty Suzanne Redwood, a woman whom he could never approach. He pondered whether she was socially unfit as Michael and Allen made her out to be. He asked innocently, "Michael. Have you ever asked her out on a date?"

His question was disquieting to Michael, who distrusted anyone who attempted to defend or attribute virtue to Suzanne. He said sharply, "She's strictly reserved for college boys."

"Well, Michael. You're going to college," Ralph pointed out.

"Caucasian college boys." Although Michael found Suzanne attractive, he attempted to conceal any expression of disappointment or passion for Suzanne.

"She's too good for me," Allen conceded disdainfully, "I'm just a Native American from the Coville Indian Reservation."

"Suzanne can't be all bad," Ralph said foolishly.

Seeing a chance to tease the earnest Ralph, Michael quickly seized upon his indiscretion. Smirking, he charged, "Ralphie Boy must be madly in love with Saucy Susie."

Not expecting the verbal assault, Ralph's jaws dropped, and his body jerked a couple of times. Knowing that he made an irretrievably mistake, he replied hastily, "I'm not in love with Suzanne Redwood."

"Michael has keen eye for the lovesick." Allen jumped in.

"But I do find her to be fascinating," Ralph confessed. That admission immediately compounded his difficulties.

"Ah - ha. We have an amorous fifth columnist within our midst," Michael thundered.

"Christ! What's so good about Suzanne," Allen pounced.

"Yeah. What's so fascinating about her?" Michael asked eagerly. He was beginning to feel some unexpected jealousy.

Quickly realizing that he was in a no-win situation, Ralph attempted to minimize his losses by saying, "Gosh. I was just joking with you."

"No. I can tell from the tone of your voice, Ralph, that you're serious," Michael analyzed, not willing to free his impotent prey.

Visibly squirming, Ralph was paralyzed with tormenting indecision. With nowhere to hide, he decided to take the offense.

"Well. You have admit that Suzanne is a quite stunning young woman," Ralph observed tactfully.

"So our captivated house fly has been enticed to the alluring fly paper," Michael articulated, "His careless feet are riveted to the

callous adhesive."

"The poet has spoken," Alien announced loudly. His teasing eyes were focused on Ralph's troubled face.

"She is enchanting but treacherous," Michael continued.

"Beguiling but self-serving. For the unsuspecting, she's certain folly without any hope for reprieve."

Fully cowed, Ralph realized that he couldn't hope to match the gifted oratory of Michael Dodd, who was a member of the high school debate team. He didn't want to continue the futile dialogue with Michael, who was enjoying his mastery of Ralph.

Ready for further ambush, Michael and Allen waited for Ralph's response. Growing impatient, Allen growled, "Well. What do you have to say for yourself? We're waiting."

"Ralph. How did Suzanne Redwood ever seduce you?" Michael cross-examined.

"She never seduced me," Ralph answered.

"I thought we were buddies. And you know how much I dislike Suzanne," Michael said.

"She never got to me," Ralph replied. "I merely think that she's attractive Native American gal."

"Did she flash her beautiful brown eyes at you?" Michael questioned, "She does that to all the boys. "

"She's a very seductive girl," Ralph confessed, hoping his ordeal was over.

"So you admit your gullibility?" Michael prodded.

"Okay. I'll confess to being foolhardy about Suzanne," Ralph conceded. He hoped that his total submission would end his ordeal.

"Just don't let it happen again," Michael smiled broadly.

"Michael. I'll try not to fall under the bewitching spell of Suzanne," Ralph acknowledged grudgingly.

"I like a man who can admit his errors," Michael responded.

Wanting to change the subject, Allen Tupper said, "Michael. I understand that you plan to attend the University of Washington in October."

"Yeah. My dad wants me to attend college," Michael answered, "I got a college scholarship from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the the Colville Tribe."

"Do you really want to go to college?" Allen asked. He sensed a reluctance in Michael's voice and sought a better answer.

"What's the use of going to college if your best friends won't be there," Michael pointed out.

"Don't worry about us," Allen said.

"I do want to have some fun too," Michael replied.

"You have a golden opportunity to better yourself. Don't pass it up," Allen pointed out.

"What do you plan to study?" Ralph asked.

Michael looked at Ralph, who had regained his composure, and he said, "My dad wants me to become an engineer, but I want to study communications."

Still a little cowed, Ralph said guardedly, "Michael. You should become a lawyer."

"Why a lawyer?" Michael asked.

"You got the gift of gab," Ralph explained.

"Yeah. You could always talk the socks off of anyone," Allen agreed.

"I can see you now arguing a case before a stern-looking judge," Ralph said in agreement.

"Well. I got plenty of time to decide," Michael said.

"Don't wait too long," Ralph urged.

"I first need to get a bachelor degree before I can go to law school," Michael replied.

"Getting a college degree will be a clinch for you," Ralph asserted. He appreciated the fact that Michael was a good student, who still received good grades in spite of being lazy about studying.

"Well. I don't plan to lose any sleep over my career plans," Michael said. He was a little embarrassed about the things being said about him. He never wanted to stand out from the crowd, but he constantly ended up the center of attraction.

Perceiving Michael's embarrassment, Ralph decided to change the topic of conversation. He asked, "Allen. What do you plan to do after graduation?"

"Oh. I plan to go to work as a logger, like my father and brothers," Allen answered, looking at Ralph.

"It's pretty hard and dangerous work," Michael responded.

"There's nothing like hard work to keep you in shape," Allen said cheerfully.

"Well. I think I'll join the Air Force," Ralph volunteered.

"The Air Force!" Michael cried out.

Ralph stared at Michael, pondering whether he planned to tease him again. He said, "I want to get my military service over first."

"I'll probably be soon joining you," Michael opined.

"Why is that?" Ralph asked.

"Oh. I'll probably flunk out of college," Michael asserted.

"Well. I plan to get married and have some kids," Allen said, "I plan to avoid the military draft."

"That's one way to dodge the draft," Ralph offered.

"I don't like what's happening in Germany," Allen said, "Berlin Wall crisis is frightening."

"I wouldn't worry about Berlin," Michael said seriously.

"The Berlin Wall is always on the news," Allen defended.

"Southeast Asia is where the real fighting is going take place," Michael predicted.

"Southeast Asia!" Allen cried out.

"We already have military advisors in Vietnam," Michael explained. Michael was a news buff. He dutifully watched the nightly news, and he read the newspapers and news magazines. He didn't like commentators' predictions for Southeast Asia and Vietnam.

"I never heard of Vietnam," Ralph said reluctantly, hating to admit his ignorance of world events.

"Well. You shortly could be fighting the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese there," Michael predicted.

"I'm not afraid to fight for my country," Ralph said proudly.

"You're not getting me to fight for this country," Allen said defiantly, "Native Americans have suffered enough for this country." Allen was always a dissent, and his parents strongly believed in the rights of Native Americans.

"I have nothing against fighting for this nation," Ralph said, "I'm a loyal American."

"Each to his own beliefs," Allen said bluntly, "But I got the feeling it's going to be a Whiteman's war and a poor Native American's fight."

"Well. It's always has been a rich man's war and poor man's fight through American history," Ralph said.

"That's what I said," Alien agreed.

"If I get drafted, I plan to serve. But I don't plan to volunteer," Michael finally said.

"Michael. You're bound to get drafted," Allen said, "You'd better get married and have a few kids."

"No. Not me. My father would never forgive if I didn't serve my country in the time of war," Michael said.

"I'm not that naive," Allen said. "My father served in World War II. What did it get him?"

"Hopefully, we can all avoid going to war. Unless Ralphie Boy still wants to impress Susie girl," Michael said teasingly. Ralph just smiled at Michael and Allen, not saying a word.

About this Mr. Highsmith, the high school principal, came out the gym door. He announce loudly, "You seniors can come into the gym for graduation practice. Be sure you stand in your assigned places."



The waiting seniors let out yells of approval and started to file into the gym without further invitation.

Michael, Allen, and Ralph followed their fellow classmates into the gym, knowing that their final week of high school was about to begin.

Desiring to avoid the infamous Michael Dodd, Suzanne Redwood waited for the threesome to enter gym. Then Trixie and Suzanne walked into gym. Both had mixed feelings about the end of their high school days. Trixie pondered about whom she would marry, and Suzanne was relieved that she would no longer have to cope with Michael Dodd.

## Chapter 2

With flashing blue eyes and short blond hair, Clayton Shaw was a tall young man with broad shoulders and a cleanly shaved face, who had recently turned twenty years old. Driving up in his big white convertible, he parked his expensive car in front of the house of Suzanne Redwood's parents.

Constructed of wood, Redwoods' house was not unlike most housing built after the construction of Grand Coulee Dam. It was not sumptuous, but it had three bedrooms, a basement and a single bathroom. Painted white, it had a green roof and brown trim. The driveway was asphalted, and a concrete sidewalk and a brown wooden fence decorated the back yard. A gray concrete walkway led to the front door of the house.

Sitting in the front seat of his convertible, Clayton speculated about his upcoming date with Suzanne Redwood. Though a local Native American, she was a charming young woman, who was appealing. He couldn't understand why most of his youthful friends disparaged the local Native American women, regardless of their looks. He thought it was funny, because most of his friends lived on the Colville Indian Reservation, the home of the Colville Confederated Tribes.

A product of the local prejudices towards Native Americans, Clayton was no flaming liberal, but he could appreciate the beauty of women regardless of their race. He wanted to sample the striking Suzanne Redwood.

Exiting his white convertible, Clayton rambled up to the front door of the house. Knocking on the door, he patiently waited for someone to answer the door. Through the stained wooden door, he could faintly hear someone approaching the door.

The door swung open, and an obviously ebullient Suzanne Redwood was standing in the doorway. Her pleasing body smelled of a recently taken scented bath. Still applying make-up, she was wearing short blue shorts and a white blouse.

Suzanne was elated that Clayton had arrived. Her tormenting fears of being stood up were quickly forgotten. Her dreams were coming true in the form of the handsome and manly Clayton Shaw. He represented something that she had always deprived in life - which was respect and social prominence.

Looking at Clayton, Suzanne said eagerly, "Clayton. You're early."

"Well. I always try to be on time."

"I'm still getting ready."

"Yes. I can see that."

"Come into the house and take a seat in the living room," Suzanne said enthusiastically.

"Thanks for inviting me into your house," Clayton replied.

Suzanne stared into Clayton's blue eyes who was gazing into Suzanne's gleaming eyes. "Well. Follow me into the house," Suzanne ordered playfully.

Suzanne led the way into the house and walked into the living room. Pushed against the far east wall was a green cloth couch, which clean but modest.

On his own initiative, Clayton took a seat on the couch, and he carefully looked over the living room. The walls were painted a pale blue, and the ceiling was white. Many photographs of Suzanne's family dotted the walls. Native American decorations and artifacts were everywhere. The furniture was mostly made of wood and economical, and an old black-and-white television sat in the north corner of the living room.

Suzanne gracefully sat down by Clayton on the couch. He peered at her noble face, which gladdened her heart.

She asked, "Do you want something to drink?"

"What do you have to drink?"

"I managed to get hold of some beer," Suzanne related, "It's in the refrigerator."

"Sure, I'll take a beer."

"Well. I'll go to the kitchen and get one for you," Suzanne said excitedly.

"I thought your parents didn't allow alcohol in your house," Clayton stated.

"Yeah. My parents don't drink," Suzanne admitted, "But they're away for the weekend."

"Suzanne. I like your attitude of defiance."

"I'm not being defiant," she answered, "I only wanted to please you."

"Well. I'm pleased."

"If they found out about the beer, they sure would be really angry with me," she said in immature tone.

"Why don't you bring a couple of beers," Clayton suggested innocently, realizing that Suzanne was willing to experiment. He thought that Suzanne might be tempted to drink some beer since the beer was her idea.

Lifting her body off the couch, she strolled to the kitchen and opened the door to a white refrigerator. A six pack of Olympia beer was sitting on a refrigerator shelf. She grabbed two bottles and set them on a metal table, and then she got a tall glass from a cupboard. After pouring some of the beer in the glass, she walked back into the living room with the beer and the foamy beer glass. She came to a stop before Clayton sitting on the couch, and she said, "Here's your beer."

"Thanks for the beer."

"I poured some of the beer in the glass for you." Suzanne was ecstatic that she could please Clayton. She handed the two beers and beer glass to Clayton.

Clayton clutched the two beers and beer glass and set them down on an old oak coffee table situated in front of the couch. After taking a small swallow from the beer glass, he carefully refilled the glass with cold beer. He grabbed the full beer bottle, holding it in his left hand. He planned to just drink beer from the bottle in his hand, and he would save the beer in the beer glass for Suzanne if he could persuade her to drink.

"Thanks for the beer again. It's great beer," he said.

"You're welcome," Suzanne said cheerfully.

"Aren't you going to drink a beer?" Clayton asked cautiously.

"I never drank beer before. I'm not twenty-one," she responded. She was little surprised by Clayton's request.

Suzanne's parents attended one of the local charismatic protestant churches, and they were strictly religious. They forbade the drinking of any alcohol by their children. Suzanne was reluctant to defy her parents, whom she loved greatly. Though appreciating her strict religious background, she had long ago decided to be not bound by the teachings of her parents' church. She intentionally avoided social contact with the other young people of the church. She couldn't see any benefit in being allied with a church that seemed to restrict the social mobility of its members. She wanted far more than what her parents' church could ever offer her.

Chuckling, Clayton looked at Suzanne's angel face, and he said, "A good-looking gal like you doesn't have to be twenty-one to drink."

With her eyes sparkling, Suzanne smiled unabashedly at Clayton's flattering comment, and she stared into his blue eyes. She was captivated by his presence. But she thought about her parents, two brothers and a sister who were away for the weekend in Montana, attending a church Bible camp.

Suzanne thought of her coming independence and adulthood. She knew that she was now responsible for her own life. She could see

no harm in trying beer, and she desired to please Clayton. Being alone in the house with Clayton made her vulnerable. She answered softly, "I don't think I should."

"I'm only twenty years old myself."

"But it is different for you."

Clayton offered his glass of beer to Suzanne. At first hesitating she quickly gave in to Clayton's coaxing, and she took the glass from his raised hand.

"Suzanne. Go ahead. It won't hurt you."

Suzanne raised the beer glass to her lipstick-covered lips and took a small sip of beer, finding the taste to be slightly bitter but pleasant.

Trying to encourage Suzanne, Clayton said, "That cold beer sure tasted good. I'm really enjoying it."

Still reluctant to drink the beer but not wanting to disappoint Clayton, she said, "It does taste good."

"When I drink beer, I don't like to drink alone," Clayton declared confidently, "You can have that glass of beer."

"Sure, if you want me to," she said weakly, realizing that she committed herself to drinking beer.

"Yes. Keep the glass beer, and I'll drink from the beer bottle," he directed. He quickly concluded that he might be able seduce Suzanne after all. Because of her reputation of being anti-alcohol, he feared that he would have a difficult time persuading her to try drinking. He didn't anticipate that she would readily give in to his urging. He picked up his beer and took another swallow.

Sensing that Clayton wanted her to drink more, Suzanne lifted the beer glass to her mouth, and she took a long drink of the tasty beer.

Clayton watched her drink with amusement, and he said, "That wasn't bad. Was it?"

"It was okay," she answered.

"Try another drink."

She took another gentle swallow as ordered. Finishing the half of contents of the glass, she said, "I need to finishing dressing."

"Yes. We need to get going," he agreed.

"I'll turn on the TV for you."

"Turn it to a movie," Clayton instructed.

"There is more beer in the refrigerator," Suzanne pointed out.

She quietly stepped over to the television set, turned it on, and found a movie playing on a local station. Turning around, she smiled invitingly at Clayton, hoping that she had pleased him. She was clearly exhilarate about her good fortune. She said seductively, "Well. I shouldn't take long."

She gracefully swayed past Clayton into her bedroom to finish dressing for her date with him.

The Native American girl was making Clayton aroused, and he found her to be more desirable than he ever fancied. Leaning back on the couch, he placed his feet on the coffee table, and he finished the contents of his beer. Still thirsty, he got up from the couch, and he proceeded into the kitchen to get another beer from the refrigerator. Returning to the living room, he looked out of a living room window at row upon row of low-cost housing made of wood. He thought about Suzanne's modest beginnings and how much her pretentious airs were out of place in such a humble setting. But she still was physically attractive which mattered most to him. He thanked God for his good luck in being able to date Suzanne this warm evening. He imagined the sensual fun that he would have with Suzanne tonight. She seemed to share his excitement of anticipation but for different reasons.

Clayton thought of his father, Dr. Marshal Shaw, who disapproved of the local Native American girls. His father repeatedly warned him about the perils of fraternizing with young Native American women. His father couldn't believe that any of them had class or intelligence. Unlike his patrician father, he had no problem appreciating the beauty and festiveness of Native American maidens.

Clayton's parents were out of town, visiting an uncle who lived in Seattle. With his parents and Suzanne's parents gone for the Memorial Weekend, he had a perfect opportunity to play with Suzanne. A bewitching lady, he was obsessed with her attractiveness. He vowed to make the most of the evening. If she was unwilling, he planned to quickly drop her as a girlfriend.

Hearing a door opening, he looked towards the Suzanne's bedroom. Walking out of the her bedroom, she ambled into the living room where Clayton was waiting for her to return. Wearing a pink summer dress, she looked at Clayton's face for approval. He immediately beamed his approval back at her.

Gazing into Clayton's eyes, she said softly, "I'm ready to leave."

"I'm ready to leave too." He walked up to Suzanne and put his hard arms around her and attempted to kiss her.

At first resisting, she quickly gave in to Clayton's comfortable embrace, allowing him to kiss her. Few men and boys had ever kissed her lips.

In a passionate voice, he said, "I always wanted to kiss you. You're such a lovely woman."

"Thank you. You're a kind man."

Clayton released Suzanne. Holding her right hand, he led her out of the house to his white convertible, parked in front. Walking around to the passenger side, he opened the car door for her.

Appreciative of his politeness, she said, "Clayton. You're such a gentlemen." She started to climb into the passenger side of the car.

"My mother, Dora, taught me to be courteous to women, especially to attractive ladies." Clayton circled his convertible, and he climbed into the driver's side. Starting his car, he sped down the black-topped road.

Two hundred yards down the road, Suzanne sighted Trixie Spearman standing on the front yard of her parents' home, attired in a simple blouse and shorts. Instinctively, Suzanne waved her hand at Trixie, who quickly sighted Suzanne in the white convertible. Suzanne pondered whether she had made a mistake by letting Trixie observe her with Clayton. She naturally objected to being the subject of idle gossip, even by a good friend like Trixie.

Coulee Dam was like any other small town when it came to gossip. Everyone knew what was happening in town, especially when it came to who was dating whom. Suzanne quickly decided that Trixie wouldn't gossip about her, because of their long friendship.

Trixie observed Suzanne waving to her, and she without hesitation waved back to an apparently jubilant Suzanne. Saying a little pray for her best girlfriend, she hoped that Suzanne would have a joyous evening and that everything would turn out well for her. But she fully realized that Clayton Shaw had the reputation of being a womanizer. She knew that Clayton was very clever and secretive about his conquests.

One of his trophies was Betty Harmon, a friend of Trixie. Betty was shapely blue-eyed blonde. Hardened, Betty had nothing good to say about her one-time lover. Trixie wasn't sure what Betty's animosity meant, for Betty wouldn't disclose any intimate details about her affair with Clayton. But their relationship must have been turbulent, and there was some deep secret that Betty wouldn't reveal to Trixie.

Trixie perceived that she would learn the truth about Clayton Shaw tonight, whether he was an innocent victim or over-sexed rogue. Unfortunately, her best girlfriend, Suzanne, was the evening live bait. That's if Suzanne was willing to confide in her about her experiences with Clayton. If anything wicked happened tonight, such as debauchery, Trixie was sure that Suzanne would never tell her the truth.

Troubled, Trixie watched the white convertible as it motored down the road with its brake lights flashing on and off, eventually fading out of sight. With no volition, Trixie again waved at an imagined white convertible speeding down the road, fully knowing it was futile to do so.

When the convertible reached Main Street, Clayton said to Suzanne, "I just know we'll have great time tonight."

"I think so too."

"I have a few close friends coming over tonight. We'll play some music, do some dancing, drink some liquor and beer, and do a little swimming," he revealed.

Suzanne didn't like Clayton's plans about consuming liquor and beer. Still desiring to please Clayton, she said reluctantly, "That's sound fun to me."

"I thought you would be game," Clayton smiled.

"Clayton. I'm not a party girl. I don't need to party with you to like you. I really admire you."

"Well. I think you're cool too." Clayton wound his way through Coulee Dam, by Grand Coulee Dam and up to the town of Grand Coulee. His parents' home was in the nearby town of Electric City. The towns offered Clayton little comfort or a future. He was pleased that the day was coming that he'd be leaving Grand Coulee Dam area forever. Dissatisfied, he had grown disaffected with the casual ways of local residents. The homely citizens had quickly forgotten the good times when he was a high school football star. Now they gossiped behind his back about his failure to play college football, and they made disparaging comparisons between him and his omnipotent father. Someday he planned to show them what is the meaning of success.

Rounding a curve, Clayton could see the town of Electric City coming quickly into view. The town contained new housing developments. In the distance, he could see his father's house, a monument to his father's success. The spacious, elegant cedar wood house was built on a bluff, which picturesquely overlooked the Banks Lake. Surrounded by a cyclone fence, it had large yards and a huge swimming pool built in the backyard. Adjacent to the pool was a raised cedar plank patio, partially covered by a cedar shake roof.

Seeing the cedar wood house, Suzanne exclaimed, "I always wanted to go inside your parents' house. It's so gorgeously looking."

"Well. Your dream has come true," Clayton laughed harmlessly. His white convertible sped up the last remaining road and reached his father's property. There a concrete driveway entered the property. For a final time, he put his foot on the gas and roared down the road. The convertible came to an abrupt stop in front of his parents' house. The upper torso of Suzanne's body swayed forward towards the dash of the car. Extending her soft hands forward, she stopped her movement before she fell against the dash.

"Clayton. You really have a fast car."

"Yeah. It's one of the fastest car in Grant county," Clayton bragged,



"It's also a good cruising car."

The white convertible gently pulled into a parking spot. Once the car was parked, he exited the convertible, circled the machine, and opened the passenger side door. Suzanne immediately slid out of the car.

Clayton put his right arm around her waist and guided her to the front door of the house. Opening the door with a brass key, he walked into the house. Obediently, Suzanne followed closely behind. Once in the elegant living room, he said, "Let's head into the kitchen."

"Just lead the way. I'll follow," Suzanne affirmed, following him into the kitchen.

In the immaculate kitchen, Clayton opened one of refrigerators, and he pulled out two bags of ice and two six packs of beer. Surprised that there was two refrigerators, Suzanne could see that there was more beer and ice in the opened refrigerator. Pulling a ice chest from a large closet, Clayton placed the beer and ice in the ice chest. From the refrigerator, he grabbed a couple of beers and opened them with a bottle opener. Handing one beer to Suzanne, she reluctantly took the beer and waited for Clayton to make the first move. Lifting the cold beer to his mouth, he took a long swallowed.

"I sure needed that beer," Clayton exclaimed, "Being with you makes me really excited."

"I bet that you tell that to all the girls," Suzanne teased.

"Not really. Why don't you drink your beer?"

Hesitant about drinking about her beer, Suzanne gazed into Clayton's confident eyes, looking for some guidance from him. She said, "I don't want to drink too much tonight."

"Suzanne. Don't be a party pooper. I want you and me to have some fun," Clayton said, "So drink your beer."

Following orders, Suzanne lifted the beer to her rosy lips and took a long drink of beer. She said, "I'm not sure if I like drinking beer."

"Honey! You will. Believe me. Take another drink." He took another swig from his beer.

Obedying, she again lifted the beer to her mouth and swallowed some more beer. She said, "Yeah. It gets easier to drink as you go."

When Clayton was satisfied with the amount of beer that Suzanne consumed, he announced, "Let's go into the living room and sit down and talk."

Taking the beers with them, they leisurely proceeded into the huge living room, which was elegantly furnished and had an expensive fireplace. There were large bay windows that overlooked the Banks Lake

After admiring the living room, Suzanne sat down on a soft white sofa, and she placed her beer on a glass coffee table. Sitting next to her on her left, Clayton raised his beer in a toast and said, "Cheers!"

Smiling but reluctant, Suzanne picked her beer up and lifted it up. After they clinked their beers together, they both drank more beer from their beers.

For the first time in her life, she felt the effects of intoxicating liquor. She liked the beer, because she liked wonderful, handsome gentleman sitting next to her.

Shifting his beer to his left hand, Clayton placed his right hand on Suzanne's knee. The movement caught her by surprise, and she instinctively jerked her knee away from his probing hand because of its coldness.

Initially frustrated, Clayton grinned and said, "Suzanne. I meant no harm. You're an attractive young woman."

"I'm happy that you think so."

With his left hand Clayton lift his beer in another toast, and Suzanne followed his example, and she brought her beer into hard contact with his beer. "Cheers," she said.

Quickly drinking from his beer, he watched Suzanne gracefully drink the intoxicating liquor from her beer. With her distracted, Clayton again placed his hand on her knee and slipped his hand under Suzanne's summer dress. He started to inch his way up past her knee cap to her lower thigh.

Immediately seizing his hand, she cried out, "Clayton! What are you doing? It's a little too early for that."

Smiling broadly, he said, "You can't blame a man for trying."

"Well. I hardly know you."

"Suzanne. I respect you. You're a woman with a level head," he said, "That's why I like you."

"Thanks for respecting me."

Clayton wasn't giving up so easily. Having decided on his next move, he got up from the sofa and directed, "Let's go out to the swimming pool."

"Lead the way," she responded enthusiastically.

"First, let me go get the ice chest."

Clayton headed to the kitchen and returned with the large ice chest. They both strolled down a long corridor, which led to the cedar plank patio.

Clayton liked to consume alcoholic beverages, because it lowered his sexual inhibitions. It enabled him to do things that he'd not ordinarily do when sober. He recognized that he was still a kid, unlike his father, who was a handsome and successful man. With

the reputation of being a womanizer, his father had no problems carrying on affairs with willing pretty women. His father was a man's man. His philandering with other women was accepted by mother, Dora Shaw. She was appeased by the material life that Clayton's father provided. Though he resented his father, Clayton did admire his father's womanizing, and he hope to emulate his father.

Approaching the pool side, Clayton said, "Let's sit down in these lounge chairs and enjoy the scenery."

But first Suzanne walked over to the cyclone fence, and she viewed Banks Lake below and the surrounding terrain. She finally said, "It's a great view of Banks Lake."

"Yeah. My father paid a lot of money for that view."

"It was worth it," she responded, "It's warm out here."

"It's still a little hot, but it will cool down. I really enjoy the evenings when it's not too hot," he explained.

"I enjoy being with you," Suzanne said seriously.

Sitting on the lounge chairs next to the pool, they chatted and drank more beer. Suzanne soon realized that the beer was making her tipsy. She thought about the big chance she was taking by drinking beer with Clayton. It could ruin her reputation. But she was growing fond of the charismatic Clayton, and she felt safe with him, because he was such a gentleman.

Looking at Suzanne's shapely body, Clayton was challenged again by her presence. He debated his next move with her. In spite of her vituperative protests, she seemed to be willing to comply to his wishes, which was encouraging. He didn't plan to give up now. He knew by now the beer must be effecting Suzanne. She was becoming vulnerable.

Her movements were becoming animated, and her eyes were glassy. Her speech was deliberate. He knew that nothing would happen at the pool side, as Suzanne was too strict. He would have to persuade her to go to one of the bedrooms of the house where they would have more privacy. He wanted to take her to his bedroom. Putting his chances at fifty-fifty, he decided to make a move.

"Suzanne. Let's go to my bedroom."

"I don't know."

"I just want to show you my new stereo record player."

Though surprised at Clayton's request, Suzanne did not object outright. Because she was an adult, she believed that she could take care of herself, and she doubted that Clayton had any mischievous intentions. She finally said, "Okay, I'm willing."

"Well, follow me," Clayton said. He estimated his chances of

success had improved to at least ninety per cent.

His bedroom was located upstairs on the second floor, and it overlooked the Banks Lake. They would have to traverse a steep stairway to reach Clayton's bedroom. Standing up first, he waited for Suzanne to stand up. When she stood up, he handed a beer to her, and he carried a second beer in his left hand. Then he put his right arm around her slender waist. Moving towards the house, they entered and reached the bottom step of the steep stairway leading to his bedroom. He let Suzanne go up the stairs first, because he was afraid that she might lose her balance and fall. She looked a little unsteady, because of the effects of alcohol. She clasped a handrail and used it to steady her climb up the stairs. Once she lost her balance, but Clayton checked her potential fall with his free hand. Little embarrassed, she thanked Clayton for helping her.

At the top of the stairs, Clayton pointed to a door down the corridor, and he said, "That's my bedroom. I'm only one who has a bedroom on the second floor."

"Why is that?" she asked.

"Because I wanted privacy," he answered.

"You must have a neat bedroom," she said.

"You should like my stereo."

They rambled down the hallway to the bedroom door. Turning the doorknob, Clayton found the door locked, but he quickly unlocked the door. He confessed, "I like to keep my bedroom locked."

"Why do you keep it locked?" she asked.

"I have some valuable items in my bedroom, like my stereo," he replied.

"It seems safe enough to me. "

"Plus I don't want my mother snooping around."

Walking into the bedroom, Clayton immediately walked to a window, and he turned on a swamp cooler to cool the bedroom. Suzanne could feel the cool wet breeze of the swamp cooler.

The well-furnished bedroom had a large double bed, which was carefully made-up. The room had two huge windows with green drapes hanging from them. A bright sun was still able to shine through windows. The walls were painted a pastel yellow with a white ceiling. The furniture was expensive and Spanish styled.

Opening his beer and Suzanne's beer, he took another drink of beer. Following Clayton's lead, Suzanne drank from her beer.

Clayton then walked over to his expensive stereo and played a record. It contained a series of modern romantic tunes.

"You've really got a lovely bedroom," Suzanne praised. She was feeling uncomfortable in the bedroom of an older attractive male.

She pondered whether she could control her emotions if Clayton attempted to touch her.

"I try to keep my bedroom well furnished," he replied with false male authority.

"Your stereo sure looks expensive."

"My father bought it for me."

"And I like the music you are playing," she said.

"I thought you would enjoy it."

"I like soft romantic music."

"So do I."

"Let's sit on the bed and talk," Clayton said with a innocent voice.

"Okay, Clayton." Suzanne was beginning to feel the full effects of the beer, and she was receptive to any suggestion from Clayton. Her shapely legs tiring, she wanted to sit down on something to rest and relax. Setting her beer on a table, she sat down on the bed first.

Contented, Clayton sat down on the bed next to Suzanne and put his beer on the table. He immediately put his arm around her slender waist. She didn't resist his maneuvering but instead leaned into his muscular body. Clayton felt her collapse against his body, and he felt the heat of her body.

"Suzanne. You're a wonderful woman," Clayton smiled. His hands clasped her waist.

"I like being with you," she said.

"I do like pretty women." He gazed into Suzanne's admiring brown eyes, put his arms around her body and attempted to kiss her.

At first Suzanne resisted Clayton's amorous embrace, but then she gave in to his apparent show of affection, and she kissed Clayton back.

Feeling Suzanne's back with his hands, he again kissed her hard. He said, "I love you, Suzanne."

Suzanne replied, "I love you too."

With his right hand Clayton seized the zipper on the back of her summer dress and in one stroke unzipped her dress to her waist. Suzanne heard and felt the zipper slid down the back of her dress. Surprised at Clayton's move, she froze with indecision, but she failed to counter his move. Her first desire was to appease Clayton, whom she wanted to please. Her feelings were highly confused.

Her lack of resistance only encouraged Clayton, who quickly moved his hands to the fastener on her brassiere.

Realizing what was happening, Suzanne pulled back from Clayton, and she said in an urgent voice, "Clayton. I don't know what to do about you."

"Suzanne. I thought you wanted this."

"Clayton. I do love you." Her eyes peered into Clayton's blue eyes, asking for help.

Perceiving his advantage, Clayton knew it was now or never. Putting his arms around her, he gave her a long kiss. Against her will, she kissed him back. Breaking free, he swiftly clasped the top of her summer dress and yanked the top towards him before Suzanne could react. Surprise, she again failed to resist. He tried to pull the top of the dress down.

She grabbed her dress top in time, Suzanne said in an urgent voice, "Clayton! I wish you would quit."

He cried out, "You're driving me mad."

"We're going too far," she protested.

"But I'm maddening in love with you."

"Clayton! Quit!" Suzanne immediately regain her composure, and her excitement countered the effects of the alcohol in her body. She grabbed Clayton's hands, and she stood up and backed away from the bed.

"Suzanne. What are you doing?" Clayton reacted angrily, "I thought you wanted this."

"No, Clayton. I don't want it to happen this way."

"I don't understand you."

"Clayton. It's not going to happen this way."

He stared at Suzanne, and he realized that he had been premature in executing his plans. Though he was angered by Suzanne's resistance to fondling, he still was not willing to concede defeat and give up his evening with her. He said, "Okay, Suzanne. I respect your desires."

"Thanks." Suzanne trusted his words, and she sat back down on the bed.

Desiring to preserve his control over Suzanne, he repeated, "Suzanne. I love you."

Suzanne's eyes sparkled with confirmation, and she said, "I love you too."

"People need to get together somehow." Clayton said, alluding to his efforts at seduction.

"I know that they do." She half-heartedly agreed.

"Well. We'd better get dress for the pool party," he said.

"When does the party begin?" she asked enthusiastically, as she wanted to desperately restore the party mood.

"My friends should be arriving shortly. They've been partying at Spring Canyon Park," he explained.

"I'm anxious to meet your friends."

"You and my mother are about the same size. You should be able

to fit her bathing suits." Stepping over to a dresser, Clayton pulled out his swimming suit.

Joining her at the bedroom door, Clayton said, "Let's head to my mother's bedroom and find you a bathing suit."

"Where's your mother's bedroom."

"It's downstairs. Follow me." Clayton led the way down the hallway to the stairs, down the stairs to the main floor and then to the door of his mother's bedroom. Suzanne followed closely behind. Opening the door, he walked directly to a dresser. He pulled out a fancy white bathing suit, belonging to his mother. He handed to Suzanne.

"Suzanne. You can change your clothes in this room. I'll go into the hallway bathroom to change."

"I shouldn't take long," she replied.

Clayton left his mother's bedroom, and he went directly to the hallway bathroom where he donned his swimsuit. After Suzanne put on the white bathing suit, she left the bedroom to look for Clayton. She immediately saw him standing in the hallway.

"Let's head out to the pool," Clayton directed.

Leaving the bedroom, they proceeded down a hallway to a closet where Clayton gathered into his arms two beach towels for the pool party. Arm-in-arm, they walked out to the patio and swimming pool, and they sat down on two lounge chairs. Pulling two beers from the ice chest, he handed a beer to Suzanne.

"At least we can enjoy ourselves drinking," he commented.

"Clayton. I'm here to party with you." With little hesitation, she opened beer with a bottle opener, and she took a small swallow from the beer.

"The beer tastes good," he feigned.

Suzanne was convinced that her dreams were coming true and that Clayton respected and loved her. She took another swallow, and she said, "It tastes fine."

Clayton smiled at her spontaneous but honest comment. Lying back on their lounge chairs, they held hands and looked at the clear blue sky and barren mountains overlooking the Columbia River, in the distance, they could see graceful seagulls flying high over Banks Lake, looking for a handout at a local public park.

"Suzanne. Look at the seagulls." He pointed to the high flying birds, who were beginning to kite down to the park.

"Yeah. Those pesky seagulls," she voiced loudly, "We do have quite a few seagulls around here." By the minute, she was becoming more confident and at ease. Her first encounter Clayton was still fresh in her mind, but she was quickly becoming romantically attached to

her handsome young man.

Suzanne thought about Clayton's mother who was quite pretty. Her name was Dora, and she was fifteen years younger than Clayton's father. Clayton was an only child of their marriage, though Dr. Marshal Shaw had three children by a previous marriage. Suzanne thought it was strange that Dora's bedroom was a regular size bedroom rather than master-bedroom size.

"Clayton. Do your parents have separate bedrooms?"

"Yes, they do. My father likes it that way."

"Why is that?" she asked.

"When he makes love to her, he can better fantasize that he's with a single woman," Clayton said grimly. "At least that's what he tells my mother."

"It does seem rather strange," she thought aloud, "Your mother is so beautiful."

"Yes. I could never figure my father out," he replied.

"Well. He's a handsome and successful man," she opined.

Immediately, Clayton felt a tinge of jealousy towards his father. He didn't like any woman praising his manly father. It always made him feel insecure and vulnerable.

"Let's not talk about my father," he urged, "We're here to have fun. Let's drink some more beer."

"I'm excited about being with you," she said.

"I know." They each took another drink from their cold beers.

About that time Suzanne heard the thundering of cars arriving at the front of the house. Clayton jumped up from his lounge chair, and he walked over to the gate of the cyclone fence surrounding the backyard. Opening the silvery metal gate, he saw his boisterous friends climbing out of their cars.

"Over here," Clayton yelled at Bob, Ted, and Louie. Threesome had been buddies of Clayton since childhood, attending the same school with him in Grand Coulee.

Obediently following Clayton, Suzanne stood next to him at the gate. Observing Clayton's buddies approaching the cyclone fence, she quickly recognized them as Bob Cobb, Ted Reed, and Louie Farber, who were Caucasians like Clayton. They were of average height, and they had little fat on their hard bodies. Accompanying them were two pretty local girls, who had sandy blonde hair. Looking slightly intoxicated and with beers in their hands, they were all joking and frolicking. Well tanned and slightly sunburnt, they were clad in bathing suits and t-shirts. Ted was carrying an ice chest full of beer.

"We'll going to do some partying tonight," Clayton blurted out excitedly. Saying nothing, Suzanne remained standing by Clayton. When the fun-loving



group were twenty feet from the cyclone fence, Clayton yelled, "Welcome friends! Suzanne and I have been waiting for you."

"Yeah. You're late," Suzanne offered cautiously. She felt very uncomfortable in the presence of Clayton's friends.

Ted laughed back, "I'm sure you two kept yourselves well entertained while you waited for us."

"Think what you want," Clayton replied with a grin.

"Clayton. You sure can pick the good-looking gals," Ted praised.

Clayton was immediately jealous of Ted's covetous comment in spite of their long friendship and being schoolmates at the University of Oregon. Having doubts about his masculinity, Clayton hated any form of sexual competition from his friends or any other man. He fought hard to suppress his anger and self-doubt.

Moving quickly through the gate, the partygoers strolled to the pool side. They sat down on lounge chairs and eyed one another. Putting down his ice chest and removing his t-shirt, Ted dove into the swimming pool, head first. Louie and Bob followed Ted into the pool. Clayton was content to stay by the pool side, sipping on his beer. His friends were happily playing king of the mountain in the bluish waters of pool, splashing water every which way.

The sandy blonde girls started to talk to each other. Suzanne was satisfied to remain sitting by Clayton. She recognized the remote but fleshy girls as Laura Richman and Peggy Sterling. They were a couple of years older than Suzanne, which made her hesitant to parley with them. She had never associated with them on a social basis, except a for a few school functions when she was a high school sophomore.

Suzanne felt uneasy in the company of Clayton's polished friends. She decided her best strategy was to remain mute and let Clayton run interference for her with his vociferous friends. By remaining mute, she realized that she was running the risk of appearing to be a low-witted but shapely Native American girl. Silently, she wished that her Native American parents were more patrician, though she fully recognized life had been insidiously unfair to them.

The vivacious group partied the night away. They consumed beer beyond their capacities, but they remained fully alert. They listened, hooted and danced to rock and roll music, played on 45 rpm record player. Not satisfied with their wild dancing and gyrations, they proceeded to disparage every civic and religious leader in town. Then they denounced the lack of meaningful social life in Grand Coulee Dam.

Out of respect for Suzanne's feelings, they did not mentioned the members Colville Tribe. The local Native Americans were usually one of their favorite target. Of course, they would never admit any feelings of prejudice towards the local Native Americans, which in their own

limited world was probably true.

Overwhelmed and inhibited, Suzanne could only smile and nodded in agreement with the vituperative comments of the partygoers. Because of her isolation from the White community of Grand Coulee Dam, she didn't have any idea whether invectives were true. The viciousness of the gossip was surprising to her, which naturally led her to give some credence to verbal attacks of the accusers.

Suzanne was steadily succumbing to her imprudent but calculated consumption of beer. She could hardly believe that she was getting inebriated at Clayton's party. Amused with her drinking, Clayton was encouraging her to drink more beer. He fully intended to get her drunk. Her anxiety about being accepted at Clayton's party caused her to drink more beer. She only hoped that she wasn't making a spectacle of herself in front of Clayton's friends. But her drinking was beginning to dull to her senses, and her body movement were highly animated. Although she didn't want to leave the lively party, she did feel the need to lie down and sleep off the effects of the alcohol.

Looking at Clayton, she said awkwardly, "Clayton. I'm getting tired. I need to lie down for awhile."

Clayton reached down and picked up a small plastic container. It contained some red colored pills. Suzanne was not sure what of pills they were. He opened the container and selected a pill.

"Here Suzanne. Try one of these. They should help you stay awake," Clayton said. He handed the pill to her.

She gasped the pill in her hand, and she tried examine it. A few seconds later, she asked, "What kind of pill is it?"

"It's one of my mother's diet pills," Clayton answered. "It should wake you up."

"I don't know if I should."

"It's only an amphetamine," Clayton confirmed.

"Have you taken one before?" Suzanne asked.

"We all have already taken one. That's why we all having such a good time," Clayton responded.

"Suzanne. Don't be a party pooper," Ted Reed whined, having overheard the conversation.

"Suzanne. Try it," Peggy Sterling urged.

Reluctantly, she surrendered to their exhortations. Raising the pill to her mouth, she swallowed it.

"Now, take a swallow of beer to wash it down," Clayton instructed.

Suzanne obeyed. The party spontaneously started anew with loud talking and mad frolicking. By the minute, Suzanne was feeling the

effects of the amphetamine, and she quickly joined the party, laughing and talking loudly. She dragged Clayton off his lounge chair to dance with him by the pool side. She feel energetic but out of control.

After their unrestrained dance, they sat back down on their lounge chairs. Suzanne grabbed her beer, and she took a long drink. Smiling brightly at Clayton, she leaned back into her chair, and then she blacked out.

### Chapter 3

A brilliant sun shone through a bedroom window, shaded by pale blue drapes. Cooled air was circulating into the bedroom through an open door. Suzanne Redwood was beginning to stir from her deep alcohol and drug-induced sleep. Lying on a queen-size bed, her nude body was only covered by a pink satin sheet.

Her darkened eyes were too painful to open, so she kept them closed. Her foggy intellect finally realize that she was lying in large soft bed. Initially, she had thought that she was safely home in bed. Then she remembered her date with Clayton Shaw and her wild partying with the handsome young man. It finally donned on her that she was sleeping in Clayton's home. Opening her pained eyes, she immediately recognized the bedroom as belonging to Dora Shaw, Clayton's mother.

Because of last night's party, she was too sick. and fatigued to stir from bed. Closing her brown eyes, she pushed her lovely head into a soft pillow. Thinking of Clayton, she moved her shapely body side to side, feeling for Clayton's muscular body. Not finding Clayton, she tried to remember whether Clayton had slept with her. She couldn't remember going to bed with Clayton, and she pondered where he was. He had to be somewhere in the house.

Recalling the party, dancing, and beer drinking, she tried to retrace the events of the party with Clayton's friends at the pool side. She remembered drinking heavily and having physical contact with Clayton. She recalled taking the amphetamine pill and the blackout that followed. It greatly troubled her that she could not remember what she did the rest of the night. She only hoped that she had not done anything foolish, which might later cause her anguish and embarrassment. Overly self-conscious, she needed to talk to Clayton about the events of the previous night. She wanted a full account of her activity during her blackout. But she was too exhausted to climb out of bed to search for elusive Clayton. That would have to wait. She dozed off and slept peacefully for another two hours. Awaking, she felt more rested, but she still was sick to her stomach. Her head and body ached.

Instinctively, Suzanne knew that it was the early afternoon. She decided that she had to make an effort to get out of bed and go home. Turning over on her back, she opened her eyes.

Standing at the door to the bedroom was Clayton. He was smiling appreciatively at Suzanne, who was elated to see him.

"Sleepy head. You're finally awake," Clayton said, smiling. "I didn't want to wake you."

"That was quite a party last night," she said guardedly.

"You were drinking like a sailor," he replied.

Suzanne frowned and said, "I can't remember how much I drank. It was my first time drinking."

"It was your first time for making love too."

"What! I can't remember making love to you," Suzanne said anxiously.

"I'm very honored," he said, "You're a gorgeous lady."

"I can't remember a thing," She said, "I should have not drank too much."

"Well. You stay in there all night until the party ended."

"I can't believe that. I drank too much." Suzanne was growing alarmed at what had happened to her.

"You're a pretty Native American woman."

"I'm an elegant woman," she declared. She was offended by Clayton's reference to being a Native American woman. She thought that her beauty was universal, and it had nothing to do with her Native American race.

Sensing her disapproval, Clayton didn't want to lose control of his prize possession. He eyed her body lying the bed.

"Suzanne. I apologize. I meant no harm." He sat down on the bed took Suzanne into his arms and gave her a long kiss.

"Do you want to make love?" he asked cautiously. He was intimidated by Suzanne's beauty and sex. Feeling himself slightly shaking, he was beginning to lose his nerve. He chided himself for having asked her to make love. He should have just started to make love to her. He could never fully suppress his unreasonable feelings of inferiority.

Responding to his question, she protested truthfully. "No, Clayton. I'm still queasy from last night party." She was beginning gradually appreciate that she had unprotected sex with him. She was deeply concerned about preserving her reputation.

Clayton looked at her with dismay. "You did drink a lot of beer."

"There is plenty of time for love later," she tried to placate him.

Though disappointed, he did realize that Suzanne was still willing to do his bidding. He feigned, "Well. We have the rest of the weekend."

"I'm too sick right now," she encouraged.

"Maybe you should eat some breakfast?"

"I don't know about eating. My stomach is queasy," she answered, "But I can try."

"That sounds good to me," he said. "You'd better get dress"

"I don't have any clean clothes."

"You can wear some of my mother's clothes," he directed.

"I need to first to take a shower," she said.

Pointing to the bathroom, he said, "My mother's bathroom is there. "

"Your mother has her own bathroom!" Suzanne was surprised, "I wish I had my own bath." She knew immediately she had made a mistake, as she didn't want to appear overly impressed with the furnishings of Clayton's home.

"I'm sure someday you'll have your own bath," he patronized.

"Well. My parents make modest money," she responded defensively,

"That was only thing I was saying."

"I'm well aware of your origins."

"Clayton!"

"I meant no offense to you," Clayton parried, "I'd never be nasty to a woman that I admire."

Suzanne blushed, and she said, "I admire you too." She wished she hadn't brought up the subject of bathrooms, it made her sound tacky and ill-bred.

"I'll leave you to your shower," Clayton said. He climbed off the bed, and he headed to the bedroom door, disappearing from sight.

Suzanne rolled off the queen-size bed and onto her feet. Stretching her firm body, she could feel her aches and pains. Pain throbbed through her head.

Falling back on the bed, she sat down and then rolled over onto her flush stomach. Shutting her weary eyes, she tried to go back to sleep. But after twenty minutes, she forced her eyes open and climbed off the bed. Heading to the bathroom, she found a soft towel in a closet. Turning on the water, she climbed into the shower and soaped her shapely body. The warm water relaxed her tensed and ailing body. She washed the grime and oily secretions from her eyes and hair. She wanted to spend the rest of the long afternoon showering, but she knew that warm water was not good for her soft skin. Turning off the water, she left the shower and dried off with a towel.

Leaving the bathroom, she searched the drawers and closets of Dora Shaw's bedroom for suitable clothes. She admired Dora for having such a variety of beautiful and stylish clothes. She was delighted that Dora wore the same size of clothes. Dora was fastidious about keeping her figure trim and her weight down. Suzanne thought that she could spend the rest of the afternoon trying on Dora's clothes.

Suzanne found a silky black dress and decided to wear it. Slipping

the dress over her head, she pulled the dress down her body.

Looking into full mirror, she gawked at her physique enclosed in the revealing black dress. The dress was low cut which exposed lots of cleavage. She knew that Clayton would find her irresistible.

After combing her black hair and applying some makeup, Suzanne left the bedroom to search for Clayton. Walking down a darkened hallway, she could hear a radio, playing rock and roll music.

Following the lively music, she found the kitchen where Clayton was standing near a kitchen stand. He was placing slices of bread into a shining steel toaster, and eggs, potatoes, and ham were vigorously cooking on an electric stove. The aroma of the frying food usually made her hungry, but this afternoon aroma quickly killed her appetite. The only thing she craved was an ice-filled glass of water.

Hearing Suzanne coming toward him, Clayton looked up from his task and witnessed her arrival in the kitchen. He said, "Well. You finally made it."

"I need something cold to drink.," she replied.

"There's still plenty of beer left."

"No, thanks. That's last thing I need."

Suzanne sat down on a wooden table in the spacious kitchen. There were three places set at the table. She pondered who else would be eating with them.

Getting a glass from a cupboard, Clayton filled the glass with ice and then water. Handing the water-filled glass to Suzanne, he said, "Here your ice water."

"Thank you. " She immediately drank half the content of the glass.

"There's plenty of more ice water if you want more," he said.

"Clayton. Who else is going to eat with us?"

"Ted Reed spent night."

"Where is he?"

"Ted is taking a swim in the swimming pool."

Clayton walked back to the kitchen, and he pulled a couple of platters from a cupboard. He then placed the hot food on the platters and carried platters back to the table. Placing the food on the table, he sat down at the table across from Suzanne.

"Suzanne. You can dish up."

"I'm not really hungry"

"You should eat something."

"Maybe later."

About this time Ted Reed walked into the kitchen. He was wearing a black athletic t-shirt and gray gym shorts. When he sighted

Suzanne, he immediately looked at her black silk dress. A wave of jealousy surged through his hard body.

"Good afternoon, Suzanne," Ted said softly.

"Hi Ted," she replied.

"Well. You finally got up," Ted mocked, "You sure drank a lot of beer last night."

Suzanne resented being told that she drank too much beer the previous evening. She had already admitted to Clayton her folly of the previous night. However, she didn't want to get angry with Ted in front of Clayton. She confessed, "Yes. I did drink a little too much."

Ted sat by Clayton. They both placed healthy portions of food on their plates and started to eat. Suzanne was content to watch them eat. She was a lot more sick than she realized and was quickly becoming fatigued.

"Clayton. I need to lie down and sleep more."

"I'm sorry that you're sick," he said.

"You shouldn't have drank so much beer," Ted harped. Suzanne made a face at Ted, who simply ignored her antics.

"Let me take back to my mother's bedroom," Clayton offered, "You can sleep there."

"Thank you," she responded. She stood up from the table and ambled towards the living room. Clayton quickly caught up with her, and he placed his arm around her waist. He guided back to his mother's bedroom. They both enter the bedroom and sat down on the queen-size bed.

"I just need to sleep a few more hours," she said.

"Sleep as long as you want," Clayton replied.

"I should be okay in a few hours." Suzanne didn't want to disappoint Clayton, because she enjoyed being with her young man. She was looking forward to spending the rest of the weekend with Clayton.

"When you feel better, we'll talk," Clayton reassured. He embraced Suzanne and gave her a deep kiss, and then he got up from the bed and moved towards the door.

"Clayton. Wake me in a few hours."

"Okay. If you wish," he replied.

After Clayton left, Suzanne lay back on the bed. Her body still ached, and her stomach had not improved any. Tired, she gave out a loud yawn and stretched her arms and upper torso. She then pulled a silk sheet and a blanket over her body. Closing her tired eyes, she immediately went to sleep.

Several hours later, Suzanne awoke from her fitful sleep. Feeling much better, she went into the bathroom and washed her face and hands. Finishing, she wondered what Clayton and Ted Reed were doing. The



house was unusually silent. She strained her ears to hear the piping of music or the movement of people. She could hear nothing but eerie silence. She didn't like being alone in the spacious house, and her childhood fears of being alone return to her.

She left Dora's bedroom and walked into the living room, determined to find Clayton and Ted. There she found evidence of recent drinking but no Clayton or Ted. Walking into the kitchen, she found it empty of occupants. Finding no one at the swimming pool, she became alarmed. She then remembered that Clayton had his bedroom on the second floor of the house. Going back in the house, she quietly wound her way up the stairs, as she didn't want anyone to discover her presence on the stairway.

She didn't like being sneaky, but she didn't want to be reproved by Clayton for not staying on the first floor. She used the hand rail to help her climb the steep stairs. Reaching the top of the stairs, she looked down the dimly-lit hallway. Clayton's bedroom door was slightly ajar, and daylight was seeping through the opening.

Hesitating, Suzanne was uncertain whether to approach the bedroom door. She was afraid that she would be discovered. She knew her feelings were irrational, but being in a strange house only magnified her fears. She also wanted to be correct, because her pious parents taught her that she had to be proper.

Suzanne, however, remembered that the bedroom belonged to Clayton, who was her beau. They had exchanged endearments; he had told her that he loved her; and he had told her that they had made love last night. She trusted him, and she loved him. She now thought herself silly for fearing the unknown.

Growing curious, she quietly stepped down the hallway. She could faintly hear some commotion in the bedroom. Encouraged, she moved closer to the door. The squeaking of bed springs became distinct. Suzanne quickly realized something was happening on Clayton's bed.

Jealous, Suzanne immediately became outraged, fearing that Clayton was having sexual relations with one of his admiring girlfriends. She thought to herself that Clayton must have scores of girlfriends, willing to go to bed with him at a minute notice. Maybe it was true that he was a womanizer. She was determined to find out who was her female rival.

Inching down the hallway, she used the wall to steady her progress. Reaching the bedroom, she quietly peeped through the cracked door into the bedroom. Clayton's muscular body was naked, vibrating with unrestrained passion. Couched on his bed, he humped over another nude body. He was engaged in an obvious sexual act. Clayton and his partner were making animal noises. She wondered how a young lady could engage in an sexual act with such abandon.

Suzanne's worst fears were confirmed. Hypnotized by the sexual act, she couldn't make out who was Clayton's sexual partner. Her young face turned pale red, and her shapely body shook with disillusionment and humiliation. Determined to discover the identification of her foe, she focused her eyes on the unknown sexual partner, whose head turned towards the door.

Suddenly, Suzanne's innocent jealousy turned to horror. Clayton's sexual partner was his best friend - Ted Reed. Utterly confused and hurt, she froze stiff with alarm. Then her feelings, quickly turned to outrage, and her dreams of romance vanished in an instant.

She immediately feared any confrontation with Clayton and damage to her reputation, and she decided to leave house as quickly as possible. Now totally suspicious of Clayton, she wanted to avoid detection by and any confrontation with Clayton.

Inching her way back down the hallway, Suzanne reached the steep stairway. Quietly descending the stairs, she walked silently through the house to the front door. Turning the brass doorknob, she eased her body past the open door and slid out the door.

Once outside, she followed the concrete driveway to the asphalt road. A hundred yards from the house, she stopped to rest and to decide her next move. She pondered whether she should stay on the main highway which was designated State Route 155 or whether avoid the main road and take a roundabout route to the next town, Grand Coulee. She was determined go home to the town of Coulee Dam without having to telephone any friends or relatives.

Suzanne quickly perceived that she could not stay on the main road. Because, if Clayton discovered that she was gone, he could quickly find her on the road with his white convertible. She still feared a possible confrontation with Clayton.

She elected to take the little-used back roads to reach the town of Grand Coulee. While Suzanne hiked along the back roads, she recounted the events of this improbable day. She thought herself silly and immature for being infatuated with the devious Clayton Shaw. She pondered how she could be so unsuspecting and unsophisticated. She realized that she hardly knew anything about Clayton, and especially his reputation. The world was much more complicated than she ever imagined. A Native American woman needed to tread cautiously in such an uncertain world.

With anguish, she thought of Clayton's homosexual relationship with Ted Reed. She couldn't understand how any man could love another man. Her biblical upbringing blinded to facts of life. She especially couldn't understand why a man could first make love to a

woman then make love to a man. Such human behavior was a contradiction. She was not homophobic.

It now made sense to her that Ted Reed could be Clayton's lover. So Clayton was a bisexual. She dreaded the notion that Clayton had sex with her. She pondered how life could be so cruel to the female gender.

Reaching the end of the back roads, she realized she would have to go back on the main road for short distance to reach the outskirts of Grand Coulee. She looked down State Route 155 to see if any vehicles were coming. The road was clear of vehicle. She started to run down State Route 155 around a long rocky curve in the road, which greatly narrowed the roadway.

Reaching a park, Suzanne could clearly see the streets and motley buildings of Grand Coulee. Again she decided to take the back roads to reach the town center.

A 1955 sedan drove by on a deserted street. With the sedan veering to the left, an elderly man ogled Suzanne's body.

Touching her shoulders with her soft hands, she visualized how revealing was her black silk dress. She decided to take a lonely unpaved alley to the downtown area. Crossing another deserted road, she headed down the alley, hoping that she find a friend who could give her a ride home.

Nearing the town center, she observed an old blue Ford truck sputtering down Main Street. Recognizing the truck and driver, she quickly raised her arms and frantically waved at the truck. The truck slowly pulled over to the curb and came to a stop by Suzanne.

Ralph Cragmont, a Native American classmate, was the driver. Wearing dark-rimmed glasses, he stared at Suzanne's skimpy black silk dress. He noted that she looked sweaty and tired like she had been walking in the hot sun. He speculated why was she walking alone in this part of Grand Coulee.

Approaching the truck, she asked, "Ralph. Could you give me a ride home?"

Ralph was a shy young man who was afraid of all pretty young women. He was elated that he could help Suzanne, whom he silently admired. This was the first time that she had asked him for a favor, and he greatly wanted to please her, as he romantically fantasized about her often. He answered, "Sure. Get into the truck cab."

"Thanks a lot." Suzanne circled the truck, and she climbed into the passenger side of the truck cab. Exhilarated, she knew that within few minutes she would be safely home. Once home she would plot her defense against Clayton if he made an appearance.

"What were you doing in this part of Grand Coulee?" Ralph asked cautiously.

Observing that he was eyeing her dress, she wrapped her arms over her chest. She knew that she would have a hard time explaining her presence and improper dress. She lied, "I was up here to audition for a modeling job."

"Modeling job!"

"Yes. The photographer tried to get fresh with me."

"He did?" he said.

"So I slapped his face and ran out of his office," she lied.

"Where was the audition?" he inquired innocently.

"Ralph! I'm too upset to talk about it."

He was intimidated by Suzanne's response. He meekly reply, "Suzanne, I'm sorry."

"It's not your fault."

"I should have known better," he said weakly.

Suzanne was mildly surprised that she could so easily intimidate Ralph. His reactions to her were immature for his age. She pondered whether he outgrow his shyness. Then she urged, "Let's get going. I need to go home and change."

"Yeah. I'll take you home."

"I don't want to be seen by anyone," Suzanne emphasized.

"I'll take a back street once we reach Coulee Dam," he responded.

"That's what I want," she said.

The old truck pulled away from the curb and drove down the street to the intersection with State Route 155. Entering the highway, Ralph steered the truck down the road to the Grand Coulee Dam itself. The road wound its way around Grand Coulee Dam to east side of the town of Coulee Dam. Entering the town, Ralph drove the truck across the bridge spanning the Columbia River.

Ralph maneuvered the heaving truck through streets of Coulee Dam, carefully avoiding the main thoroughfares. Overwhelmed by the presence of Suzanne, he pondered whether he should make conversation with her. He finally said, "Suzanne. You're sure looking beautiful today."

"Thank you. I noticed you eyeing body," she replied.

"Well. You're wearing a sexy dress."

"Ralph. I don't want you to get the wrong idea about me."

"It's a pretty dress," he emphasized.

"I'm wearing this dress because the photographer wanted me to wear it," she said defensively.

"I wasn't suggesting anything."

"I must admit it is a little revealing," she confessed.

"But the dress does look good on you."

"Ralph. I don't like being a sex object."

"I didn't mean to offend you," he said weakly

"Just keep your eyes to yourself."

"Well. I do like you, Suzanne," he admitted.

"I like you too," Suzanne responded, "but only as a classmate." She didn't like to act so reptilian, but it was better to discourage Ralph now than to later hurt his feelings.

"That's what I meant." He was disappointed, but he didn't expect Suzanne to find him attractive. He was satisfied that he had an opportunity to drive her home and chat with her. Ralph drove the truck down the last stretch of road to Suzanne's home. He guided the truck into the driveway of her home.

When the truck came to a stop, she said, "Ralph. Thanks for driving me home. You're such a lifesaver."

"You're welcome."

Suzanne exited the truck and hurried to the front door of the house. Unlocking the door, she turned around and waved goodbye to Ralph. He then backed the truck out of the driveway onto the street, and he drove the truck down the road until it faded out of sight.

Entering the house, Suzanne walked into the living room where she promptly sat down on the couch. Suspecting the worst, she feared that Clayton Shaw would come to the house and confront her. She speculated whether Clayton would search for her once he found that she was gone. She pondered whether she should have asked Ralph Cragmont to stay with her. She didn't want to meet Clayton alone.

Planning her defense, Suzanne thought about telephoning Trixie Spearman, her best friend. But she immediately dismissed idea. Everything had to be kept secret. If her parents found out about her wild partying and premarital sex, they would be angry and grievously hurt. If possible, she wanted to avoid disappointing good but pious parents.

Deciding to get rid of the evidence, she went into the kitchen and removed the beer from the refrigerator. After pouring the contents down the drain, she systemically broke the bottles into small pieces with a hammer. She placed the broken pieces into the trash can. Then going into her bedroom, she removed the black silk dress and changed into her clothes.

Returning to the living room, Suzanne again sat down on the couch waiting for Clayton to appear any minute. She decided that she might need a weapon to defend herself. Walking into her parents' bedroom, she found the four-ten shotgun and shells for it.

After loading the shotgun, she returned to the living room, and she placed the shotgun by the couch. Lying down on the couch, she thought of words that she would say to Clayton if appeared at the house.

Dozing off to sleep, Suzanne Redwood was awakened by the ringing of the telephone. She immediately knew it had to be Clayton, telephoning her. At first hesitating, she got up from the couch and picked up the telephone. Answering the telephone, she said, "Hello."

Clayton recognized Suzanne's voice, and she said, "Suzanne. Is that you?"

"Yes, it's me."

"Why did you leave my house?"

"I just wanted to leave," she said.

"I thought you loved me."

"I was never in love with you."

"But we made love."

"When I was blacked out, and maybe passed out," she responded.

"But it was beautiful."

"Love is more than just engaging in sex," she replied.

"Well. I still love you," Clayton said weakly.

"Clayton. You took an advantage of me," she asserted.

"What are you talking about?" he asked anxiously, perceiving that Suzanne knew something about him.

"I rather not say."

"What is it? I want to know."

"I saw you in bed with Ted Reed," Suzanne said coldly.

"It's not what you think," Clayton thundered back. His face turned angry. Her statement had confirmed his fears; the truth was out. He had thought that Suzanne had discovered his homosexual relationship with Ted Reed. They had been lovers since childhood. Ted was his only male lover, and Clayton did not think of himself as a homosexual. He generally preferred women, but he found it impossible to end his relationship with boyhood friend. Ted was beginning to openly reveal his homosexuality, and Clayton was now forced to make some hard decisions about his boyhood friend.

"I don't want to see you again," she seethed.

Clayton was unwilling to give up his control over Suzanne, and he wanted to continue his affair with her, as she was a very comely young woman. And he wanted to keep her silent about his homosexual relationship with Ted Reed. He decided to spring his trap on her. It was time to forcefully confront Suzanne with his secret weapon. He snarled, "Look, Suzanne. I got some photographs I want you to see."

"Clayton. I don't want to see."

"You'd better see the photographs. They're really revealing."

"What did you do to me?" Suzanne screamed into the telephone.

"I'll coming to your house and show you." Clayton hung up the telephone.

Emotionally distraught, she fell to the couch. She knew that Clayton would be here within thirty minutes. He had mentioned some photographs, and she pondered what he was talking about. She tried to remember whether any photographs were taken at the party. If there were photographs, they must have been taken after

she had blacked out. She regretted taking the amphetamine pill or whatever Clayton gave her. She realized that Clayton had planned to drug her all along. For what purpose, she did not know.

Getting up from the couch, she started to nervously pace the floor of the living room, waiting for Clayton's arrival. Twenty minutes later, she heard a car drive up in front of her house. Looking out the window, she saw Clayton and Ted Reed exiting a white convertible. Clayton was carrying a large manila envelope in his hand.

Clayton and Ted scurried up the walkway to the front door. Knocking on the door, Clayton cried through the door, "Suzanne! I'm here. I got the photographs."

Suzanne's heart pounded, and she was froze with fear. She didn't want to let Clayton into the house. But at the same time, she wanted to see the mysterious photographs. She feared the worst about the photographs, as she finally recognized that Clayton was capable of doing anything.

Slowly walked to the door, she said through the door, "I'll open the door. But only if you promise not to force your way in."

"I promise," Clayton said. Ted was standing behind him.

Suzanne gently opened the door, and she observed Clayton and Ted standing outside. She said angrily, "What do you want?"

"I just want to speak to you," Clayton blurted out.

"I have nothing to say to you."

"Suzanne. I still love you," he said.

"Clayton. Seductive words are easy for you," she replied, "I no longer believe you."

"I'm a not a homosexual."

"But I saw you with your friend, Ted Reed," she said.

"Ted is only a childhood friend."

"I don't believe you."

"I prefer women," he exclaimed.

"Then why are you here with Ted Reed?" she asked.

"Ted just wanted to come along."

"Suzanne. You're being silly," Ted finally added.

"Clayton. I cannot condone your relationship with Ted Reed," she said sternly.

His eyes fiercely stared at Suzanne. His face turned to anger, and he screamed, "Don't ever call me a homosexual again."

"If it is the truth...."

"You're nothing but a stupid Indian girl," Clayton yelled out.

"Don't call me names," she responded loudly.

"Well. Look at these photographs," he cried out emotionally. He was shaking with anger, and he was almost all of control. Tearing the

manila envelope apart, he thrust the photographs toward her.

Gasping the black and white photographs, Suzanne held them in both of her hands. In disgust, she let out a shriek. The first few photographs shown her posing nude. The next photograph shown her engaged in a sexual act with Clayton. She pondered who took the photographs. The photographs got worst as she examined them one by one. When she finished, she dropped the photographs to the floor.

"Clayton. Why did you do this to me?" She was completely demoralized by the photographs.

"I want you under my control," he screeched, "I want you to do anything I want."

"You're a sick man."

"Don't you ever call me a sick man again," he yelled, "I got the negatives to these photographs."

"You plan to distribute them if I don't cooperate," she said with resignation.

"Honey. You got the right idea," he snarled. "Why I might even send your nude photographs to a girlie magazine." He was confident Suzanne would give to his extortion.

"Oh. You'll look good in a girlie magazine," Ted said to Suzanne.

"I don't have much of a choice. Do I?" she said.

"Nope."

"What do you want me to do?" she asked.

"Come back with me to my house," Clayton ordered, "And spent the rest of the weekend."

"I need to get a few things," she said reluctantly.

"Well. Go get your things."

Suzanne turned around and walked across the living room. Clayton and Ted followed her into the house. Clayton was elated with his easy victory over Suzanne whose rapid submission was completely unexpected.

When Suzanne reached the couch, she immediately grabbed the four-ten shotgun and aimed it at Clayton. Coming to an abrupt stop, he cried fearfully, "What are you doing?"

"Clayton, goodbye." She pulled the trigger.

Clayton was hit in the side. The only part of the shotgun blast had hit him. Holding his bloodied side, he cried out in pain and fear. Staggering backward, he was completely terrified of Suzanne. He didn't think that she was capable of inflicting bodily injury on him. He stood at the door entrance, frozen with terror.

Coldly, Suzanne again raised the four-ten shotgun and took aim at Clayton's crotch. He let out a hellish scream, and he turned around and ran towards the door. Ted closely followed behind. Running out



of the house, they leaped into the white convertible and sped down the road.

In the meantime, Suzanne dropped the shotgun to the floor. Totally shaken, she retreated to the couch and fell back on it. Devastated, she put her hands to her face and quietly sobbed. She couldn't believe that Clayton could have drugged her and raped her. Moreover, Clayton had taken photographs of the whole sordid event. He had conspired to coerce her into a private sexual slavery.

Climbing to her feet, she stepped unsteadily to the front door and pushed it shut. Observing the obscene photographs on the floor, she stooped over and gathered them into her hands. She then carried to the fireplace and threw them into the hearth. Grabbing some matches from the mantel, she set the photographs afire. She watched them slowly burn. Watching the burning photographs had a tranquilizing effect on her.

Then she picked up the shotgun off the floor, and she returned it to her parents' bedroom. She thanked God that weapon was available when she needed it.

Feeling extremely fatigued, she staggered into her bedroom, and she lay on her bed. She didn't attempt to pull the blankets over her shapely body, and she quickly was sleeping soundly.

The next morning Suzanne was still sleeping when the morning sun rose in the early blue sky. Birds were chirping outside her window. When the sunlight light struck her face, she opened her eyes. Rolling over onto her flat stomach, she attempted to go back to sleep. Still drowsy, she thought of the nightmare that she had dreamed. Then she realized that the nightmare was not a dream. Opening her eyes, she studied the room. She wanted to confirm that she was sleeping in her own bedroom. Safely in her own bedroom, she closed her eyes again.

She tried not to think about the contemptible Clayton Shaw and his friend, Ted Reed. She recalled the pornographic photographs and the wild night of drinking beer and taking drugs. She remembered that Clayton still had the negatives. Recounting the shooting of Clayton, she knew that further sleep was impossible. Climbing out of bed, she headed to the bathroom and took a quick shower.

After she donned a white blouse and tan jeans, she went into the kitchen to fix her some breakfast. Although she wasn't hungry, she forced herself to eat some fried potatoes, fried eggs and ham. She didn't want to make herself sick by not eating. While she ate, she developed strategy on handling her personal crisis.

Suzanne decided that the truth about her drugging and rape must never be revealed. She had her reputation to protect and her life to

live, and she didn't want anyone to feel sorry for her. She reasoned that Clayton and Ted would keep quiet about the rape since she knew that they were homosexual lovers. And, because of the shooting, Clayton was bound to stay away from her.

Trixie Spearman was the only Native American person who knew that she planned to attend a party with Clayton. In fact Trixie had seen her riding with Clayton in his white convertible. She would have to deceive Trixie about the outcome of her date with Clayton and the party. Suzanne knew that Trixie regularly attended church on Sunday, and she decided to attend Sunday school and church. It would give her opportunity to innocently talk to Trixie without raising any suspicions.

Finishing her meal, Suzanne quickly dressed for church. She elected to wear a simple blue dress and black loafers. She dared not to wear any makeup, as Pastor Cooper regularly preached against women wearing any form of makeup. Somehow the wearing of makeup would lead the transgressor into a life of sin. Out of respect for Pastor Cooper, Trixie and her never wore makeup to church.

Grabbing her Bible, Suzanne left the house and climbed into the family's old pickup truck. It had a stick shift, but she had driven the truck many times before. Shifting it into gear, truck pulled out of the driveway onto the street. The church was a mile and a half down the road. Within a few minutes, she drove the laboring truck into the church parking lot. Exiting the truck, she strolled smartly into the church.

The sign on the church proudly read: The Community Church of the Lord. Painted white, the church was built of wood and looked like a typical old church. It had once been a Congregational Church, which long ago had been abandoned. Most of the parishioners now were Native American. The community church was a charismatic church that believed in faith healing, the influence of the Devil in Man's daily life, Man's need to be born again, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. It forbade the drinking of alcohol, the use of mind-altering drugs, smoking, social dancing, and other usual Biblical sins. Like most charismatic churches, it had a small congregation, and it was financially poor. The church was verily able to support its pastor who long ago took an oath of poverty.

Entering the church, Suzanne looked for Trixie Spearman, who was the secretary for the Sunday school. Pastor Cooper was in the church auditorium, giving final instructions to the Sunday School teachers. In his middle forties, he was a Native American. He was tall with grayish black hair and brown eyes. He was attired in an old blue suit that had seen better days. Finishing his briefing, he started to walk towards the church entrance.

Suzanne didn't especially desire to talk to the moralistic and pious preacher. She felt guilty about her wild partying, drug taking and premarital sexual relations with Clayton Shaw. She hurried across the room to avoid Pastor Cooper. But she was too late. He frantically waved to her, which caused her to stop and wait for the pastor.

When Pastor Cooper reached Suzanne, he said, "What's the hurry this morning?"

"I'm trying to find Trixie?" Suzanne replied.

"Trixie hasn't arrived yet."

"She usually here by now," she said.

"Why aren't you in Montana with your parents," the pastor asked.

"I was too busy getting ready for senior graduation," she answered.

"You're missing an excellent Bible camp."

"I know."

"Do you plan to attend a Bible-oriented college?" he asked.

"Well, no. I plan to attend the University of Washington in Seattle," she replied, "I want to major in social work."

"Suzanne. I wish you would reconsider your decision not to attend a Bible college."

"But there are many student Christian organizations at the University of Washington."

"But it is not the same as attending a Bible college," the pastor argued.

"Well. I'll give it some thought," she said politely.

"I do worry about your spiritual welfare," he said sincerely.

"I do believe in the Lord," Suzanne answered, "Lord will watch over me." She gave the pastor the pious answers that he wanted to hear. She was annoyed at the pastor's attempt to manipulate her. She longed for the day when she wouldn't have to attend church and Sunday school.

"I'm glad you're committed to the Lord," the pastor replied, wondering whether Suzanne was feigned religiousness for his benefit.

"I'll be okay," she replied.

"Well. I'm happy you're in church this morning," he said. He then left Suzanne, and he walked over to another young female parishioner of Native American heritage.

About this time, Trixie Spearman entered the church, wearing a white dress. Suzanne immediately wasted no time in seeking out Trixie, who was also delighted to see Suzanne at church. She was curious about the outcome of Suzanne's date.

When Suzanne approached, Trixie inquired, "Suzanne. How did your date go with Clayton Shaw?"

"He was simply wonderful." Suzanne feigned enthusiasm.

"Huh! Maybe it isn't true that he is a lady killer."

"Clayton is too much a gentleman to be a womanizer," Suzanne offered.

"Did he try to seduce you?"

"No, he didn't."

"Betty Harmon told me a completely different story about Clayton," Trixie revealed.

"Betty is very wrong about Clayton," Suzanne countered.

"Well. I don't why Betty would lie to me," Trixie said.

"And I would lie to you?"

"No. But I think Betty is holding back some dark secret about Clayton," Trixie asserted.

"There is no dark secret about Clayton," Suzanne emphasized.

"Well. I'm happy that your date with Clayton turned out well," Trixie said.

"I had a lot of fun."

"It looks like you and Clayton will be dating often."

"No. Clayton is not my type," Suzanne revealed.

Trixie instinctively perceived that something had happened to Suzanne on the date in spite of her denials. It was obvious that Suzanne was not being honest with her. The girl who was once infatuated with Clayton was no longer infatuated with him after one date. Apparently, there was some dark secret about Clayton that Betty and Suzanne were unwilling to reveal to her.

"Why is Clayton not your type?" Trixie asked.

"Clayton is handsome, and he is fun," Suzanne related, "But he's still not my type."

"You mean Clayton and you we not compatible. "

"Yeah. We' re not compatible," Suzanne agreed quickly.

"Did you say something to Clayton to make him mad?" Trixie asked, intending to tease Suzanne.

"Trixie. I don't appreciate your attempt at humor."

"Something must have happened."

"Nothing happened between Clayton and me."

"Well, Suzanne. I'm glad that you don't plan to date Clayton again," Trixie said, "He's so arrogant and a stuffed shirt."

Grimacing at her tormentor, Suzanne said, "Let's drop the subject of Clayton Shaw."

"Okay." She respected Suzanne's decision not to reveal anything to her, and she decided not to push the subject further.

"I expect you won't be attending the University of Oregon," Trixie declared, knowing that Suzanne wouldn't appreciate the question.

"Yeah. You'll right. I plan to attend the University of Washington in the Fall."

"You and Michael Dodd will be attending the same university," Trixie smiled.

"Trixie! Don't make me mad."

"I wasn't suggesting anything."

"You're always bring up the name of Michael Dodd," Suzanne seethed, "knowing that I care little for the individual."

"Well. He'll be attending the University of Washington," Trixie reiterated

"The University of Washington has some forty thousand students," Suzanne said.

"You're still bound to run into Michael."

"I don't think so," Suzanne said, "We have nothing in common."

"At least, you can always look him up."

"Trixie! I have no reason to associate with Michael."

"It's your loss."

Seeking some revenge, Suzanne said, "I could never figure out why you attend Sunday school and church. "

"It's pretty normal to attend Sunday school and church," Trixie remarked.

"Well. My God-fearing parents make me attend church or I wouldn't be here."

"My mother never made me attend church," Trixie replied, "Anyway, I like being with people."

"Trixie. Don't get me wrong about church," Suzanne said, "It a very worthy social institution."

"I do believe in God."

"Yeah. But you're always going to parties and dancing."

"I really see no conflict between my religious beliefs and my social life," Trixie defended. Suzanne's remarks were making her feel guilty, as she saw no harm in participating in secular social activities.

"I wouldn't mind attending a more respectable church," Suzanne announced.

Trixie immediately understood her meaning and smiled at the high-sounding but flaunting Suzanne Redwood. She hoped that Suzanne would obtain the respectability for which she was striving.

"I don't take church that seriously," Trixie chided.

"If Pastor Cooper found out about your partying."

"Suzanne. You won't tell Pastor Cooper."

"Only if you quit mentioning Michael Dodd."

"You need not worry about Michael," Trixie responded.

"That's goo to hear."

Margaret Cooper, the pastor's wife, waved to the young women to come into the auditorium, as Sunday school was about to begin. She was a skinny White woman in her early forties. The pastor's wife taught the young adult Bible class.

Together both women walked towards where the Sunday school class was meeting. Suzanne hoped that blonde woman but plain-looking woman had something interesting to say this morning. She usually preached about the immorality of the present-day society. More than once Suzanne had dozed off in Sunday school class.

## Chapter 4

The church basement was full of people: parishioners, friends, and relatives. Babies were crying; children were playing and yelling; and adults were visiting and chatting. Teenage boys were grouped in a far corner, talking about Saturday's football games. Teenage girls also huddled together at a table, chatting about diverse subjects. There were portable tables pushed against a far wall, which were full of delicious food.

The Community Church of the Lord was holding a potluck dinner. It was late September in 1962. The church was honoring its college students, who would soon be leaving for college or vocational school. Suzanne Redwood and Trixie Spearman were among the honorees. Chuck Cooper, the son of Pastor Cooper, was also being honored along with five other students. Tall like his mother, Chuck had a light skin, light brown eyes, and green eyes.

Feeling exultant, Suzanne quietly watched the festivities. Trixie was standing next to her, saying nothing. The pastor and his wife, Margaret, were moving from family to family, welcoming them to the potluck dinner.

Although she was now joyful, Suzanne remembered the earlier summer months when she was slowly recovering from her encounter with Clayton Shaw and his friend, Ted Reed. Since the rape, she had countless times recalled the debauchery at the hands of Clayton Shaw.

Clayton Shaw had survived the shooting. He told the police that an intruder had shot him at his parent's home. He said the perpetrator was a Mexican man, intend on burglarizing the house. Ted Reed confirmed Clayton's tale. The local town residents were in an uproar for weeks. Afterwards, Clayton and Ted headed to Portland, Oregon to seek summer work.

Suzanne pondered what Clayton might do with the obscene photographs of her. Clearly, he must appreciate that she would kill him if he publicized the photographs. The shooting must have taught him a lesson since he had not attempted to threaten or contact her. She thought that he might keep the photographs to prevent her from exposing his apparent homosexuality. She had no intentions of exposing his homosexuality. It matter little to her what his sexual preferences were. She simply wanted Clayton out of her life.

Pastor Cooper announced to the gathering that dinner was ready and to line up and dish up the hot food. Suzanne and Trixie got into long line and waited their turn.

"Well, Suzanne. You're on your way to college," Trixie exclaimed, "I can hardly believe it."

"It has been a long road," Suzanne replied.

"You got the brains to make it through college."

"Attending college won't be easy."

"I'm really happy for you."

"Do you know that I'm first one of my family to attend college," Suzanne related.

"Well. You deserve to go to college," Trixie said, "You should really like the University of Washington."

"I'm looking forward to attending the university."

"You'll have all those young men to look at and date," Trixie said.

"I'll be far too busy with my studies to worry about men," Suzanne replied. Both let out a giggle.

"What do you plan to study?" Trixie asked.

"I want to eventually get a Master of Social Work degree."

"It sound highbrow to me."

"Well, Trixie. Are you still planning to go to Portland," Suzanne asked.

"I plan to become a secretary," Trixie answered, "Once my studies are done I plan to return to the Colville Indian Reservation."

"There are not many job opportunities here for you."

"I'll find a job."

"Seattle and Portland have a lot to offer a person."

"Well. I want to stay near my parents," Trixie said.

"I can understand your feelings," Suzanne replied.

"Anyway, I like living on the reservation."

"You couldn't get me to stay here," Suzanne commented, "There are many more opportunities for a professional person in the urban areas."

"Oh, Suzanne. You'll probably get married and live forever in Seattle," Trixie announced.

"You may be right."

Suzanne and Trixie finally reached the food tables. Grabbing a couple of paper plates, they dished up with food, and they sat down on one of the dinning tables. While they ate, Pastor Cooper introduced the college students one by one. When their names were called, both Suzanne and Trixie rose to their feet. The pastor explained that Suzanne planned to attend the University of Washington, and she planned to study social work. He next explained that Trixie planned to attend a business college in Portland, Oregon, and she planned to become



a secretary. The appreciative audience gave them both a loud applause.

Then the pastor introduced his only son, Chuck Cooper. The popular pastor told the crowd that his son was attending a Bible College in Portland, Oregon. He was proud that his son planned to study for the ministry. The assembly rose to their feet and gave Chuck a standing ovation. Pastor Cooper broke into tears, but he quickly regained his composure and continued with the introduction of the other students. After introducing five more students, the pastor gave a short talk about the importance of higher education. Finishing his talk, he sat down.

"It was really tearful introduction," Trixie choked.

"Do you mean Chuck?" Suzanne asked.

"Yes."

"Why is Chuck going to attend a Bible college?"

"I think his father attended the same Bible college," Trixie said.

"Why isn't Chuck attending a more reputable Christian college?" Suzanne asked.

"Well. Chuck was never a great student in school," Trixie said.

"It's probably the only school that would admit him," Suzanne commented.

"Chuck is bound to make a great preacher."

"Chuck isn't the preacher type," Suzanne stated.

"You may be right. But I heard that Chuck has found the Lord," Trixie said seriously.

"Chuck has become a born-again Christian!"

"Yes."

"Well. You still need some brains to become a preacher," Suzanne offered.

"Chuck has become a serious student of the Bible."

"Trixie. I'll predict that Chuck doesn't make through the school year."

"I don't know. Chuck really believes in the Lord," Trixie said.

"We'll see what happens. "

Suzanne and Chuck Cooper never have been friends, even though they have attended the same church for years. He was a typical preacher's kid who excelled in embarrassing his father. His poor performance in school did not help his self-esteem. Suzanne's intelligence intimidated Chuck, so they have had few conversations. Chuck was a better friend of Trixie, because she was more accessible than Suzanne.

"When are you leaving for Seattle?" Trixie asked Suzanne.

"My father is driving me over tomorrow," Suzanne smiled.

"Why are you smiling?"

"Because in a few days I'll be free of my parents," Suzanne exclaimed, "I can finally do what I want."

"You do have strict parents."

"You can say that again."

"You do have strict parents." They both laughed together at Trixie's humor.

"The things I'll be able to do," Suzanne exclaimed.

"Like dancing and drinking," Trixie replied.

"Why not?"

"Well. Once in awhile, I like to go dancing and have something to drink," Trixie admitted.

"Yeah. I've heard about your partying."

"At least I'm honest about it."

"When are you headed to Portland, Oregon?" Suzanne asked Trixie.

"In about a week."

"Where do you plan to stay in Portland?"

"For a few weeks I plan to live with an aunt," Trixie replied.

"I'll be living in college residence hall," Suzanne revealed.

"Don't you plan to join a sorority?" Trixie asked.

"I don't know anyone who belongs to a sorority."

"Yeah. You probably would need someone to sponsor you," Trixie said.

"Anyway, I'm more interested in the fraternities," Suzanne joked.

"Well. That's where the boys are."

"And some very classy boys too. "

Finishing their meal, Suzanne and Trixie said their goodbyes to their friends and fellow parishioners. Pastor Cooper and his wife told them that they would pray for them. Leaving the church, they headed to Suzanne's place, as she had more packaging to do.

At the entrance to the residence hall Suzanne Redwood thanked her father for bringing her to the campus of the University of Washington.

Her Native American father was in his late forties, but his black hair wasn't even a little gray. He was of average height and weight. Today he wore a red plaid shirt and blue jeans, which was unusual for him. He liked to wear dress shirt and slacks, as he was an administrator for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

She rarely call him by his first name, which was Tom. She usually called him father or dad. A God-fearing man, he raised Suzanne to fear God and to live a Christian life. But, as Suzanne

grew older, he sensed that she had little interest in the things of God. He was convinced that she would eventually stray from the teachings of the church.

Suzanne kissed her father goodbye and then watched the family station wagon faded into the distance. Elated, she was now free of her godly parents. But she also realized that she was now solely responsible for her own life and the consequences of her new found freedom. Except for one date with Clayton Shaw , she had never been a true sinner, but she vowed to make up for lost time.

She decided to take a walking tour of the campus. The University of Washington was located in Seattle, Washington, next to Lake Washington. Some forty thousand students attend the university. Downtown Seattle was mere five miles away. Looking east, she saw the rugged Cascade Mountains. Looking west, she observed the snow- capped Olympic Mountains, which soar upward from the Olympic Peninsula. Looking south, she sighted Mount Rainier rising high in the blue clear sky.

As she walked through the campus, Suzanne admired the stately picturesque buildings, constructed of stone and landscaped parkways. Green grass and tall trees were everywhere. It was a beautiful campus. The campus closely fit her early preconceptions. She had made the right decision by attending the University of Washington.

After walking for some thirty minutes, Suzanne returned to the residence hall, and she went up to her room. Her room on the first floor of the residence hall. Building was located on north side of the campus, near 45th Street North. She could see the vehicular traffic going up and down the street. Greek Row was not far from her room.

The room was rectangular shape, and its walls were painted an off-white. It was nothing spectacular. It had two twin-size beds, two small closets, two dressers, two student desks with reading lights, and two bookcases. Each dresser had a mirror above it. A large multi-pane window overlooked a stately garden, and the window was shaded by white blinds.

Suzanne was still unpacking her clothes when a young woman walked into room. Wearing a simple blouse and blue jeans, she was petite girl with blackish straight hair and dark eyes. With a creamy complexion, she had all the right curves and a pretty face.

Looking up, Suzanne watched the woman walk into the room, carrying a suitcase in her hand. Suzanne immediately understood that the woman was her roommate, and she appeared to be Caucasian. She quickly introduced herself, as she was very excited about meeting

her new roommate. "Hi. My name is Suzanne Redwood."

"I'm Vivien Renwick."

"You must be my roommate," Suzanne said cheerfully.

"This room 115."

"Yes."

"Then I'm your roommate for better or worst," Vivien joked lightly.

Suzanne immediately liked looks of her new roommate, who was confident and pretty. Suzanne said, "You are a first year student?"

"Yeah. I graduated from high school last Spring."

"This is also my first year," Suzanne revealed.

"What do you plan to study?"

"Oh. I plan to study social work."

"I plan to become a high school teacher," Vivien related.

"Vivien. Where are you from?"

"I'm grew up on Mercer Island," Vivien said, "Mercer Island is a suburb of Seattle. Its located on an island in the middle of Lake Washington."

"What do your parents do?" Suzanne asked, curious about her roommate.

"My father is an engineer for the Boeing Aircraft Company, and my mother is a school teacher."

"I'm impressed."

"Where are you from?" Vivien inquired.

"I spent all my life at Coulee Dam, Washington on the Colville Indian Reservation," Suzanne answered.

"Where is Coulee Dam?"

"It located next to Grand Coulee Dam."

"You look like a Native American," Vivien said.

"I'm an enrolled Native American. I'm a member of the Colville Confederated Tribes." Suzanne didn't like being questioned about her racial heritage, because she never knew whether the questioner harbored any racial bias towards Native Americans. She feared being discriminated against because of her race.

"I hope you don't mind my prying."

"No. It's obvious that I'm Native American," Suzanne said.

"It was foolish of me to have asked," Vivien replied.

"I hope that you're not prejudice," Suzanne inquired.

"Nope. I'm rather liberal," Vivien said, "My parents have been active in the civil rights movement since the mid- fifties."

"The civil rights movement has never come to Coulee Dam," Suzanne said.

"There must be a lot of red necks around Grand Coulee Dam."

Suzanne didn't like anyone disparaging her home town.. But she had to concede that there were some red necks in the area. She rarely complained about discrimination. She had simply tolerated it as a fact of life. She hoped in her heart that Seattle was a different kind of place. She said, "There are some prejudice people."

"There must be a lot of Cowboys in the area of the Dam."

"Yeah. If you want to call them that."

"Am I embarrassing you?" Vivien asked politely.

"I don't like to talk about racial prejudice," Suzanne said.

"Well, Suzanne. You just can't put your head into the sand and ignore the problem," Vivien said bluntly.

"I don't want to talk about it."

"Okay. But you'll always have a friend in me." Vivien was undeterred by Suzanne's answer.

"Thanks," Suzanne frowned. From television and the local newspapers, she had learned that there was a civil rights movement happening in the nation. Thinking it was strictly a African American movement, Suzanne simply ignored it. In her life she had met few African American people, and she had no African American friends. Few African American lived in Coulee Dam. It never occurred to her that Native Americans were affected by the movement. She couldn't equate the racial prejudice against African Americans with racial prejudice against Native Americans.

Suzanne returned to her task of unpacking her clothes and placing them in drawers and her closet. Vivien started doing the same. Suzanne had never before met a self-proclaimed White liberal. She now would be living with one. In fact she had never before lived with a White person. Consequently, she was happy that Vivien was a supporter of the civil rights movement.

Suzanne wouldn't admit it to Vivien, but metropolitan Seattle was overwhelming to her. Vivien knew the city, and she was bound to be invaluable in providing advice to her about urban life. It would take her some time to get use to the big city. Her adjustment to the urban life of Seattle was bound to be easier because of Vivien Renwick. Suzanne also was delighted with the availability of young men on campus. She thought that she would have little difficulties meeting young men.

When two o'clock came, Suzanne turned to Vivien, and she said, "Well, I must go over to the Administration Building and change a course."

"Which course?" Vivien asked.

"I'm dropping calculus and adding a literature class."

"Can I go with you?"

"Sure." Suzanne was delighted that Vivien had volunteered to go

with her to the Administration Building. She could depend on the friendship of her new roommate.

Suzanne put on a light jacket and waited for Vivien. When Vivien was ready, they headed to the entrance and eventually exited the residence hall. The Administration Building was a half mile away. While they strolled through the campus, Vivien told her about Seattle. Suzanne listened with interest, for she had only visited Seattle twice before.

Entering the Administration Building, Suzanne and Vivien proceeded to the Registration Office. There were several long lines of students waiting to delete or add courses. Suzanne estimated that it might take over an hour to get to the front of the line. She didn't want to impose on Vivien. She said, "Vivien. You don't have to wait in line with me."

"No. I'll wait with you," she replied.

"The lines are long."

"The University of Washington is a big school," Vivien said.

"How big are the classes," Suzanne inquired.

"The some freshman classes have over two hundred students," Vivien said, "It depends on the class."

"I'm not afraid of large classes," Suzanne stressed, "At least you know how well you're doing."

Vivien looked at other students waiting in line, and she spotted a male student who looked like a Native American. He was quietly waiting in line. Tall and beefy, he had short straight black hair, brown eyes, and a bronze skin.

Turning to Suzanne, Vivien pointed to the young man, and she said enthusiastically, "Isn't that a Native American student?"

Suzanne's eyes followed Vivien's pointing finger to the Native American student. To her dismay it was Michael Dodd.

"He's sure a handsome young man," Vivien remarked innocently. Suzanne grinned at Vivien, and she was momentarily speechless. It had never occurred to her that a White woman would find Michael Dodd attractive.

"That's Michael Dodd," Suzanne finally said.

"Then you do know him."

"Yes. We both are members of the Colville Tribe."

"Did he live in Coulee Dam?" Vivien asked.

"Yes. We attended the same schools."

"You're going to have introduce me to Michael Dodd."

"Why?" Suzanne asked, frowning.

"Because I'd like to meet him, and he's handsome."

"Michael and I not very good friends," Suzanne related.

"Why not?"

"We have hardly spoke to one another since primary school," Suzanne revealed. She wanted to discourage Vivien from meeting Michael.

"Is there something wrong with Michael Dodd?" Vivien asked.

"No. We just don't get along. "

"Well. I suppose familiarity breeds contempt."

"I don't find him that attractive," Suzanne said coldly.

"Michael is really handsome to me."

Suzanne's face blushed. She perceived that she was losing the battle. Out of desperation, she said, "Michael Dodd is illegitimate."

"What do you mean?"

"He was born out of wedlock. "

"How do you know?"

"Because my mother told me," Suzanne explained, "Michael was conceived and born while Stanley Dodd was fighting in Europe during World War II."

"He's still good looking."

"Well. I've warned you."

"It doesn't make any difference to me," Vivien said defiantly.

"I'm not trying to disparage Michael Dodd," Suzanne said.

"Suzanne. You sound like a disappointed lover."

Suzanne's shapely body jerked involuntarily. No one had ever accused her of having any romantic aspirations towards Michael. She realized that her aspersions against Michael might be misunderstood. In her entire life, she never had any romantic notions about Michael. She blurted out, "Michael and I were never lovers. We never dated, and I never had any desires to date him."

"I wish I had grown up in Coulee Dam," Vivien replied.

Suzanne knew it was useless to talk further to Vivien about Michael. She also didn't want to leave the wrong impression with Vivien, who apparently found Michael desirable. She said, "I look upon Michael Dodd as part of my extended family."

"Are you related to Michael?"

"No. I'm not related to Michael."

"Could you introduce me to him?"

"Vivien. I won't introduce you to him."

"Why?"

Suzanne thought to herself for a few seconds and then replied, "In my culture girls must introduce themselves."

"That sounds strange," Vivien commented.

"Strange or not, you're going to have meet him on your own," Suzanne asserted.

"I may just do that." Vivien was challenged by Suzanne's statement.

Suzanne finally made it to the front of the line, and she quickly finished her business with the Registration Office. Leaving the Administration Building, they headed back to their room.

Nine weeks later, Suzanne Redwood and Vivien Renwick were walking together on campus. It was Friday afternoon, and the day was overcast and cold. They had just finished lunch, and they were taking a stroll towards the student union building.

The Fall quarter was quickly coming to an end, and they were chatting about their final course examinations, which were a week away. They both were doing well in school, receiving A's and B's on their mid-term examinations. Hoping to maintain a "B plus" grade average, they were anxious about their final examinations.

"Lately, you've been studying very hard," Vivien said to Suzanne.

"I'm taking some hard courses," Suzanne said.

"Why are you taking chemistry and zoology courses?"

"My college advisor recommended them," Suzanne replied.

"What does chemistry and zoology have to do with social work?"

"I didn't tell my advisor that I plan to go into social work."

"What did you tell her?" Vivien asked.

"I told her that I was a pre-major," Suzanne responded, "Based upon my high school transcript, she recommended science courses."

"It sounds like you're a pre-med major."

"Well. I'll probably receive B's in the two courses."

"Then you should study medicine," Vivien said.

"No. I like social work."

As they approached the student union building, they sighted a Native American student, standing near the entrance of the building. In his late twenties, he was a tall man, and he was wearing a blue denim jacket, a red shirt, and faded blue jeans. He had long black hair and a blemished face.

"Who's the Native American man?" Vivien asked Suzanne.

"His name is Clarence White Fox," Suzanne said, "He's a Sioux from South Dakota."

"Is he a friend of yours?"

"No. He is just an acquaintance."

"Where did you meet him?" Vivien asked.

"He's the President of the Native American Student Association," Suzanne explained.

"Have you attended one of their meetings?"



"Yeah. I did once. But I found the meeting to be boring," Suzanne related, "And they sounded radical."

"Radical! That sounds interesting," Vivien exclaimed.

"I knew you would say that!"

"Suzanne. I'm very interested in minority organizations," Vivien announced.

"Then you should attend one of their meetings."

"I think I will."

"Maybe you'll find out that I'm right," Suzanne said emphatically.

"When is the next meeting?" Vivien inquired.

"Tonight. At seven o'clock. At the student union building."

"Suzanne. Do you want to come with me?"

"No. I must do some hard studying tonight."

Clarence White Fox sighted Suzanne and moved towards her. He always a little intimidated by her coldness and seemingly lack of interest. He said loudly to her, "Hey Suzanne."

Suzanne and Vivien stopped. Looking at Clarence, Suzanne said, "Hi Clarence."

Anticipating a negative answer, he asked Suzanne, "Are you coming to the meeting of the Native American Student Association tonight?"

"No. I'm too busy tonight," Suzanne answered.

Clarence was visibly disappointed with Suzanne's reply. Vivien sensed his letdown. She blurted out, "I plan to attend your meeting tonight?"

"Who are you?" Clarence asked Vivien. He scrutinized Vivien. She appeared to be Caucasian, but he was not sure since she had dark hair and eyes.

"I'm Suzanne's roommate," Vivien replied.

"She's Vivien Renwick," Suzanne said. Then she introduced Clarence to Vivien.

"Vivien. Do you belong to a tribe?" Clarence asked.

"Vivien is a Cherokee," Suzanne smiled.

"Huh. A Cherokee!" Clarence mouthed.

Vivien quickly decided to go along with the ruse, and she said, "Yeah, I'm a Cherokee."

"Well. You're welcome to come to the meeting tonight," Clarence said. He wasn't sure what to make of Vivien's claim. But he did know that there were many light-skinned Cherokees, and Suzanne had said that Vivien was a Cherokee.

"I've already informed Vivien of the place and time of the meeting," Suzanne reported.

"Vivien. I'll see you at the meeting," Clarence said. Leaving Suzanne

and Vivien behind, he headed towards the library.

"Why did you say that I was a Cherokee?" Vivien asked Suzanne, "I don't like to being deceitful."

"I was just teasing Clarence," Suzanne said.

"I don't think it's funny"

"No one will believe that you are a Cherokee," Suzanne reassured, "especially Clarence."

"Why Clarence?"

"Because Clarence believes a person has to be a full-blooded Native American to be a real Native American," Suzanne explained.

Vivien was disturbed by Suzanne's offhanded remark, as she didn't realized that Native Americans categorized themselves into mixed-bloods and full-bloods. She assumed any person who was descendant of Native Americans was Native American. Maybe she was just unintentionally naive and bias.

"I suspect that Clarence is a full-blooded Native American," Vivien offered.

"Yes, he is."

"Well. Clarence is entitled to his convictions," Vivien asserted. She could empathized with Clarence's views, but she realized that his excessive pride in his race could be a hindrance.

"I fully agree," Suzanne agreed, wanting to avoid futile and needless argument with Vivien.

"And I don't want to pose as a Native American, even as a mixed-blood," Vivien declared.

"It's not going to hurt you to masquerade as a Native American," Suzanne quipped.

"You sound like a bigot." Vivien was disappointed with Suzanne's disparaging remarks.

"Vivien. You'll taking me too seriously."

"Sometimes I have doubts about you," Vivien said seriously.

"I was just trying to have some fun with you. "

"I don't like your attempt at levity."

"I am sorry," Suzanne grinned.

"What are grinning at?" Vivien asked.

"At you. You take life so seriously."

"Suzanne. I care about people, especially minorities," Vivien preached.

"I don't view myself as an uncaring person."

"Sometimes you are selfish."

"I do belong to a minority group," Suzanne countered. She didn't object to Vivien's critical comments, because she needed Vivien's friendship and advise.

"That's no excuse."

"Maybe."

"Suzanne. I know you are trying," Vivien conceded.

"You're being too harsh on me," Suzanne finally protested.

"Why do you say that?"

"Well. I didn't grow up in a White middle-class family with college educated parents like you."

"Suzanne. I recognize that you are a Native American woman," Vivien conceded, "and that you come from a deprived background."

"Vivien. Don't be patronizing."

"Then what are you saying?"

"I'm saying it isn't easy to grow up a Native American woman in this society," Suzanne asserted.

"Meaning?"

"I have to try harder," Suzanne said.

"Ambition is not a virtue," Vivien remarked.

"I'm not talking about ambition."

"Suzanne. You should be satisfied with Native American things. "

"I still believe in the American dream."

"It's just illusion," Vivien sated.

"I'm not cynic."

"But it is up to you to choose between Native American things and White things," Vivien announced.

"At times you can be impossible," Suzanne said.

"You're to have quit being a social climber," Vivien argued, "And accept that you're a Native American woman."

"Social Climber!" Suzanne exclaimed, "You're typecasting me."

"Suzanne. You should be proud you're a Native American woman."

"I didn't say I wasn't proud."

"Frankly, you seem overly ambitious."

"We're getting nowhere with this conversation," Suzanne announced, "Let's go back to our room."

"Good Idea."

Suzanne and Vivien turned around and rambled back to their residence hall room. They studied until five o'clock, and then they went to dinner. After eating dinner at the cafeteria, they again returned to their room. It was nearing six-thirty, Vivien was changing her clothes.

"Suzanne. Do you any Native American bead work?" Vivien asked innocently.

"Yes, I do." Suzanne went to her dresser and picked up a medallion, which was beaded with black and brown beads. An eagle design was beaded into the medallion. She showed it to Vivien.

"It's beautiful," Vivien commented, "Who made the medallion."

"My mother."

"Can I wear it to the meeting of the Native American students?"

"You're welcome to wear it."

"Thanks," Vivien replied

"Wearing the medallion should make you look more like a Native American woman," Suzanne offered teasingly.

"Suzanne. I don't plan to say that I'm a Native American."

"Chicken!"

"I just don't think it's right to deceive people."

"No one is going to know," Suzanne said, placing the intricate eagle medallion around Vivien's delicate neck.

Looking into a mirror, Vivien said, "The medallion does look impressive."

"Go ahead and wear it," Suzanne urged.

"Yes. I will wear it."

"Have a good time," Suzanne said.

Vivien donned her short leather jacket and left the room. Exiting the residence hall, she plodded to the student union building, which three blocks away.

Anxious about meeting the Native American students, Vivien grew more uncertain and jittery near the student union building. She pictured the Native American students refusing to allow her to attend their membership meeting. Entering the building, she climbed a broad stairway to the second floor. Searching for Room 204, she stepped down the long hallway. Hearing the voices of students, she headed to the room from which the voices were originating. It was Room 204.

Still unsure, Vivien stood waiting at the door. A few seconds later, two male Native American students appeared in the hallway and quickly entered the room. Without hesitating, she followed the two young males into the room, and she sat down on a metal chair at the back of the room.

Painted yellow, the square-shaped room was of a medium size, and it had one large window, decorated by green drapes. There were four rows of metal chairs, eight chairs to a row. An old wooden table was positioned at the front of the room, and there were wooden chairs for four people at the table.

Clarence White Fox was already sitting on one chair at the table's far right side. Buried in deep thought, he was studiously examining some official-looking papers. Periodically, he would look up, scan the room and then return to his reading.

As the minutes ticked by, Native American students filed into the room and sat down. Fifteen minutes later, most of the chairs were filled. The dress of the day was casual shirts or tops and blue jeans.

The assembly was equally split between males and females.

Vivien Renwick heard a sonorous voice, and she glanced at the door. The resonant voice belonged to Michael Dodd. He and a buddy entered the room, and they found seats in the front row.

Pleased with his presence, Vivien had immediately recognized Michael Dodd. He was one of the reasons why she came to the meeting. She desperately wanted to meet him. Suzanne had never introduced her to Michael, though she had several opportunities. Growing frustrated with Suzanne's reluctance, she decided to take matters into her own hands.

When Michael entered the room, he has eyes immediately fell on Vivien. Finding her attractive, he pondered whether she was a Native American. She did have blackish straight hair and dark eyes but a creamy complexion. Since she was wearing an eagle medallion, he assumed that she must be a mixed-blood Native American.

Clarence White Fox glanced at his wrist watch. Rising to his feet, he called the meeting to order, and he introduced himself as the President of the Native American Student Association. Then he introduced the Vice- President and then the Secretary, who was a tall slender young woman from Montana. The Secretary then read the minutes of the previous meeting. After some minor corrections, the minutes were promptly approved by voice vote.

Eyeing the students attending the meeting, Clarence said, "Let's have every student introduce themselves. I see some new faces."

"Please state your name and tribe," the secretary instructed.

Clarence first pointed to Michael Dodd who immediately introduced himself. "I'm Michael Dodd. I'm a member of the Colville Tribe."

Starting with first row, the students introduced themselves one by one, working their way back to the fourth row.

Feeling uneasy and isolated, Vivien watched as the introductions neared her row. She would soon have to introduce herself. She desired to end the innocent subterfuge of being a Cherokee. But losing her nerve, she figured that she had no other choice but to continue the ruse. She was afraid the other students might think that she was prying into their native affairs.

When her turn came, Vivien reluctantly stood up. She remembered that Suzanne told her the Cherokees were mainly from Oklahoma. She declared, "I'm Vivien Renwick. I'm a Cherokee from Oklahoma."

Puzzled at Vivien's words, Clarence asked Vivien, "You don't have an Oklahoma accent."

Thinking quickly, she responded, "Oh. My father's parents are

from Oklahoma. "

"I'm not disputing that you are a Cherokee," Clarence said defensively, "I was just wondering about your accent."

Vivien saw Michael curiously looking at her from the front row. He had a surprised expression on his face when she made her announcement. She was tempted to reveal the truth, but, already committed, she wanted to avoid looking foolish or devious. She was the last student to state her name and tribe.

Clarence continued with meeting, going through a routine agenda, which consumed forty minutes. Vivien was becoming bored with the uneventful meeting. She thought that the Native American students would be more cognizant of their plight. Clarence came to the last item on the agenda.

With the official-looking papers in his hands, Clarence asserted, "I got in my hands some top secret documents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These documents show that the BIA is conspiring with the State of Washington to terminate the tribes."

"Yeah. The BIA even lists the tribes it wants to terminate," the Vice-President shouted irately. Subject to emotional outbursts, he was a young man of nineteen years and a Native American from western Washington state.

"How did you get the BIA documents?" Michael asked.

"A friend of mine who works for the BIA Western Washington Agency gave them to me," Clarence asserted.

"He's providing us inside information," the Vice-President cried out emotionally.

The Native American students, including Michael, responded angrily to the BIA's relentless efforts to terminate the tribes.

Thought Vivien didn't fully understand the meaning of termination, she joined with the other students in protesting the BIA's ill-conceived policy of termination. She finally heard something that she liked.

"Let's march on the BIA office," Clarence yelled out, "and confront them with their policy of termination."

"Great idea," a student agreed.

"Let's march and protest," the Vice-president yelled back.

The now inflamed students rose to their feet and roared their enthusiastic approval to march on the office of the bureaucratic rascals. A few students started to sing the derisive BIA song.

Vivien quickly found the tune to be to her liking and began to lip synch the protest song. She gazed at Michael who was also singing the BIA song. She admired him for supporting Native American causes and his apparent dissident inclinations.

After singing the BIA song, the students quieted down and returned to their seats. The planning for the protest march on the BIA commenced. Clarence opined, "We should march on the BIA next Friday."

"That will give us a ten days to organize the protest march," the Vice-President stated excitedly.

"We'll need at least a week to contact the other Native American organizations about the protest march," the Secretary pointed out.

After a quick vote, the students resolved to march on the BIA the following Friday. Clarence then said, "We need someone to contact the newspapers and the media for coverage."

"Are there any volunteers?" the Secretary asked, searching the room for volunteers.

After some soul-searching, Vivien slowly raised her hand, and she said timidly, "I'll volunteer to contact the newspapers and the media."

"That's what we need is more volunteers," Clarence exclaimed.

Michael Dodd raised his hand and said, "I'll volunteer to contact the tribes."

"That's the spirit," Clarence screamed out. He was experiencing the best day of his life as he was achieving his insatiable goal of leading Native Americans in protest.

Other students began to volunteer to do the multitude of tasks necessary for a successful protest march. Many of the students were veterans of other protest marches.

With plenty of eager volunteers, the planning for the march was quickly completed. Still exhilarated, Clarence instructed the volunteers to remain after the meeting for an organizational meeting.

Satisfied with his charismatic performance, Clarence declared, "The meeting is adjourned."

Getting up from his seat, Michael approached the front table, and he started chatting with Clarence. Michael asked Clarence, "Do you have a list of the mailing addresses for the tribes?"

"I can get you a list," Clarence replied unhesitatingly.

"When?"

"By Monday afternoon."

"I'll need the tribes' telephone numbers too," Michael instructed.

"The list will have their telephone numbers," Clarence stated.

Still slightly shy of Native American students, Vivien quietly waited in her chair until other spirited volunteers had gathered around Clarence. Then she crept toward the gathering of students, and she intentionally stood beside Michael. She listened to the discussion of the students.

Sighting Vivien, Clarence stated, "Vivien. You volunteered to

contact the newspapers and the media. "

"Yes, I did."

"Do you need any information?"

"Well. I need some names and addresses," she said, "and I'll need the location of the BIA Office."

"You got them," Clarence replied, "Anything else?"

"No. I'm a journalism major," she boasted innocently.

"It's good to have a consummate professional on our side," Michael mocked, intending to tease Vivien.

Blushing at Michael's statement, she immediately perceived her blunder. She revealed, "I worked on the school newspaper of Mercer Island High School."

"Then you have done this before?" Michael asked. Sensing she was serious, he reversed course. He didn't want to discourage her as he was attracted to the delicate lady.

"Many times," Vivien indicated, "I've also been publicity chairman for many civil rights demonstrations."

"Then you're well qualified," Clarence agreed.

Vivien decided that any news releases should be a joint effort. She urged, "We should put together a news release for the newspapers and the media."

"Yeah. That's a good idea," Clarence said.

Seeing an opportunity to meet her, Michael encouraged, "Yes. A news release will help us to get media attention."

"When will the news release be ready?" Clarence inquired.

"With a little help, I should have it ready by Monday," Vivien answered. She was gladdened by Michael's change in attitude.

"Good," Clarence said gleefully.

"Who's going to help me?" Vivien asked.

Michael stared into Vivien's dark eyes. Her eyes sparkled with approval, and he said, "I'll help you to write the news release."

"Thanks Michael," Vivien smiled. She was pleased that Michael Dodd had volunteered to help her, though she wasn't surprised. She had noticed him looking at her.

"When do we write the news release?" Michael asked.

"We can start tonight."

"Where?"

"Here."

"Okay."

When the meeting of the volunteers finally ended, the room quickly emptied. Staying in the room, Michael and Vivien sat down at the old wooden table. Before leaving the room, Clarence gave them some writing paper.



Alone, they started to draft the news release. While Vivien wrote, Michael examined her pretty face and creamy complexion. She had a shapely body, and he was fascinated with her.

Vivien knew little about Native Americans and their affairs. Although she had heard of the bungling and patronizing of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, she had never heard of the federal policy of termination. Michael proved to be very helpful in providing her the necessary background information. He was little surprised at her ignorance about the federal policy of termination, but he surmised her lack of knowledge about termination was due to her growing up in Seattle as an urban Native American. Vivien was an excellent writer, and they quickly put the news release together.

When they finished the first draft of the news release, Vivien leaned back in her chair, and she gazed at Michael's young face. She liked his tall muscular body and pleasant personality. She said, "I'll type up the news release and have Clarence approve it. Then we can send it to the newspapers and media."

"Which newspapers?"

"All of them." She smiled seductively at Michael.

"Do you think the papers will publish it?"

"I know a few reporters," Vivien boasted, "They'll help me."

"That's good." Michael was favorably impressed.

"I might be able to arrange some coverage for the protest march," she said.

"A few newspaper articles about the march would help," he commented. They both fell awkwardly silent, as they eyeballed one another.

Breaking the silence, Vivien asked, "Do you know Suzanne Redwood?"

"Yes. She's from my home town."

"Suzanne is my roommate."

Michael's jaws dropped, and he said slowly, "It's a small world."

"Suzanne and I saw you at the Registration Office at the beginning of the quarter," Vivien explained.

"So you're Suzanne's roommate," he said. He quickly compared Suzanne with Vivien, and he concluded that they were quite different. Vivien was more altruistic and democratic.

"I always wanted to meet you," Vivien said softly.

"Suzanne and I were never friends," he announced.

"I got that impression from Suzanne," she said.

In spite of Suzanne, Michael was determined to befriend Vivien. He asked, "How do you like being Suzanne's roommate?"

"Suzanne is a fascinating woman," Vivien replied, anticipating

adverse reaction from Michael.

"Well. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," Michael commented coldly.

"An interesting response."

"Maybe you can change my mind about Suzanne."

"What's your problem with Suzanne?" Vivien asked.

"We grew up in the same small town."

"Michael You're acting childish."

"You don't know Suzanne like I do," he responded.

"Suzanne is a beautiful Native American woman," Vivien said. Her comment was bound to irk Michael.

"That gives her no right to act high society," he announced,

"Beautiful women tend to have excessive pride," she analyzed.

"You're making excuses for her," he said.

"She is a woman."

"She is a human being."

"You're too hard on Suzanne," she replied.

"Well. She only has herself the blame. "

"I'll concede that Suzanne is a social climber," Vivien said.

"Vivien. You're finally making some sense," he replied.

"You're just bias."

"Maybe."

A Native American girl entered the room, and she walked directly to the table where Michael and Vivien were sitting. Wearing a black trench coat, she was a pretty woman of eighteen years. She had black straight hair, brown eyes, and a brown complexion.

Vivien looked up at the alarmed face of woman, and she immediately realized that the woman was the girlfriend of Michael Dodd. Her name was Karen Harefoot. Embarrassed, Vivien knew that Karen might be upset at her flirting with Michael.

"Michael! What are you doing with that White girl?" Karen cried out. As Vivien predicted, Karen was jealous.

"Karen. She's not a White girl," Michael announced, "She's a Cherokee from Oklahoma."

"Not another Cherokee princess!" Karen screamed.

"She's the roommate of Suzanne Redwood," Michael replied.

"Why are you talking to her?" Karen demanded.

"We just had a meeting of the Native American Student Association," Michael explained.

"The Native American students voted to stage a protest march on the BIA office." Vivien finally broke her silence.

"Vivien and I volunteered to help organize the protest march," Michael elucidated.

"We were drafting a news release for the march," Vivien confirmed.

"Well. I'm sorry for jumping to conclusions," Karen apologized unconvincingly. She was still suspicious of Michael and Vivien, because Michael admired all pretty women.

"It's easy to get the wrong idea," Vivien said.

"Vivien. This is my girlfriend, Karen Harefoot."

"I'm Vivien Renwick," she said to Karen.

To avoid further conflict, Michael decided it time to leave. Karen and him had previously planned to do some late studying at the library. He said to Vivien, "Well. Karen and I should be going."

"It was good to meet you, Michael and Karen," Vivien said graciously.

"Goodbye Vivien," Michael said. He stood up and put his arm around Karen. Arm in arm, they left the room.

Vivien remained sitting at the table while Michael and Karen exited the room. Her well-calculated plan to meet Michael Dodd had been a disaster. But she had made new Native American friends, and she still planned to participate in the protest march against the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Grabbing the draft of the news release, she got up from the table headed back to the residence hall.

Arriving back at her room, Vivien found Suzanne studying hard at her desk. Turning around from her desk, Suzanne asked, "How did the meeting go?"

"You should have been there," Vivien replied.

"Well. What happened at the meeting?"

"The Native American students are planning a protest march against the Bureau of Indian Affairs," Vivien related excitedly.

"The protest march must have been the idea of Clarence White Fox," Suzanne surmised.

"Yeah. He's the one who proposed it."

"Clarence can be so radical."

"All the Native American students are supporting the protest march," Vivien said.

"I'm not."

"Suzanne. I'm disappointed in you."

"The Native American students should be studying for their finals," Suzanne said.

"Well. I plan to participate in the protest march," Vivien announced.

"What!" Suzanne exclaimed.

"The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State of Washington are conspiring to terminate tribes."

"Vivien. Even if what you said was true, a protest march is not going

to do any good."

"At least we can make our feeling known."

"Vivien. You're not even a Native American," Suzanne argued.

"It has nothing to do with race and culture," Vivien explained,

"Termination is a bad federal policy, and it should be changed."

"Why you're blaming the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

"Because the BIA is behind the policy," Vivien asserted forcefully.

"Do you know my parents work for the BIA?" Suzanne questioned.

"No. I didn't know. Are your parents terminators?" Vivien asked innocently. She assumed that anyone who work for the BIA had to support or sympathize with the policy of termination.

Suzanne was surprised at Vivien's question. Her family never openly discussed the federal policy of termination of tribes. She assumed that they were against it. "No. They are not terminators."

"Then why did you mention your parents work for the BIA?"

Vivien cross-examined.

"I should not have mentioned it," Suzanne said timidly.

"Suzanne. You should participate in the protest march."

"No. I have no reason to participate," Suzanne said, "Anyway, I don't like to walk."

"I think you should participate," Vivien urged, "because of Native American solidarity."

"Vivien. I simply don't have time.

"Well. I think it's exciting."

Tired of the idle conversation, Suzanne returned to her studying.

Vivien decided to type up the news release, and she got out her portable typewriter. The noise of the typing distracted Suzanne from her studying.

"What are you typing?" Suzanne asked.

"The news release for the protest march."

"You're disturbing my studying."

"I'll be finished in about five minutes," Vivien replied. She quickly typed up the news release, and she shown it to Suzanne. Suzanne quickly scanned it and handed back to Vivien.

"Well. What's your opinion?" Vivien asked.

"Vivien. You are certainly liberal."

"I come from a liberal family."

"You could tone down the news release," Suzanne suggested, "You're too anti-Bureau of Indian Affairs."

"But Bureau of Indian Affairs is behind the federal policy of termination," Vivien argued.

"You should be more objective."

"Well. I could delete a few words," Vivien conceded, "without hurting the message." She scratched out a several words and two

sentences and handed it back to Suzanne.

"It sounds better."

"I'm not going to change it further," Vivien challenged.

Suzanne observe Vivien's wild look, and she decided that it futile to suggest further changes. She resented Vivien's holier-than-thou attitude. She asked, "Did you identify yourself as a Cherokee at the meeting of the Native American students."

"Yes, I did."

"Did anyone question your heritage?"

"No. They accepted my impersonation," Vivien revealed.

"With your liberal views, you won't have any problems fitting in with the Native American Student Association," Suzanne commented.

"Meaning?"

"They like confrontation and activism like you do."

"Well. It's a means to an end."

"The Native American students should spend their time studying rather protesting," Suzanne commented.

"Suzanne. We live in a racist society," Vivien lectured, "Open your eyes."

"My eyes are open. I don't want to talk about it. "

"You can't just put your head in the sand."

Saying nothing further, Suzanne returned to her studying, and Vivien put away her portable typewriter. Vivien thought about manly Michael Dodd and his jealous girlfriend, Karen Harefoot. Though disappointed, she still wanted to find out more about Michael. She thought that Michael would soon grow tire of Karen and end his relationship with her.

Sitting down on her bed, Vivien said to Suzanne, "I finally met Michael Dodd."

Suzanne frowned, and she said, "Was he at the meeting of the Native American Student Association?"

"Yes."

"It figures."

"He helped me to draft the news release," Vivien boasted.

"Did he ask you for a date?" Suzanne asked. She was greatly curious about Michael and Vivien

"No. Michael already has a girlfriend."

Suzanne was delighted at Vivien's answer, concluding that Michael had not interested in Vivien. She commented, "Well. That should put end to your romantic interest in Michael Dodd."

"You're right about that," Vivien agreed reluctantly.

"What's her name?"

"Karen Harefoot."

"Yeah. I've heard of her," Suzanne said. "She's from Montana."

"She's pretty but a little possessive," Vivien stated.

"I've heard that Karen is the jealous type."

"Yes. Karen was disturbed about my collaboration with Michael on the news release," Vivien admitted.

"Did Karen catch you with Michael?"

"Yes. But we weren't doing anything."

"Vivien. You'd better watch your step," Suzanne teased, "and stay away from the Native American boys. Their girlfriends don't like it."

"If I would have known about Karen, I would not even talked to Michael," Vivien replied.

Looking at her alarm clock, Suzanne saw that it was bed time. She went to her closet and pulled out a night gown. Sitting down on her bed, Suzanne looked at Vivien, who was yawning. She said, "Vivien. This afternoon you called me a social climber."

"I'm sorry about my choice of words."

"No. You're right," Suzanne admitted, "I am a social climber."

"At least, you're honest about it."

"I want the American dream and to be recognized."

"We've already been over this before," Vivien said, "I see no need to go over it again."

"I am excessively ambitious," Suzanne revealed.

"Maybe you should be ambitious," Vivien said, "You have a lot to offer the Native American community. "

"Maybe society too?"

"Of course," Vivien said, "You're intelligent woman."

"Sometimes I question my ambitions," Suzanne said.

"Suzanne. You are not fatally flawed. "

"But I'm still troubled," Suzanne said.

"About what?"

"Well. I don't want to marry any poor boys."

"Are you talking about Native American boys?" Vivien asked.

"Yes."

"Well. That explains your feelings about Michael Dodd."

Suzanne made a face at Vivien, and she said, "If it was just Michael, I won't have any guilty feelings."

"I expect your parents drilled into you the need to marry Native American," Vivien analyzed.

"Yes."

"Native American boys are good looking," Vivien teased, "I met several good- looking ones tonight."

"I'm being serious."

"Well, Suzanne. The Native American race has to preserve itself somehow."

"You talk like my parents," Suzanne disclosed.

"Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder or we wouldn't have any races," Vivien said. She remembered Michael's similar comment about Suzanne.

"You sound like a racist."

"Not really. I'm not prejudice towards any race," Vivien said, "I could easily marry a Native American man."

Suzanne wasn't surprised at Vivien's statement. She said, "I'm not sure whom I want to marry."

"Suzanne. You've been on several dates this quarter."

"Yeah. But I didn't like my dates."

"They were sharp looking to me," Vivien said.

"I'm looking for more in a man," Suzanne admitted.

"What do you mean by that?"

"I want a man with a future and class," Suzanne finally said.

"Suzanne. You sound like a gold digger."

Blushing, she charged, "Vivien. You're being too blunt."

"You want to marry a man with money."

"What's wrong with that?"

"Nothing," Vivien countered, "But you're not getting my approval."

"I wasn't asking for your endorsement," Suzanne defended.

"Then what do you want from me?"

"I just needed someone to talk to."

"Suzanne. You can always talk to me," Vivien said, "I may not agree with you, but I'm willing to listen."

"Thank you."

Suzanne climbed off her bed, and she grabbed a towel from her dresser. Exiting the room, Suzanne headed to the community shower room. Vivien quickly donned her night clothes and crawled into bed. Closing her eyes, she was soon sleeping.

## Chapter 5

Unlocking the door, Vivien Renwick entered the apartment, and she placed her books on a table in the dining room. Suzanne Redwood was in her room studying on a small desk, littered with papers and books. At the beginning of the school year, they had rented an apartment at 55th and University Way, which was not far from the campus of the University of Washington.

Their modest apartment had two bedrooms and a small dining room, a living room and a kitchen. It was painted pale yellow, and the furniture was secondhand. They had managed to fill walls with pictures, photographs and mementoes. They were delighted with the apartment, as it was better than living in a residence hall. The apartment gave them more privacy and a sense of maturity. The winter quarter of 1966 had just started, and Suzanne and Vivien were now college seniors. They had been roommates since the Fall of 1962. They found that their association was mutually beneficial. Suzanne liked living with a Caucasian girl, since it gave her vital information about White society. She wanted desperately to be accepted as a coequal and participant by dominant society.

Still active with the Native American Student Association, Vivien found it convenient to roommate with a Native American woman. The Native American students still thought that Vivien was a Cherokee from Oklahoma. Though some students suspected otherwise, she managed to continue her innocent deception.

After three and half years, their college careers were quickly coming to an end. Suzanne and Vivien would be graduating in the Spring of 1966. Suzanne was majoring in psychology, but she planned to study for a Master of Social Work in the Fall of 1966. She had already applied for admission to the School of Social Work for graduate study. Vivien was majoring in journalism, and she planned to obtain a newspaper job after graduation.

Removing her beige raincoat, Vivien walked into Suzanne's room. "Well, Suzanne. I'm home," Vivien said, "Thank God it's Friday."

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon. Vivien sat down on Suzanne's bed.

"It has been a long week," Suzanne agreed. She was also tired from an arduous week of study.

"Rent is due tomorrow," Vivien said.



"Yes. It's my turn to pay it."

"What do you plan to do tonight?" Vivien asked.

"I've been invited to a party at a fraternity house," Suzanne revealed.

"Haven't you given up yet on the fraternity boys?"

"I don't know what you mean?" Suzanne was annoyed at Vivien's question.

"Suzanne. You have been to scores of fraternity parties," Vivien replied, "And you haven't found anyone yet."

"Vivien. You're jealous of me."

"I have no reason to be jealous," Vivien countered, "I think fraternity types are a bunch of snobs."

"I don't think so."

"But you haven't found a boyfriend by attending their stupid drunken parties," Vivien charged.

"I just haven't met Mr. Right yet," Suzanne said, "I'm very choosy about whom I date."

"And you won't met Mr. Right," Vivien said, "They just want to get your brown ass into bed."

Suzanne stared fiercely at Vivien, and she was offended by her use of graphic language. She said, "I haven't been to bed with any of them."

"That's why you haven't found a boyfriend among them."

"You may be right." Suzanne thought of the fraternity brothers who have tried to get her into bed via alcohol, drugs, and romantic talk. But she had always concluded that they were not good enough for her, and she frustrated their schemes. She also recalled her traumatic experience with Clayton Shaw. Her distrust of men started with him.

"I know what I'm talking about," Vivien said.

"Well. Still like to attend their parties," Suzanne said, "They always invite me back."

"They invite you back, because you're a pretty woman. "

"Anyway, I have met some handsome and classy young men at the fraternity parties," Suzanne said.

"Yeah. But do they feel the same way about you?"

"I don't know what they think about me."

"Suzanne. We do live in a racist society," Vivien asserted.

"I know. It's your favorite statement."

"Trust me. I'm right."

"Racist or not," Suzanne commented, "I don't plan to let race keep me back."

"But at what price?"

"That is for me to pay," Suzanne said.

"It's your life." Vivien laid back on Suzanne's bed.

"Well, Vivien. What do you plan to do tonight?" Suzanne asked.

"Thanks for asking," Vivien smiled, "I'm finally going on a date with Michael Dodd."

Suzanne gave Vivien a strange look, and she said, "Well. You never did miss a meeting of the Native American Student Association, and it has paid off."

"Yes. I finally got my man."

"What happened to his old girlfriend, Karen Harefoot?"

"Karen returned to Montana," Vivien said.

"Why did she return to Montana?" Suzanne asked.

"Have no idea."

"I heard that Michael get her pregnant, and he refused to marry her."

"Suzanne. You never did like Michael Dodd." Vivien sensed resentment in Suzanne's voice.

"What is there to like?"

"Plenty! Anyway, Karen returned to Montana, because she was homesick," Vivien explained.

"Likely story!"

"Suzanne. Sometimes you're impossible."

"I look upon Michael like a cousin," Suzanne mocked, "A poor cousin but still a cousin."

"You've said that before," Vivien said, remembering the day they had sighted Michael at the Registration Office on campus.

"Yeah. You're right." Suzanne also remembered the same day.

"Well. I'm obviously not a relative of Michael," Vivien said, "and I love the man."

"I wonder whether Michael has ever dated a White girl," Suzanne pondered.

"He's attractive." Vivien smiled back.

"Have you revealed to Michael that you are a White girl?"

"No."

"You can't always masquerade as a Native American."

"Suzanne. It was your idea."

"So it was."

"Do you think Michael will like me?" Vivien asked.

"Of course. You're a pretty woman," Suzanne said seriously, "Michael must really feel privileged."

"That's not what I meant," Vivien interjected, "Will Michael like me, although I'm not a Native American?"

"Michael had always been a militant Native American type."

"Strange. I don't perceive Michael as a militant."

"Well. He really believes in the preservation of the Native American race," Suzanne said.

"If your statement is true, I don't have much of a chance with him,"

Vivien lamented.

"He may just like White girls," Suzanne amused, "I wouldn't give up too early."

"I plan to tell him tonight that I'm not a Native American," Vivien announced, "before our relationship goes any further."

"Vivien. You're doing right by telling him."

"I hope so."

"When is Michael going to pick you up?"

"He will be here at six," Vivien replied, "We're going to dinner first then a movie. And then maybe some dancing."

"Well, good luck." Suzanne returned to writing a term paper.

Vivien left the room and walked into the living room where she turned on an old television. Sitting clown on an well-used sofa, she watched television until five o'clock. At five, she took a shower, and she readied herself for her date with Michael Dodd. After dressing, she then returned to the living room to watch television and wait.

Finishing her studying, Suzanne walked into the living room. She said to Vivien, "I'd better get ready for the party."

"When does the party start?" Vivien asked.

"It starts at eight o'clock."

"You got plenty of time."

"Well. I like to take my time getting ready."

"I know you do," Vivien replied.

Hearing a loud knock at the door, Vivien hopped to her feet, and she hurried to the door. Opening the door, she found Michael Dodd standing before the door entrance. Vivien said excitedly, "Michael. Please come in."

Michael stepped into the apartment, and he immediately saw Suzanne standing in the living room. He smiled at Suzanne, and she returned a forced smile. He said nervously, "Vivien. Are you ready to go?"

"Yes, I'm ready to go." Vivien walked to a closet and got her beige raincoat.

"Hello Suzanne," Michael said politely. He saw that Suzanne had become a remarkably beautiful woman, a highly desirable prize for any man.

"Hello Michael," Suzanne replied drily. She carefully examined Michael. He had changed from a naughty boy to a mature man, and he had gained an air of authority about him.

"You're looking beautiful this evening as usual," Michael said. Since Suzanne was Vivien's roommate, he decided to offer her some praise.

"Thank you."

Returning to the door, Vivien said, "Let's get going."

"Have a good time," Suzanne encouraged.

Vivien and Michael left the apartment and rode the elevator to the first

floor. Exiting the apartment, they sauntered towards Michael's two-door sedan, which was parked in front of the apartment building. After opening the passenger door for Vivien, Michael circled the car and climbed into driver's side. Starting the car, he drove up the street to the business area of the University District, two blocks away.

"Vivien. Where do you want to eat?" Michael asked.

"It's up to you."

"Well. I know this Italian restaurant near Green Lake."

"I like Italian food," Vivien confirmed.

"Then we'll eat Italian food." At the next intersection, Michael turned the car around and drove towards Green Lake. Passing Green Lake, he drove the car to Aurora Avenue and pulled into the parking lot of a stylish Italian restaurant. Leaving the car, they entered the old brick restaurant. Wearing a black uniform with bow tie and white blouse, a waitress guided them to a table near a stained glass window, and she left two menus with them.

After examining the menu, Michael said, "Well. I like spaghetti and meatballs."

"It's too greasy for me," Vivien responded.

"What do you plan to order?"

"The ravioli dinner looks good," Vivien decided.

Waiting several minutes, the waitress returned and took their orders. The waitress asked, "Do you want anything to drink?"

"I'll have some coffee," Michael replied.

"Give me the same," Vivien said.

The waitress left table and quickly returned with the coffee. When the waitress left, Vivien commented, "I thought you would order a beer."

"No. It's too early," Michael said, "Maybe when we go dancing, I'll have a beer."

"Suzanne has told me about your wild parties," Vivien amused.

"According to Suzanne, every Native American is a heavy drinker," Michael said.

"But you do like to party?"

"Yes, I do once in awhile."

"Then Suzanne is right about you," Vivien concluded.

"Let's not talk about Suzanne," Michael requested.

"Okay."

Michael studied Vivien's dark eyes, which were sparkling with excitement, and he eyed her small cheery mouth. He loved her petite but curvy body and her lovely straight hair. Admiring her creamy skin, he figured she was less than one-quarter blood Cherokee, still believing Vivien's ruse.

Vivien examined the innocent face of her handsome young man. She enjoyed his wit and his tall and well-built body. His hair was black; his eyes were brown; and his complexion was light bronze. Because of her roommate Suzanne, Vivien had grown accustomed to black straight hair, brown eyes, and brown skin.

"Vivien. What do you plan to do after graduation?"

"Once I get my journalism degree, I'd like to become the editor of a community newspaper," she answered.

"Why don't you become a newspaper reporter?" Michael inquired.

"Because it's not easy to find a job as a newspaper reporter."

"Oh." He was surprised, but he knew very little about journalism.

"There's a lot of competition for reporter jobs. There are a lot of journalism majors."

"I didn't realize that."

"Michael. What do you plan to do after graduation?" Vivien asked. She had heard several stories about his future plans. One rumor had him going to law school, and a second rumor had him attending business school for a Master of Business Administration degree. A third rumor had him returning to the Colville Indian Reservation to setup a business. She didn't know which rumor was correct.

"I expect I will be drafted and sent to Vietnam," Michael predicted, trying not to show any concern.

"There's a plenty of killing going on in Vietnam." Vivien said seriously. She was violently against the war, and she had participated in numerous activities protesting the war. The possibility of Michael going to Vietnam had never entered her mind.

"I have mixed feeling about the Vietnam war," Michael divulged. Though he had spoken against the Vietnam war, he had never participated in any anti-war activities.

"You can't sit on the fence," Vivien said.

"The draft makes it academic."

"Michael. You can always evade the draft."

"No. My father would be disappointed in me if I was a draft dodger," he explained.

"Then you don't plan to avoid the draft?" she asked, "I'm surprised."

"No. I'm resigned to going to Vietnam."

"You don't have to follow blindly the wishes of your father," she said forcefully.

"It has nothing to do with the wishes of my father," Michael finally admitted. "I want to serve in Vietnam."

"Michael. You're being stupid. You're going to get killed."

"It's something that I have to do."

"No. You don't have to serve," she cried out, "It's not your war."

"I may not have a choice," he said.

"You can always go to Canada."

"Oh. Let's quit talking about Vietnam War," he finally said, "We're here to enjoy ourselves."

Vivien wanted desperately to continue with the conversation, as she wanted Michael to remain at home and not go war. But there would be plenty of time before graduation to dissuade him from willingly submitting to going to war. She asked, "Then what do you plan to do after Vietnam?"

"I haven't made any definite plans," Michael responded.

"What about law school?"

"I might go to law school."

The waitress returned with the food and left it on the table. Vivien and Michael started to slowly consume their food, which was sumptuous and generous.

"Whatever happened to Karen Harefoot?" Vivien asked cautiously, remembering Suzanne's allegations. She had heard other Native American students talk about Karen, but she wanted to hear what Michael had to say.

Michael was surprised that Vivien was bold enough to ask him about his old girlfriend. He replied, "Karen moved back to Montana."

"Did you get her pregnant and refuse to marry her?"

"Has Suzanne been spreading false rumors about me?"

"No," she said emphatically.

"Well. Karen got involved with drugs and alcohol," Michael explained, "She couldn't control herself, so she returned home."

"Karen had her problems."

"And I didn't get her pregnant."

"I believe you," Vivien reacted.

"My relationship with Karen Harefoot is over," Michael announced, "She's not coming back into my life." He wanted to encourage Vivien, as he found her attractive.

"Well. Relationships do end," she commented, "especially stormy ones."

"I'm not going to miss her."

"You mentioned the use of drugs," Vivien explored, "Did you both use drugs?"

"I only use alcohol," he asserted loudly, "I'm not a drug user." He was afraid that he was giving Vivien the wrong impression.

"Well. I've been known to lit up with marijuana," Vivien confessed.

"I've tried marijuana, but I don't like to mix marijuana and alcohol together." Michael explained. He was relieved that Vivien was understanding and open.

"It can be potent combination."

"I prefer to drink beer," he said.

Michael quickly finished eating his toothsome spaghetti and meatballs. Vivien slowly chewed her food. Sipping his coffee, Michael leaned back and watched her eat her ravioli dinner.

Eating about half of her dinner, she said, "Well. I 'm done with my dinner."

"You don't eat much," he commented.

"That's how I keep my figure."

"You are a lovely young woman," Michael praised.

"Thank you."

"I like your curvy body."

"I've noticed."

Vivien thought it was a propitious time to tell Michael that she was not a Native American. She pondered how he would react to the news. According to Suzanne, Michael was committed to preserving the Native American race, though his father was a White man. But Suzanne had also mentioned that Michael was born out of wedlock while his father was serving over seas. She said nervously, "I have something to tell you."

"What is it?" Michael never liked that tone of voice.

"I'm not sure whether to tell you," she hesitated.

"I won't tell anyone your secrets."

"You promise."

"I promise," he said.

"Well. I'm not a Native American."

Michael stared in disbelief at Vivien, who was visibly distressed by her admission. He exclaimed, "But you told everyone that you were a Cherokee."

"Yes. I did. It was wrong," Vivien admitted.

"Then what race are you?"

"I thought it was pretty obvious. I'm a Caucasian," Vivien unburdened.

"A White woman!"

"Yes. I'm English and Welsh."

"Did Suzanne tell you to masquerade as a Cherokee?" Michael questioned. He speculated that Suzanne had to be behind the deception, as she had been Vivien's roommate for nearly four years.

"Originally, Suzanne wanted me to do it as a joke," she admitted.

"I thought Suzanne was involved."

"I didn't intend to be deceitful," she said, "But it was useful to be considered a Native American."

"Why?"

"Because I wanted to attend meetings of the Native American Student Association," Vivien explained.

"It seems a strange reason," Michael commented.

"I like the Native American Student Association. "

"Why is that?"

"Because the Native American students are committed to battling the Bureau of Indian Affairs," she said, "I especially liked their struggle to defeat the BIA's policy of terminating the tribes."

"Yeah. We are committed," he agreed.

"I really loved the protest march against the BIA office," Vivien remembered fondly.

"I remember the protest march," Michael said, "It was something." He recalled Vivien carrying a sign reading "OFF THE BIA and the delightful expressions on her face.

"I really felt great about the protest march," she finished, "We were accomplishing something."

Michael was captivated by the liberal Vivien Renwick. He appreciated her efforts in behalf of the Native Americans. He was beginning to believe that Vivien might fit into the Native American community. He said, "I truly thought you were a mixed-blood Native American."

"It must be my black hair and dark eyes," she asserted.

"Maybe it was your hair and eyes. And you were concerned about the plight of the Native Americans."

"I didn't do any harm."

"You had me fooled," he disclosed.

"Michael. I did it to meet you," she revealed.

"Me?" Michael was surprised that Vivien was so hungry to meet him, and he was flattered by her efforts.

"Suzanne told me you attended meetings of the Native American Student Association," she said, "so I decided to attend one of their meetings."

"So you planned our meeting."

"I was disappointed that you already had a girlfriend," she said, "I should have known."

"I met Karen the first week of college," Michael confirmed.

"But I was fascinated with the Native American students," Vivien said, "so I kept coming to the meetings."

"And you kept saying you were a Cherokee," he added.

"No harm done."

"Are you finish with your meal?" Michael asked.

"Yes."

Michael paid for the food and left a hefty tip. Leaving the Italian restaurant, they climbed into Michael's car and drove out of the black-topped parking lot onto Aurora avenue. Driving south, Michael headed to downtown Seattle where most of the movie theaters were located.



The semi-dark streets of downtown were lighted by street lights, verily able to do the job. There were few heavily-dressed pedestrians braving the winter night. Here and there were slow-moving buses and swift taxi cabs traversing the streets and stopping periodically for stop lights. Once in awhile a police patrol vehicle maneuvered down a wide street.

The downtown area had many multi-storied buildings but few skyscrapers. A monorail train traveled from downtown to the Seattle Center, a civic center. The Space Needle rose from the grounds of the civic center, and the Alaskan Way Viaduct ran high over the waterfront.

Wearing an odd assortment of clothes, skid road residents roamed the cheap taverns of First Avenue. Many of the skid road people were Native people from Canada, hunting for more alcohol or a respite from the cold.

Looking for a first-rate movie, Michael and Vivien wound their way through a maze of streets until they found a movie, fitting their taste. After parking the car, they plodded to the movie theater, two blocks away. Paying the cashier, they entered the ornate movie theater. Debating whether to buy some popcorn, they decided to purchase a small box of buttered popcorn. They found seats in the middle of the auditorium, and they quietly waited for the movie to begin.

Movie theater was built during the heyday of movie-going before the advent of popular television. It was lavishly constructed of granite and reinforced concrete. Built like a colossal palace, it was decorated with royal red drapes, stained glass, and elaborate stone statues. The auditorium had a high dome ceiling and seats for a thousand customers. A large gallery overlooked the auditorium. The previews of coming attractions were first projected on the giant screen. Next the main feature was flashed on the off-white screen. Michael and Vivien leaned back into seats and enjoyed the movie, which lasted two hours. When movie ended, they shuffled out of the movie theater, navigating through the exiting crowd.

"How did like the movie?" Vivien asked Michael.

"I like a movie with a message."

"Things are certainly bad in the South," she said, "Segregation is a way of life there."

"It's an evil way of life," he said.

"Racial relations are not much better in North," she pointed out

"African Americans are rioting, because they live in poverty, ghettos, and face racial prejudice," he said.

Vivien didn't like Michael's statement. Her liberal dander was up, and she opined, "And I suppose Native Americans don't live in poverty or ghettoes or face racial prejudice."

Michael was surprised at Vivien's remark, and he closely eyed her

pretty face. She waited patiently for an answer to her question. He wanted to avoid answering her question but changed his mind. He finally replied, "Most Native Americans are poor, and they do experienced plenty of discrimination and prejudice."

"And they do live in ghettos," she asserted.

"I never thought of Indian reservations being ghettos," Michael informed, "Most Native Americans want to keep their reservations as they are."

"But they are the same as ghettos," she argued boldly.

"The reservations aren't located in urban areas," he analyzed, "So they can't be ghettos. They're mostly located in rural and mountainous areas."

"But the reservations are poverty stricken," Vivien said.

"Well. Native Americans are poor," he conceded.

"And they were forced to live on reservations," she averred.

"What's your point," Michael said.

"I was only pointing out that Native Americans and African Americans face the same problems in this country," she said.

"Vivien. I'm not disagreeing with you," Michael replied.

"Then don't argue with me."

"Okay." he said emphatically.

Vivien was satisfied that she had made her point with Michael. He could be reasonable she concluded. Afraid that she was sounding like a militant liberal, she ended the divisive discussion. But she was an independent young woman, who had her own ideas of right and wrong. She would hang on to her convictions until forced to give them up by insurmountable reason or facts.

Returning to Michael's car, they sat in the car while the engine warmed up. He asked, "Do want to go dancing?"

"I thought you'd never ask," Vivien exclaimed.

"Let's head back to the "U" District and find a dance tavern there," he suggested.

"It sounds good to me."

Michael maneuvered his car up Virginia Street to Fairview Avenue then to Eastlake Avenue, near the "U" District. Sighting a tavern advertising dancing, they pulled into the parking lot and exited the car. The tavern was built of wood and painted green. A neon sign advertised live music.

Entering the tavern, Michael and Vivien stood in a line, while burly bouncers checked ID'S. The tavern had standup tables, booths and wooden tables for the customs. The bandstand was filled with musical instruments, tall speakers, multi-colored strobe lights and microphones. The hardwood dance floor was freshly polished.

The largely college crowd appeared to be enthusiastic and alive but loud. All the standup tables and booths were occupied by students, who were mostly wearing blue jeans and casual shirts or tops. Their jackets and coats were lying on the backs of wooden chairs. The rock band was taking a brief break after its first set.

Dressed in blue jeans, the band members were sitting with their girlfriends, enjoying bottles of beer.

Since turning twenty-one, Michael had been to the tavern several times. He liked the tavern's rustic atmosphere and imaginative lighting. A fan of live music, he liked to dance to rock music. Though a little intimidated at first, he found that the girls were willing to dance with him.

Since turning twenty-one, Vivien had also been to the dance tavern with other girlfriends. But she never could persuade her roommate, Suzanne Redwood, to accompany her to the tavern. Suzanne preferred to attend private parties. Vivien could always find someone to dance with at the tavern. It was one of her favorite dance taverns.

After paying the cover charge of three dollars, they edged their way through the boisterous crowd to the dance floor. Spotting an empty table near the bandstand, they stepped across the dance floor and sat down at the vacant table. A beer attendant quickly moved towards their table to take their order.

"What do you want to drink?" Michael asked Vivien.

"Let's order a pitcher of beer," Vivien replied. She didn't want Michael to spend too much money on her, figuring him to be a poor college student.

"I'm game."

The beer attendant was standing in front of their wooden table. She was dressed in a red blouse, blue denim vest and jeans. She asked politely, "You are ready to order?"

"Yes. We want a pitcher of beer," Michael said.

"A large pitcher?" the attendant asked.

"Yes." Vivien said.

The beer attendant returned to the bar. Ten minutes, she came back with the pitcher of cold beer and two beer glasses. After paying the beer attendant, Michael grabbed the pitcher and filled the beer glasses with cold beer. He handed one beer glass to Vivien who grasped it with her hand. They both raised their beer glasses and chinked them together in a toast. Michael said, "Here's to you."

"Thank you," Vivien said.

"Do you like beer?" he inquired.

"It depends on my mood," she responded, "I feel like drinking

beer tonight."

"There's nothing like beer and rock music."

"I heard that Native Americans can't handle liquor," Vivien commented, "Is it true?"

Michael expected Vivien to ask that question. He answered, "Well. It depends on the person."

"I thought it was a racial characteristic."

"No. I know a lot of tribesmen who drink hard liquor," he said, "They seem to handle it well."

"But you only drink beer," she pointed out.

"Strong liquor drinks give me too much of a hangover," Michael disclosed, "So I only drink beer."

"Michael. You must have started drinking when you were young."

"Yeah. I started drinking when I was sixteen years old."

"Five years of drinking," she exclaimed.

"Why are you so interested in my drinking habits?" he asked.

"I'm just curious."

"When did you start drinking?" Michael asked her.

"I was a teenager like you," Vivien confessed reluctantly.

"The kettle is calling the pot black," he laughed.

"I used to go to high school parties," Vivien said, "I had a good time."

"I had my parties and fun too."

The band climbed back on the bandstand and commenced to play rock music. They were a four-piece band who were wearing yellow shirts and blue jeans. Students began to pour onto the dance floor, dancing to the fast rock music.

"Do you want to dance?" Michael raised his hand in the direction of the band.

"Why not?" Vivien responded.

Standing up from the table, they strolled to the dance floor and began to dance wildly to the rhythmic music. They quickly lost themselves to the hypnotic dancing of couples on the dance floor and loud music of the band. When the music ended, they stayed for a second fast rock tune. After which, they returned to their table for rest and more beer drinking.

"I love to dance," Vivien said, "But it makes me hot." She took small swallow from her beer glass.

"You were sure twisting and swirling out there," Michael agreed.

"Do you come here often?" Vivien asked.

"I make here every weekend."

"You must like to this tavern."

"Karen and I came here quite often."

Vivien didn't want to hear about Michael's affair with Karen. The band started to play a slow dance tune. Looking at Michael's handsome face, Vivien said, "Let's dance."

"I'm ready," Michael responded.

Again they sauntered to the dance floor, following several other couples. Without hesitating, Vivien wrapped her arms around the muscular body of Michael and moved close to his body. Surprised at her move, he responded by wrapping his strong arm around her waist pulling her closer to his body. She did not resist his move.

Vivien's head reached Michael's chin. They moved their entwined bodies across and down the dance floor.

When music ended, Michael and Vivien returned to their table. While they finished drinking the pitcher of beer, they watched the dancing of couples and listened to music of the band. When the pitcher and their beer glasses were empty, Vivien said, "Let's leave and go to my apartment. "

Attracted to the curvy young woman, he didn't need a second invitation, as he wanted to be alone with her. He said, "Sure. Let's go to your apartment."

They quickly left the tavern and climbed into Michael's car. Pulling out of the parking lot, Michael drove north. He said, "Where's Suzanne tonight?"

"She's at a fraternity party tonight," Vivien said.

"Will Suzanne be back tonight?"

"I expect her to be home after midnight."

"My roommate is gone for the weekend," Michael said, "We might have more privacy there."

"Well. We can go to your apartment," she offered.

"Sure."

"I'd like to see your apartment," Vivien said, "But I must get home before Suzanne returns."

"Why?"

"Because I don't want Suzanne to know that I went to your apartment," Vivien replied.

"Does it matter?" Michael asked.

"It does matter to me," she said bluntly, "I don't want Suzanne thinking you seduced me."

The car entered the "U" District, and Michael made a left turn and drove up a back street. The apartment building was a short distance up the street. Michael turned into an alley, and he parked the car in a parking slot under the apartment building. Leaving the car, they entered building and rode an elevator to the fourth floor. Walking down the hallway, they came to apartment 410. Pulling a key ring

from his pocket, he opened the door, turned on the lights, and entered the apartment. Vivien followed him into the apartment.

Painted pale blue, the two-bedroom apartment was small and modest. A large window filled the outer wall, and yellow drapes decorated the window. The carpet was worn and threadbare. A couch and coffee table was situated in the living room. An old black and white television set sat in a corner. A stereo record player was pushed up against the large window. Records were stacked on a table next to the stereo. Each bedroom had a window, drapes, and a large closet. The apartment needed to be cleaned. Assorted junk littered the apartment.

"Why don't you come over to the stereo with me," Michael suggested to Vivien.

"Okay." Vivien followed Michael.

Michael stepped over to the stereo, and he searched the stack of albums. He asked, "What kind of music do you want to hear?"

"I enjoy soft romantic music," Vivien said softly.

"There must be a album containing romantic music somewhere in this stack. " He carefully searched the stack of albums for romantic music, and he finally found a album that his roommate had recently purchased.

"Here's an album." He shown the record to Vivien, and then he placed the record on the turntable. Soft romantic music was soon coming from the speakers.

The apartment was slightly warm, so Michael drew back the drapes and cracked open a window. A cool breeze blew into the apartment.

Enjoying the music, Vivien said, "I like the music. I'm going to have to buy that album."

"The music does sound good," Michael agreed.

"Who bought the album?"

"My roommate, Vernon Bitterroot."

"Your roommate has good taste."

Michael never thought that his roommate had good taste in music. Short and shy, Vernon was a Native American from eastern Oregon, and he was very studious and quiet. He was an overachiever that no one really liked. But Michael liked him, because Vernon studied hard, and he was very knowledge about any topic. Vernon was also conscientious about paying his part of the rent and bills. Michael could always depend on him.

"Let's sit down on the couch," Michael suggested.

Smiling seductively at Michael, she said, "Yeah. I need to sit down." She walked to the couch and sat down in the middle. She

pondered whether Michael had never made love to a Caucasian girl. She decided she would encourage him if he failed to make any moves.

Michael was excited by the presence of Vivien in his apartment. When she sat in the middle of the couch, his anxiety turned to inhibiting frustration. He was cross-pressurized by his personal commitment to preserve the Native American race and the overwhelming desire befriend Vivien.

Vivien sensed his growing indecision, and she decided to take the initiative. She said softly, "Michael. Come and sit down next to me."

He obeyed and sat next to Vivien. She had removed her beige raincoat, and she was sitting cross-legged on the couch. Vivien looked into Michael's eyes, and she said, "Michael. You shouldn't be afraid of me."

"I'm not."

"I bet you have never dated a White girl," she said.

"Oh. I've dated plenty of White girls," he said defensively.

"You don't sound very convincing."

Concluding it was time to tell the truth, he said reluctantly, "Vivien. You're right."

"What's so special about a White girl," she asked.

"Nothing."

"There must be something."

"No. It's not White girls."

"Then what is it?" she asked.

"Well. I'm committed to preserving the Native American race," he revealed.

"I thought your father was White," she responded.

"Suzanne must have told you...."

"Tell me what?" Vivien asked, while knowing the truth.

Michael stared at Vivien's innocent face. Vivien had to be playing games with him. He knew Suzanne too well. He said emotionally, "I was born out of wedlock."

"She might have mentioned that in passing," Vivien admitted.

"Anyway, my natural father is a Colville tribal member."

"So we cannot fraternize, because your natural father is a Native American," Vivien said.

"I'm not saying that!"

"Yes. You are!"

"I'm not sure what I'm saying," Michael admitted.

"Do you like me?" Vivien asked.

"Yes."

"Then kiss me."

Michael eyed Vivien's curvy body, creamy skin and pretty face. He immediately enveloped her with his arms, hugged her and kissed

her hard. She wrapped her arms around his body, and she returned his kiss and affection.

Vivien pulled away, and she said, "You must have kissed a lot of Native American girls."

"A few," Michael responded. He removed his light leather jacket.

"Only a few," Vivien teased. She commenced to unbutton her pinkish blouse, and when she finished, she removed her blouse from her firm body. She said, "Well, Michael. Remove your clothes."

"Sure." He started to remove clothes.

Once they were undressed, Vivien whispered, "Let's go to your bedroom."

They headed to Michael's bedroom where they made love.

When they finished, Vivien asked, "Michael. Is there any difference between White girls and Native American girls?"

"No. Except you're difference from the White girls back home."

"I hope so," she replied.



## Chapter 6

Suzanne Redwood was sitting on an old oak chair, placed next to a wall in a spacious dining room of a fraternity house. A loud but lively party was taking place in the stately house. The vociferous partygoers had a large keg of beer in the living room.

Most of the partygoers were members of college fraternities or sororities. Paper cups of beers could be seen everywhere. A few of the male students were already tipsy. In the dimly-lit living room, a stereo record player was playing rock music. Youthful couples were wildly dancing and vibrating to the music.

Small groups of people were chatting while they consumed their beer. Encouraged to mingle, men and women were going from gathering to gathering, meeting new partygoers where ever they went. Groups of partygoers would quickly materialize than vanish in thin air.

Suzanne was chatting with another young lady, Tracy Wigmore. Twenty years old, Tracy was a comely blonde with blue eyes and a fair skin. Tracy was a university student and a member of a local college sorority. She liked to attend fraternity parties. Because of her striking looks, she was often invited to parties.

"It's a great party," Suzanne said to Tracy.

"I'm having a wonderful time," Tracy exclaimed. She took a swallow of beer from her tall paper cup.

At the moment, Suzanne was not drinking beer. She usually drank beer if she was talking to a handsome young man. But only if she was offered a beer. She liked to attend parties, which were staged by fraternity houses, as she was attracted to good- looking young men who belonged to college fraternities. Believing that they had class and a moneyed future, she wanted desperately to marry such a young man.

The prejudice against her Native American blood made it difficult to meet fraternity men, who were serious about her. Such prejudice was invariably covert and subtle. So far, she had only met young men who wanted to get her into bed. When they failed to seduce her, they quickly dropped her as a girlfriend, finding more willing young ladies. They had only wanted easy sex with a pretty Native American maiden. They could care less about her internal beauty and intelligent personality. Maybe it

was just benign neglect, but it still amount to prejudice.

Suzanne had made friends with women who were members of local college sororities. They seemed to know where parties were, and they would inevitably invite Suzanne to come along. Never refusing an invitation, she was always excited about attending fraternity parties. Careful about her behavior and dress, she never wore out her welcome at the fraternity parties.

At parties the fraternity brothers seemed to be delighted with Suzanne's presence. Her prudish behavior didn't deter them. They accepted the fact that she could not be easily seduced. They accepted her as their token minority. But she could carry a conversation, and she was a good dancer. She wasn't coy, and she would freely talk to anyone at the parties. Of course, her goal was to make many contacts as possible.

But most partygoers classified Suzanne as a social climber, because she did not come from a fashionable family.

Tracy looked at Suzanne and boasted, "I've dated about half the fraternity brothers at the party."

"Where's your date tonight," Suzanne asked. She knew that Tracy wouldn't be sitting with her unless she was waiting for her date to arrive.

"He'll be here any minute."

"What's his name?"

"Evan Ashland," Tracy replied.

"Evan is handsome," Suzanne said. She remembered the time that she had dated Evan. It was a wonderful night, until he attempted to kiss her. He quit only when she started to physically resist his unwanted contact. He exploded with anger, and he drove her directly home without saying a word. He was still polite to her at parties but little else.

"Evan is so gorgeous," Tracy exclaimed, "Next year he's going to medical school."

Suzanne smiled at Tracy's hyperbolic words. Tracy was obviously infatuated with Evan. She said, "Yes. I heard that he plans to become a doctor."

"And he'll make a wonderful doctor," Tracy said.

"I'm sure he will," Suzanne agreed.

Growing tired of Tracy's silly chatter, Suzanne was about to go into living room to find one of her sorority girlfriends. Before she could move, two young men sat down on wooden chairs by the entrance to the dining room. They both had beers in their hands. She recognized one of the young men from another party.

Suzanne whispered to Tracy, "Who is that young man sitting on the right." She pointed in the direction of the young man.

Tracy's eyes followed Suzanne's hand, and she said, "Oh. That's Larry Bucknell."

Larry Bucknell was wearing a dress shirt and blue slacks. He was above-average height with light brown hair and green eyes, and he had a light complexion and a firm body.

"Do you know him?" Suzanne asked.

"Yeah. Larry and Evan belong to the same college fraternity," Tracy replied.

"I suppose they are friends."

"Yeah."

"I never seen him with any girls," Suzanne pointed out.

"Larry is pretty shy about women."

"But he's a good looking young man."

"He's not as handsome as Evan," Tracy asserted.

"I wasn't comparing him with Evan," Suzanne replied.

"My Evan is so handsome."

"What is Larry's major?"

"Oh. He is majoring in accounting," Tracy explained, "But he plans to get a Master of Business administration degree."

"What about the military draft?" Suzanne asked.

"I don't know anything about the draft."

"I'm talking about Vietnam."

"Suzanne. I wasn't born yesterday," Tracy protested, "I know all about Vietnam."

"I'm sorry," Suzanne apologized.

"You'll have to ask Larry about his draft status."

"I just may do that."

"Maybe he has some sort of draft deferment," Tracy analyzed.

"What kind of family does Larry come from?"

"You seem very interested in Larry," Tracy said seriously.

"Yes. He is good-looking."

"Well. Larry's father has just filed for bankruptcy," Tracy informed, "But they were quite well-to-do before the bankruptcy."

"That's too bad."

"Larry's father is quite an entrepreneur," Tracy explained, "He's a self-made man."

"What do you mean?" Suzanne asked.

"Chester Bucknell never went to school," Tracy commented, "and he didn't have a penny when he started out."

"How did he lose his money?"

"Unfortunately, Mr. Bucknell liked to play the stock market."

"So he's not a genius at playing the stock market," Suzanne opined.

"He tried to recover his losses by borrowing money and putting it back in the market," Tracy said, "but it wasn't in the cards."

"So he had to file for bankruptcy."

"Yes. But Mr. Bucknell will make a comeback," Tracy predicted, "He's too good a businessman."

Suzanne was surprised at Tracy's understanding of Chester Bucknell's difficulties. Tracy was more formidable than she appeared. Suzanne said, "It's too bad that he had a mania for playing the stock market."

"Suzanne. Do you want to meet Larry?" Tracy detected that Suzanne was very interested in Larry. Although Larry was shy and indecisive, Tracy perceived that he had great potential. If he even partially measured up to his father, Larry would have a productive life.

Tracy had nothing against Suzanne, thought she had heard that Suzanne had one date with Evan. She thought that Suzanne was very fine Native American girl, a credit to her race. She couldn't see what Evan saw in Suzanne, except for her shapely body. She thought that Suzanne and Larry would make a good couple. Maybe Larry would gain some confidence and quit being shy with women. She predicted that Larry would quickly grow tired of Suzanne and drop her.

Suzanne glanced over at Larry, who drinking beer and chatting with a male friend. Normally, Suzanne was not attracted to shy men, but his family background was quite interesting to her. And lately she had not met any young men who had potential, who weren't first after her shapely body. She found Larry attractive and strangely mysterious. She said, "Yes, Tracy. I would like to meet Larry Bucknell."

"Fine, Suzanne. You shall get your wish," Tracy said eagerly. She got up from her seat, and she walked over to where Larry was sitting.

Larry looked up and saw Tracy walking towards him. Tracy was coming over to talk to him. He decided that Evan Ashland had to be the subject. He admired brainy but comely Tracy, but he didn't like her feigned silliness.

"Larry! I found the perfect young lady for you," Tracy said excitedly.

At least he didn't have to listen to Tracy glorification of Evan Ashland. Her announcement surprised him, as Tracy generally wasn't a match-maker. Tracy had a number of sorority girlfriends who desperately was looking for a husband. He only hoped it wasn't one of them. Pretty women tended to intimidate him, and he experienced nothing but inhibition and frustration when asking them for a date.

"Who is it?" Larry asked cautiously.

Tracy pointed to Suzanne, and she said, "She's crazy about you."

"She is!" he said incredulously.

"Yeah. She's infatuated with your looks."

"What's her name?"

"Her name is Suzanne Redwood," Tracy disclosed.

"Is she a minority?" he asked.

"Of Course. Suzanne is a Native American."

"That's interesting." Though Larry was insecure around Caucasian women, he had no problem relating to brown skinned women of any race. He felt inferior to Caucasian women but superior to minority women. In fact, he preferred women with dark eyes, dark hair and a dark skin.

"Suzanne wants desperately wants to meet you," Tracy divulged.

"She is a pretty Native American girl," Larry admitted, "and she wants to meet me?"

"Yes," Tracy smiled.

"Well. Take me over to her," he said enthusiastically. He got to his feet and stood by Tracy.

"Follow me," Tracy directed.

Larry said goodbye to his friend, Tom Stanfield, and he followed Tracy across the dining room where Suzanne was sitting. They stood before Suzanne.

Pointing to Larry, Tracy said to Suzanne, "This is Larry Bucknell."

"Nice to meet you." Suzanne smiled at Larry.

Pointing to Suzanne, Tracy said, "Larry. This is Suzanne Redwood."

"I'm pleased to meet you," Larry said to Suzanne.

"Well. I must be going," Tracy informed, "I see Evan entering the house." Tracy hurried to the front door. When Evan saw her, he immediately put his arm around her and walked with her to the keg of beer.

"Tracy told me that you're a Native American," Larry said to Suzanne.

"Yes. I'm from the Colville Indian Reservation in eastern Washington state."

"My parents and I spent a week there once," he divulged.

"It is a beautiful place," she said.

"Yes. I like mountains and evergreen trees. "

"Are you a college senior?"

"Right. I graduate this spring," he replied, "I'm majoring in accounting."

"Do plan to become a C.P.A.?" Suzanne asked.

"Yeah. But I also plan to get a Master of Business Administration degree." he revealed.

Suzanne was favorably impressed with Larry Bucknell. She adored his light brown hair and green eyes. She asked, "Do you want another beer. I'll get you one."

"Sure. Here's my paper cup". He handed her his paper cup, and Suzanne headed to the beer keg in the living room.

Larry was captivated by the shapely Native American maiden. Of course, he inevitably liked pretty women who liked him. He was especially enchanted with Suzanne's black hair, brown eyes, and deep tan skin. He felt comfortable with her, and he was delighted with her for trying to please him.

Suzanne returned to the dining room, carrying two tall paper cups of beer. She said to Larry, "Here's your beer."

"Thanks," he said, "Huh. You got a beer for yourself. "

"I didn't want you to drink alone." Suzanne took a drink of beer from her paper cup.

"I like a young woman who has no problem with drinking," Larry said.

"I don't have any problems drinking with a fine young man like you," she encouraged.

"Suzanne. Are you a college senior?"

"Yes. I'm majoring in psychology," she answered.

"Tough major."

"After I graduate, I plan to get a Master of Social Work."

"I can't imagine you as a social worker," Larry replied.

"Well. I plan to become one."

They drank more beer and chatted about Seattle and its weather. It had been cold and rainy all day. But the overcast sky had cleared, and the moon lit the night, producing eerie shadows and ghost-like figures.

"Do you and Evan Ashland belong to the same college fraternity?" Suzanne asked Larry.

"Yeah. We sure do," Larry replied, "Evan and I have been friends for years."

"How long?"

"We've been friends since high school?"

"That's a long time," Suzanne said.

"I understand you and Evan dated once," he said. Larry had always admired Evan's ability to attract beautiful women. He was secretly envious and jealous of the virile Evan Ashland.

Suzanne was embarrassed by Larry's question. It was apparent that Evan Ashland told Larry anything about their date. She said defensively, "Yes. We had one date. We just had dinner and went to a movie."

"Evan is quite the ladies' man," he asserted.

"He is attractive."

"Did Evan try to seduce you?" he asked.

Suzanne resented his prying question, but she decided to give him a honest answer. "Yes. Evan tried to take advantage of me. But I kneed him in the groin."

Larry laughed at Suzanne's candid response. He said, "Evan deserved what he got."

"When I'm ready, I'll make love to a man," she declared.

"Suzanne. You're a strong young woman," Larry praised.

"I don't like any man making assumptions about me."

"I like your spunk."

"Just don't try anything with me," Suzanne warned.

"Suzanne! Cool down."

"It just makes me angry," she exclaimed.

Larry decided that a cool walk might help Suzanne regain her composure. He was already fond of the shapely young woman. He said, "Let's take a walk."

"Yes. I'd like to take a walk."

Larry and Suzanne walked to a closet and donned their coats. They then ambled to the front door of the fraternity house. Exiting the house, they stepped down a series of concrete stairs to the street level.

Suzanne looked up at the clear sky and searched heavens for stars. The moon light and the haze from the city lights had obscured most of the stars. But the most brilliant stars shone through duskiness. She spotted the familiar stars of her youth.

Seeing Suzanne stargazing the dark sky, Larry said, "The stars are enchanting."

Startled, she gazed at Larry and explained, "Oh. I was just remembering the stars of my youth. "

"The stars are romantic. "

"I spent many a hour trying to give some meaning to the stars," she explained.

"Maybe they have no meaning," Larry added skeptically.

"No. The stars have eternal meaning," she offered, "You simply have to discover it."

"What was so special about the stars of your youth?"

"Nothing special," she said, "but it was a more peaceful and certain time."

Larry looked at the fateful but starry sky, and he thought about his turbulent youth. He remembered his work-alcoholic, demanding father and the daily trauma of living in shadows of his father's excessive expectations. For him his youth was not peaceful or certain, and his adulthood offered a new beginning and freedom of choice. He suddenly craved to be around familiar surroundings.

"Suzanne. Let's head to my room," he said, "I want to show some mementoes of youth."

"You're not as shy as I was told?"

"I promise not to touch you," Larry replied.

"Then lead the way," Suzanne directed.

"Well. My fraternity house is two blocks north of here," he said. Turning north, they walked towards the fraternity house.

"Larry. Are going to be drafted?" Suzanne was concerned about Larry's draft status, because it meant a two-year commitment in the military.

"Well. I hope to get a medical deferment."

"What is wrong with you?"

"Nothing," he explained, "but I have a bum knee from an old football injury."

"Your knees seems fine to me," Suzanne said innocently, "You don't limp."

Larry immediately fell to his knees, and he exclaimed. "It's my bum knee."

"Are you okay?" She wasn't sure whether Larry was feigning. If he was faking, he was doing a marvelous acting job.

"My family doctor will certify that I have a bum knee," Larry divulged. He got up from the ground with little difficulty.

"Were you faking?" Suzanne inquired incredulously.

"No. I really have a bum knee."

"It doesn't look to serious to me."

"Apparently, you want me to be sent to Vietnam," he said.

"No, I don't," she said, "Are you trying to evade the draft?"

"Suzanne. You should be so blunt."

"But there must be other alternatives."

"I can't think of any," Larry said.

"Why don't you want to go to Vietnam?"

"Simple! I don't want to get kill or seriously injured," he stated.

Recalling the newspaper headlines about Vietnam, Suzanne agreed, "Yeah. You're right."

"Anyway, I want to go directly to graduate school," Larry explained, "with no stopovers in Vietnam."

After walking two blocks, Larry came to a halt and pointed to a darkened house. "This is my fraternity house," he said. "My room is on the second floor."

The fraternity house was rather large wooden building with many windows. Painted white with brown trim, the house was three stories high, and it had a shake roof.

Walking up wooden steps, they entered the house. Larry said, "Let me



show you the house."

"It won't be necessary. I've already seen it" she said.

"Oh, yeah. I forgot you've been here before."

"Three times," Suzanne disclosed.

"Then let's go up to my room," he said.

"Lead the way,"

Larry and Suzanne walked up a flight of stairs to the second floor. Taking the lead, Larry headed to a door down a long, well-lighted hallway. Arriving at the door, he opened it with a key, turned on the lights, and entered the room.

After following him into the room, Suzanne removed her blue cloth coat and gave it to Larry. He placed their coats in a closet.

"Do you want something to drink?" Larry asked.

"What do you have?"

"There some beer in the refrigerator." Larry pointed to a compact refrigerator, sitting in a corner.

Wanting to please Larry, she replied, "Sure. I'll take a cold beer."

Opening the refrigerator, Larry grabbed two cans of beer and opened them. He handed a beer to Suzanne.

"Let's sit down on my bed," he suggested. He was always unsure of himself in the presence of a pretty woman. He had unreasonable fears that Suzanne might say no and make him look foolish.

"Okay." Suzanne recalled when Clayton Shaw tried to seduce her in his bedroom. It seemed many light years ago. Larry might have the same intent, but she didn't care. She sat down on the bed, and she took a swallow from her beer. Larry sat down the bed, two feet from her.

"Where's your roommate?" Suzanne asked.

"Oh. He's visiting his girlfriend up in Bellingham," he related.

"What's his name?"

"Roland Barton," he said, "He's from Mount Lake Terrace."

"His girl friend must attend the Western Washington State College," Suzanne said.

"Yes. She does," he replied, "What about your roommate?"

"My roommate is Vivien Renwick," she responded, "She comes from Mercer Island."

"Has she attended any of the fraternity parties?"

"No. Vivien doesn't like them," she explained, "She's a White liberal."

"Oh. You're roommate is a White girl!" Larry was surprised at the revelation, but he quickly condemned himself for making such a racist statement.

"What's wrong with that?" Suzanne exclaimed, eyeing Larry.

"Nothing!" Larry said, "I'm not used to talking to Native American women."

Suzanne accepted his explanation. She said, "Vivien and I have been roommates since our first year at the university."

"Well. I would like to meet Vivien," he said, "she sounds like an interesting gal."

"Vivien has been a great friend."

"What about your family?" he asked.

"My parents live in Coulee Dam, Washington on the Colville Indian Reservation, and they work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs agency," she said. She explained that her father's name was Clyde and her mother's name was Pauline.

"What do they do?"

"My father is the contract compliance officer for the agency," she replied, "and my mother is the executive secretary for the BIA Superintendent."

"I'm impressed," he encouraged in understanding tone, "Are they college educated?"

"No. I'm the first member of my family to go to college." Suzanne was immensely proud of that fact.

"You must be proud," Larry said, "Do have any brothers and sisters?"

"I have two brothers and one sister. " She explained her brothers' names were Sidney and Russell and her sister's name was Vicky.

"Are you the oldest?"

"Yes. I'm the oldest," she replied, "Larry. What about your family?"

Larry explained to Suzanne that he had grown up in Bellevue, Washington. He was the oldest of two children. He had a sister named Valencia or "Val" for short. His father was a self-made man and a successful businessman. His father's name was Chet, and his mother's name was Agnes. His father never attended college, but his mother had been a school teacher. She had attended the Central Washington College in Eastern Washington. But she was now strictly a housewife, who did little housework.

"What's your father's business?" Suzanne asked.

"He's into real estate."

Suzanne remembered Tracy Wigmore's offhand remark about Chet Bucknell's bankruptcy. Though she didn't want to ask about the bankruptcy, she thought it was too important to ignore. She said, "Tracy told me your father had filed for bankruptcy."

Annoyed, Larry cried out, "Tracy should mind her own business."

"Tracy didn't mean any harm," Suzanne defended.

"She's always spreading gossip."

"I don't need to know about the bankruptcy."

"Yes! My father did file for bankruptcy," Larry admitted heatedly.

"That's too bad," she sympathized.

"But the bankruptcy was only for my father's real estate business," he explained.

"Doesn't your father also play the stock market?"

"Tracy sure has a big mouth."

"Well. Tracy does like to bloat," Suzanne offered.

"At my expense."

Suzanne was still interested in hearing about Chet Bucknell's bankruptcy. Larry's anger had made her hesitant. But still highly curious, she said, "I asked about the stock market?"

Larry was displeased with Suzanne's persistence. But he valued the friendship of the lovely young woman. He acknowledged reluctantly, "Yes. My father does play the stock market, but only as part of his real estate business."

"Meaning what?"

"My father is not personally bankrupt."

"He filed under Chapter 11?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Was his real estate business incorporated?" Suzanne asked. She didn't want to outfox Larry, but she did want the truth from him.

"Aren't you the smart one," he said. He glared at Suzanne. She knew something about bankruptcy law, and it was futile to attempt to deceive her.

Suzanne sensed built up frustration in his voice, and she decided to ease the tension between them. She said, "Last fall quarter, I took a course on practical law for the layman."

Larry laughed at his stupidity, and he confessed, "Well, Suzanne. You're right about father. He has filed for personal bankruptcy."

"Chapter 7?"

"Yes."

"Larry. I'm not trying to be difficult."

"You are looking at a poor man," he joked.

"I can't imagine you being poor," Suzanne said.

"Well. I'll probably have to support myself through graduate school," Larry admitted.

"You won't have any problems."

"I hope so."

"I'm very impressed with your family," Suzanne said, "it's a high caliber family."

Larry slightly embarrassed by her lauder of his family. He said, "My father demands the best."

"I'm also impressed with you," she remarked, "you have class and potential."

Larry was pleased with Suzanne's gracious comments about him.

She was accessible. He said, "You're the first Native American girl that I ever met."

"I hope you're not disappointed," she said softly.

"No. I like beautiful Native American princesses."

"Am I not a pretty woman?" Suzanne protested. She didn't care for Larry's reference to her race or term princess.

Larry looked at her scowling face, and he realized that he had been insensitive about Suzanne's feelings. She was touchy about her race, and she also might be sensitive about her being plebeian. He begged, "I didn't mean to offend you."

"I wasn't offended," she denied unconvincingly.

"You are a beautiful woman." He tried to appease her.

"Thank you." Suzanne smiled broadly at Larry. She liked his awkward innocence, and she was attracted to his firm body. His innate reserve only encouraged her to view him as obtainable. She was tiring of waiting for the perfect young man. Larry had potential, and she decided to take a chance with him.

"I'm really nuts about you," he said. He decided to reveal his true feelings to Suzanne, as he feared losing her by omission.

"Larry. I find you attractive too." She was waiting for him to touch her, but she see the hesitation on his face. By now she was usually fighting off the searching hands of her other suitors.

"Suzanne. I adore you."

"But we just met."

"Don't you believe in love on first sight?" Larry asked.

"Sometimes."

"Well. I believe in it."

Growing frustrated with the talk of Larry, she finally said, "Larry. Sit next to me."

Mildly surprised at Suzanne's request, he said weakly, "Sure." Obeying, he moved his body across the bed to where Suzanne was sitting. He feared his awkwardness had made a negative impression on Suzanne.

"You are shy," she remarked.

"Well. I am shy around pretty women," he admitted. Their conversation was making him increasingly uncomfortable and defensive.

"I'm not trying to criticize you," she said, "I do like you." She put her hand on his knee, which caused his body to jerk.

Her soft touch immediately made Larry excited. But he was failing to respond to her obvious invitation. Out of frustration, he finally said, "I find you captivating."

Sensing his inhibition, Suzanne gazed into his eyes and moved her

hand to his thigh. She asked him, "Have you ever made love to a woman?"

"Of course, I have!" he answered. Suzanne had unwittingly attacked his manhood.

"I believe you?" she reassured innocently.

"I've been with plenty of women," Larry defended. His face turned colorless, and he was becoming agitated.

She saw his pain that he was experiencing. Maybe she should end their conversation and return to the party. She only wanted Larry to be honest with her. If he refused, she planned to leave to drop him. She warned, "Larry! You must be honest with me. If you can't, I just as well leave."

Larry glared at Suzanne and then ogled her shapely body. He decided that he had to have her. He conceded reluctantly, "Well, I'm not a womanizer."

"That's better," she said, "and what else?"

"I've never seduced a woman," he said with great difficulty.

"Have you made love to a woman?"

"Yes."

"To a prostitute?"

"Well, yes."

"I respect you for being honest with me," Suzanne said.

"It's hard to be honest when your self-esteem is at stake," Larry said seriously.

"You can't base a relationship on falsehoods."

"I wasn't trying to mislead you," Larry explained, "I was only protecting my ego."

"Larry. I still admire you."

"I don't want to lose you," he said. He condemned himself for using such excessive language; he must sound foolish.

Suzanne put her hands on his chest and carefully caressed his chest. Still inhibited, he was not responding to her bodily manipulations.

"What's wrong?" Suzanne asked softly.

"Nothing."

"Then take me in your arms and kiss me."

"Sure," he said. Following her instructions, he put his arms around Suzanne's shoulders and lightly kissed her.

"Larry! Kiss me hard."

Trying again, he held her tight and kissed her long and hard.

"You do have a nice body," Suzanne said. She started to unbutton his casual red shirt.

"What are you doing?" he exclaimed. He never figured that Suzanne

could be so bold.

"Do you want to make love to me?" she asked.

"Yes."

"Then make love to me. I'll help you." They made love.

When they finished, Suzanne announced, "I need to go home."

"Why?"

"Because I want to find out what happened to my roommate," Suzanne explained.

"Is Vivien in some kind of trouble?" Larry asked.

"No. But she dated an old acquaintance of mine."

Distrustful, Larry felt some jealous towards the unknown acquaintance. He inquired, "What's he to you?"

"Michael Dodd is an old high school classmate," Suzanne divulged.

"Is Michael a Native American?"

"Yeah. Michael belongs to the same tribe as I do." Suzanne surmised that Larry was a little jealous of the unknown Michael.

"Was there anything between you and Michael?"

"Larry! Michael and I happen to despise one another," she said.

"Oh. You're not friends," Larry said excitedly. He was immediately relieved that Michael posed no threat to him.

"I'm just concerned for my roommate," Suzanne said, "Michael can be a little rough with women." She climbed off the bed and started to get ready to leave.

"I'll drive you home." Larry also donned his clothes.

"Well. Thanks for the ride home," she said.

After they dressed, they walked out of the fraternity house to Larry's car. He owned a blue 1962 sedan. After opening the car door for Suzanne, Larry circled the car and entered the driver's side. He pulled out of his parking spot, and he drove the car south towards 45th street.

"I live in an apartment on University Way and 55th Street," Suzanne said.

Larry drove west on 45th street and turned right on 15th avenue. Driving north, they arrived at the location of Suzanne's apartment. He asked, "Where's your apartment?"

Suzanne pointed to an apartment building constructed of wood. It was illuminated by outdoor lights and was four stories high. She said, "I live on the third floor."

Larry parked his car in front of the apartment building. He still felt uncomfortable in Suzanne's presence. Growing jittery, he looked at Suzanne's pretty face. "I'm pleased to have met you

tonight," he said, "I had a wonderful time."

"It was a great evening," she said. She waited for Larry to ask her for another date. His shyness was disquieting.

"Suzanne. Would you like to meet my family?" Larry asked nervously, fearing a negative response. He wanted to show his father that he had a serious girlfriend. Chet Bucknell had put a lot of pressure on him to start dating women. Chet even implied that Larry was less than a man for not having girlfriends.

"I would be delighted to meet your family," she replied.

Relieved at Suzanne's positive response, he said confidently, "Can I pick you up at noon tomorrow?"

"Sure! I should be ready by then."

"Let me walk you to your apartment door," he said.

"I'd appreciate that," she answered.

They exited the car and strolled up the apartment building. Taking the elevator to the third floor, they walked down the corridor to Apartment 311.

"This is my apartment," Suzanne said.

"Well. Again I had a wonderful evening," Larry said.

"Aren't you going to kiss me good night?"

Larry gazed into Suzanne's eyes, and he took her into his arm. He kissed her hard, and Suzanne returned his kiss.

When they broke their embrace, Suzanne said good night and entered her apartment. Exhilarated, Larry happily stumbled down the corridor to the elevator. He had met the beautiful woman of his dreams. It had been one of the best days of his life.

In her apartment, Suzanne searched for Vivien Renwick, but she could not find her. Vivien had not yet returned from her date with Michael Dodd. Suzanne was fearful about the welfare of her roommate. She distrusted the lecherous Michael Dodd, who had a reputation of being fast with women. Turning on the television, she watched a late movie, which helped to clam her nerves.

An hour later, she heard someone at the apartment door. She hoped it was Vivien returning to the apartment. She tried to decipher the garbled chatter of a man and a woman exchanging words. But a translation was impossible. Sitting on the couch, she waited patiently for Vivien to enter the apartment.

The apartment door opened, and Vivien entered the apartment. Vivien immediately saw Suzanne sitting on the couch, watching television. She said, "Suzanne. You're still awake."

"Yes. I want to wait for you. How did your date go with Michael?" Suzanne asked anxiously.

"Well. He didn't rape me," she joked with a smile.

"That's good to hear," Suzanne said seriously, "Michael is a wolf."

"Suzanne. You're being too harsh."

"What do you mean?"

"I didn't find him to be a lady killer."

"Michael isn't a woman chaser?" Suzanne exclaimed, "That's hard to believe."

"Michael is very sensitive and decent," Vivien explained, "He's a wonderful young man."

"That doesn't sound like Michael Dodd."

"Well. You must not know Michael Dodd very well," Vivien asserted bravely.

"There was always some animosity between us since we were young," Suzanne revealed. She remembered being the butt of Michael's jokes. And the silence treatment that Michael and his pals inflicted on her.

"May I ask why - Suzanne?"

"I don't know why," she answered, "Michael has always shunned me."

"Are you blaming Michael?"

"Well. Michael has never tried to make friends with me," Suzanne verbalized.

"Suzanne. Each of you share part of the blame," Vivien pointed out, "Both of you grew up in the same community, belong to the same tribe, and attended the same schools."

"Meaning?"

"You and Michael should be friends."

"It's not easy to be friends with Michael," Suzanne argued.

"From what I've heard from both of you, there is no sane reason why you shouldn't be friends," Vivien said.

When Suzanne heard Vivien's words, she demanded, "What did Michael tell you about me?"

"Nothing important."

"Vivien. I don't like people talking about me behind my back."

"I wasn't talking about your back your back," Vivien defended, "You happen to be my roommate, and Michael is acquainted with you. You're bound to come up in our conversations."

"Michael is turning you against me."

"No. I'm in love with Michael Dodd," Vivien disclosed.

"So quickly!"

"Yes. I've always admired him."

Suzanne was startled by the revelation. Apparently, she knew little about Michael, and wild rumors about him were highly



exaggerated. She conceded, "Well, Vivien. It's your life. You can love anyone you want."

"Thank you."

"Though I have my differences with Michael, I respect your feeling towards him," Suzanne said.

"Well. I do love Michael," Vivien said emphatically.

"Oh. I forgot," Suzanne said, "Did you tell Michael that you were a White girl."

"Yes. I told him." She wished that Suzanne was more supportive.

"He didn't get upset?"

"Well. He didn't like it at first," Vivien revealed, "but he quickly got over it,"

"So Mr. Native American Rights likes White women," Suzanne exclaimed.

"Michael didn't seem to mind."

"What's the world coming to?" Suzanne sighed.

Vivien decided to break off the fruitless conversation and get ready for bed. After taking a quick shower, she put on a yellow nightgown, and she returned to the living room. Suzanne was still watching television.

"Well, Suzanne. How did the fraternity party go?"

Suzanne smiled broadly at Vivien, and she said cheerfully, "I thought you would never ask. I met the most gorgeous young man."

"What's his name?" Vivien asked.

Many times before, Suzanne had been excited about young men that she had met at fraternity parties. Inevitably, the initial enthusiasm about them died out. After a couple of dates, Suzanne would not hear from them again. Or Suzanne would discover that they were not good enough for her. What was the real truth - Vivien didn't know, and it really didn't matter to her. Vivien did suspect that racism was involved and that some of young men were only after Suzanne's shapely body. Suzanne never talked about her sex life to Vivien.

Vivien did question Suzanne's values. She couldn't understand why Suzanne kept faithfully attending those inane fraternity parties. Suzanne always mentioned that she wanted to meet classy young men. Vivien could never understand the connection between fraternity parties and classy young men. Vivien never knew what Suzanne meant by the term, classy young men.

Vivien thought the fraternities and sororities were elitist and reactionary. She refused to have anything to do with them. Suzanne must have experienced prejudice at the fraternity parties and on dates with the fraternity brothers. But Vivien could never

convince Suzanne to look to other places for boyfriends.

"His name is Larry Bucknell," Suzanne divulged ecstatically.

"Is his father Chet Bucknell?" Vivien asked.

"Yes. Do know his father?"

"No. But I heard of him," Vivien disclosed, "Chet Bucknell is into real estate. He has land investments on Mercer Island."

"Chet Bucknell is quite an entrepreneur," Suzanne said.

"Chet has filed for bankruptcy," Vivien commented.

Suzanne grinned and said, "Larry has already told me what's happening with his father."

"I'm not trying to be patronizing."

"It's common knowledge," Suzanne acknowledged. She was distressed by Vivien's knowledge of the bankruptcy. It put her on the defensive.

"Chet Bucknell's bankruptcy is all over Mercer Island," Vivien related.

"Chet Bucknell likes to play the stock market," Suzanne explained, "His bankruptcy had nothing to do with his real estate business."

"Mr. Bucknell is bound make a comeback," Vivien said grudgingly. She didn't want to sound too negative about the Bucknell family. But she had her doubts. Her father, Jack Renwick, preached incessantly against Chet Bucknell, and he opined that Chet Bucknell was nothing more than a modern day robber baron. Mr. Bucknell was no environmentalist, and he was involved in numerous questionable land developments, which were damaging to the environment. Vivien didn't know anything about his son, Larry Bucknell. But she was convinced Larry Bucknell had to be like his father.

"I have a date with Larry Bucknell tomorrow," Suzanne disclosed,

"Where are you going?"

"Larry invited me to meet his family."

"Well. That's a new twist," Vivien said.

"Larry is very fond of me," Suzanne revealed, "He has already said that he's in love with me."

"Any man is bound to find you attractive."

"Thank you."

"You just need to find a young man who is decent and compatible with you," Vivien said.

"Well. Larry is a decent man, and I feel comfortable with him."

"That's good to hear," Vivien replied, "Maybe Larry is the young man of your dreams."

"And I find Larry to be attractive." Suzanne explained to Vivien that Larry was a college senior, and he was majoring in accounting. He planned to become a certified public accountant then obtain a Master

of Business Administration degree.

"How does Larry plan to avoid the draft?" Vivien asked.

"Larry has a bum knee from an old football injury," Suzanne explained.

"It's a very convenient injury," Vivien said cynically.

"Larry loves his country," Suzanne defended, "and he would serve his country if it wasn't for bum knee."

"I only wish Michael had such an injury."

"Well. I'm glad that Larry won't be going to Vietnam."

"I expect Michael to be drafted and sent to Vietnam," Vivien said.

"Is there no way for him to avoid the draft?" Suzanne asked.

"No. Michael doesn't have enough sense to get out of the rain."

"For once I agree with you." Suzanne smiled at Vivien.

"Well, Suzanne. I deserved that," she laughed.

Vivien headed to her bedroom, and Suzanne proceeded to the bathroom to prepare for bed. Stepping into the shower, she thought of the long day ahead of her tomorrow. She never liked meeting the parents of her dates, for she never knew what to expect from their parents. She was always sensitive about the prospect of facing racial prejudice. It didn't matter whether it was open hostility or subtle silence. She could feel the prejudice.

The next day, sitting on the couch, Suzanne Redwood was waiting patiently for Larry Bucknell to arrive at her apartment. A wall clock was steadily inching its way to twelve o'clock noon. She had carefully prepared herself for her outing with Larry. She decided to wear a navy blue blazer and black skirt, and she had meticulously applied cosmetics to her pretty face.

Earlier, Vivien Renwick had left the apartment for her parents' home on Mercer Island. Suzanne thought that Vivien would eventually head to Michael Dodd's apartment after visiting her parents. She was beginning to believe that Vivien was truly in love with Michael. It was an unexpected turn of events.

Vivien had been interested in Native American affairs, since she discovered that her roommate was a Native American. She had conscientiously attended the meetings of Native American Student Association, and she even had verbally identified herself as a Cherokee. It didn't seem extraordinary that Vivien had fallen in love with Michael Dodd.

Hearing knocking at the apartment door, Suzanne hurried to the door and quickly opened it. Standing in the doorway was Larry Bucknell. His light brown hair was neatly cut short and combed. His greenish eyes sparkled with anticipation.

"Hi Larry. Come into the apartment," Suzanne said.

"It's great to see you- Suzanne," Larry replied. He quickly walked into the apartment. His trip to Suzanne's apartment was filled with worry and anxiety, and he was greatly relieved that Suzanne had not stood him up. He had continually day dreamed about her since last night.

"Take a seat on the couch," she directed, "I'm still getting ready." She ambled to the bathroom to comb her straight black hair. She didn't want to appear too excited about Larry's appearance.

Larry took a seat on the secondhand couch, and he eyed the furnishings of the apartment. As he anticipated, the apartment was sparsely furnished. But he was impressed with the Native American artifacts and artwork. Here and there were photographs of Suzanne's and Vivien's families.

Returning to the living room, Suzanne announced, "Larry. I'm ready to leave."

"Well. You look beautiful today," Larry praised.

"Thank you," she said, "You look handsome yourself."

Hypnotized by Suzanne's presence, Larry fought to think of something to say to her. Eventually, he muttered, "The weather is beautiful today."

"It unusual weather for this time of year."

"There's nothing like clear skies and sunshine."

Growing impatient with Larry, she said, "Are we going to your parents' home?"

"Yes. We sure are."

Sensing hesitation in his voice, Suzanne said, "We don't have to visit your parents."

"But I want you to meet my parents."

"Larry. You don't have to play games with me," she said, "I can understand feelings of your parents."

"Meaning?"

"Are you afraid to introduce to me to your parents?"

"No. I'm not afraid."

"It isn't everyday you introduce a Native American girlfriend to your parents," Suzanne blurted out.

"Suzanne. I'm in love you," Larry responded, "and I'm very proud that you are a Native American woman."

"I'm just anxious about meeting your parents."

"My parents are not prejudice," he said, "There won't be any problems, because you're a Native American."

"What if they don't accept me?" she asked somberly

"Then they can go to hell."

Suzanne looked at Larry's indignant face. He appeared to be sincere, and there were indications of honesty in his voice. Having verbalized her concerns, she was satisfied that Larry was serious about her. She like his tough response. Of course, she had no other choice but to meet his parents. She was committed to developing a romantic relationship with Larry. Whether she liked it or not, his parents were the key to the success of their relationship.

"Which route are we taking to Bellevue?" Suzanne inquired. Because Larry was visibly upset, she decided that a change of the subject was needed.

Larry was immediately relieved that Suzanne still desired to meet his parents. Nevertheless, he was anxious about the reaction of his parents towards Suzanne's race. He replied, "Let's go through the University of Washington Arboretum."

"It sounds good."

"Then we'll follow the Lake Washington Boulevard," he explained, "and take the Mercer Island Floating Bridge."

"Terrific."

"I'm glad you like my planning," he said.

"I have no objections," Suzanne replied, "Let me get my coat from the closet." Walking to a closet, she clasped her blue cloth coat and put it on.

Suzanne and Larry left the apartment and proceeded down the corridor to the elevator. Riding the elevator to the ground floor, they exited the apartment building. Larry had parked his car in front of the building. Climbing in the 1962 sedan, Larry drove the car towards Arboretum.

Arriving at the Arboretum, they decided to take walk. Larry found a parking lot and parked the car. They spent the next two hours leisurely touring grounds. Though the day was chilly, the shining sun brightened their spirits. They carefully examined the varied plant life, trees, scrubs and green landscape of the Arboretum. The winter rains had turned everything green. They had much fun attempting to identify the flora. Larry had an uncanny ability to identify the flora, which surprised Suzanne.

Tiring of walking, they returned to the car, and they continued their trip to Bellevue. Lake Washington Boulevard ran through the Arboretum. They followed the boulevard to the shores of Lake Washington then to the Mercer Island Floating Bridge. A segment of Interstate 90, the bridge spanned the wide Lake Washington.

Crossing the lake, they entered Mercer Island, which was a large island in Lake Washington. After crossing Mercer Island, they again crossed the final stretch of Lake Washington. Exiting 1-90,

they turned north and entered the city limits of Bellevue.

"My parents own a home near Lake Washington," Larry said.

"I'm impressed," Suzanne replied.

"My father, Chet, bought the house ten years ago," he said, "We have about one more mile to go."

"The neighborhood looks pretty exclusive."

"Yeah. The real estate is expensive."

"My parents' home is modest but comfortable," Suzanne said. She decided that honesty was the best policy. And any attempt to exaggerate her circumstances would make her look foolish and ill-bred. Anyway, it was her beauty which attracted Larry.

"It must have been rough growing up on an Indian reservation," Larry said innocently.

"My family doesn't live in a teepee," she replied.

"I didn't mean to say that you were poor."

"Well. There are poor families on the Colville Indian Reservation," Suzanne explained, "but my family wasn't one of them."

"The crime rate must be high."

"Not in particular," she responded, "but there is severe alcoholism problem on the reservation."

"Is that because Native Americans cannot hold their liquor?"

"They can hold liquor and beer like anyone else," she said, "I have a few acquaintances who are testimony to that." She immediately thought of Michael Dodd and his buddies. Although she might object to their excessive drinking, she had to concede that they handled it well.

"Then what causes alcoholism among Native Americans?"

"I've thought about it," Suzanne said seriously, "Apparently, Native Americans must like to drink and be friendly. Of course, some are addicted to alcohol."

"But every racial group likes a friendly drink," he said.

"Well. Native American are going to have to find the solution in themselves," she said.

"It would help if they had jobs," he conceded.

"Maybe less racial prejudice," she added.

"You're always going to have racial prejudice."

"When you think about it, Native Americans live under a tremendous amount of daily stress, because of racial prejudice," she asserted.

"There can't be much racial prejudice against Native Americans," he retorted.

"Have you ever lived on an Indian Reservation. "

"No."

"Then you don't know."

"Well. I'm not prejudice," Larry said.

"But you're only one person out of one million people in King County," she argued.

"You make a lot of sense," he said. Larry surprised that Suzanne was so thoughtful and analytical. She possessed both beauty and intelligence. He also could understand why Suzanne planned to go into social work.

Making a left turn, Larry drove his car down a narrow street through a thicket of trees and scrubs. Turning into a long asphalt driveway, they drove up to a large yellow house. Leaving the car, they walked hand-in-hand up to the front of the house.

Opening the door, Larry said nervously, "Well. We're here. Let's go into the house. "

"I'm ready," Suzanne said. Her fears about meeting Larry's parents were resurrected. She smartly walked into the house, trying to be confident as possible. Sharing her concerns, Larry followed her into the house, and he then led her to a spacious well-furnished living room.

A young lady was sitting on white luxurious sofa, reading a paperback novel. She was attired in a gray sweater shirt and blue jeans. Hearing them enter the living room, she looked up and saw it was her brother and a young woman, who appeared to be a Native American. Her curiosity was aroused, as her brother had few girlfriends, and he rarely brought them home. Obviously, this woman was something special. She commented, "Larry. You're finally home."

"Yeah. We first visited the Arboretum," Larry responded.

"Who's your lady friend?" his sister asked, smiling.

"Oh. This is my girlfriend, Suzanne Redwood."

"It isn't often that I meet one of Larry's girlfriends," his sister said. She scrutinized Suzanne's straight black hair, brown skin, brown eyes, and high cheek bones. She concluded Larry's girlfriend was a Native American.

"And this is my sister, Valencia," Larry said to Suzanne, "She's a high school senior." Valencia was a pretty girl with blonde hair and light brown eyes. She was taller than Suzanne, and her body was lean and firm.

"Which high school do you attend - Valencia?" Suzanne asked.

"Suzanne. You can call me 'Val'," Val replied.

"Val attends Bellevue High School," Larry said, "She's a straight 'A' student."

"Larry told me that he had a bright and pretty sister."

"Are you a Native American?" Val asked Suzanne. She was struck by Suzanne's beauty. Larry had always been attracted to attractive women.

But her brother was shy with women, especially if they were pretty. This was the first time he ever dated a strikingly pretty woman. She thought Suzanne's minority status had something to do with her brother's befriending Suzanne.

"Yes. I'm from the Colville Indian Reservation," Suzanne stated, "I grew up in Coulee Dam, Washington."

"You're from a small rural town," Val said.

"Coulee Dam is next to Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River," Suzanne responded, "The area has some farm lands, but it is mostly mountainous."

"How did you ever survive?" Val asked boldly. She couldn't imagine anyone possibly enjoy living in a small town like Coulee Dam.

"Even in a small town, there are things to do," Suzanne replied politely, "I enjoyed growing up in Coulee Dam, but I don't plan to return there."

"Val! You're being unfair to Suzanne," Larry interrupted, "She's my guest."

"Well. I didn't mean to embarrass her," Val said.

"Val's question was legitimate," Suzanne said, "Seattle has so much more to offer a person than a town of five thousand residents." She wanted to make a good impression with all members of Larry's family.

"Well. I'd better return to my reading," Val explained, "It's part of an English class assignment."

"Where's mother?" Larry asked Val, who was acting unusually reserved. He concluded that Val was not use to treating a Native American woman as an equal. She had grown in a protected environment where were few minorities.

"Mother is in the greenhouse," Val replied, "She's working replanting some of her prized flowers."

"And father?"

"He's in the boathouse working on the sail boat."

Retreating to the sofa, Val sat down and tried to read her novel. But she thought about her brother and Suzanne. He seemed serious about their romance. Initially she gave the romance between her brother and the Native American woman little chance to survive. But she eventually decided that if Suzanne was a strong woman, then it might just survive. She had little confidence in her unassertive and shy brother.

"How did you like my sister?" Larry asked.

"She's pretty," Suzanne replied, "That's about all I can say." She didn't want to talk about Valencia, because she didn't know her well enough.

"Val can be difficult and blunt," Larry explained, "She's not use to dealing with outsiders."

"Outsiders!"

"Sorry. I didn't intend any offense," he said, "Obviously you're my girlfriend."



"Then what did you mean by outsiders?"

"Really nothing. Val's life is centered about her cliquish friends and family," he explained.

"Val seems okay," she said. She was surprised at Larry's criticism of his sister.

"Well. She could have been more polite," Larry admitted.

"Maybe she just had a bad day. " Suzanne was more concerned about prospect of meeting his parents than hearing his apologies for Valencia.

"Let's head to the greenhouse," Larry said, "and meet my mother, Agnes."

"Sure. I'd love to meet your mother."

Larry and Suzanne walked down a hallway towards the back of the house. The house had a vast backyard, which included a swimming pool, greenhouse, boathouse, large garage, and other structures. The backyard was enclosed with a high wooden fence. A concrete walkway connected the house with the greenhouse.

As they stepped towards the greenhouse, Larry said, "Let me warn you. My mother is really upset about the bankruptcy."

"That's unfortunate."

"This morning father told the family that the house had to be sold, and the proceeds turned over to the creditors," he explained.

"Huh. All of this has to be sold!" she exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Where will your family live?"

"Well. My father plans to rent a house up the street," he disclosed.

"Your father is quite entrepreneur," she encouraged.

"I know."

"You're be back in your own house is no time."

"Thanks for the encouraging words," he said, "Anyway, my mother is a little depressed. "

"That's too bad."

Reaching the greenhouse, Larry opened the door and let Suzanne enter. Agnes was not sitting at the work bench where she usually did her gardening. Her hobby was growing prized flowers, and she had won numerous awards and prizes for her beautiful flowers.

"Where's your mother?" Suzanne asked.

"She usually works at that work bench." Larry pointed to an old unpainted wooden bench.

Suzanne quickly looked at the plants growing in the greenhouse. She had never seen so many varieties. She said, "Your mother grows beautiful flowers."

"She's a member of the Seattle Flower Club," he explained, "and she has won numerous first-place prizes at flower shows."

"She sounds like a talented woman," she said.

"My mother has a green thumb."

"She has an interesting hobby."

"My mother, Agnes, is probably working at the back of the greenhouse," Larry said.

Moving between two rows of plants, they began searching for Larry's mother. They walked towards the far end of the greenhouse.

Agnes was working at a wooden plank table. She was busy replanting flower plants into flower pots containing newly fertilized soil.

Agnes Bucknell was a small woman with light brown hair and gray blues. Forty-five years old, she was pleasing to the eye. Although she had recently gained a few pounds of weight, she had an attractive figure. She was wearing an attractive jumpsuit made of green-colored cloth.

Agnes heard Larry and Suzanne stepping towards her, and she looked up at them. Immediately recognized her son, she said, "Oh, it's you Larry."

"I'm home," he replied, "I want to introduce you to my new girlfriend, Suzanne Redwood."

"I'm pleased to meet you - Suzanne," Agnes said genially. Mother and son had a close relationship.

Larry had already explained to his mother that Suzanne was a Native American. Fearful of his father, he had not told him about Suzanne's race. His father, Chet Bucknell could be a difficult man, and he was reluctant to oppose him.

"And Suzanne. This is my mother, Agnes."

"I'm happy to meet you," Suzanne said cheerfully, "Larry had told me wonderful things about you."

"Larry is such good kid," Agnes exclaimed.

"Yes. Larry is fine man," Suzanne agreed.

Larry was slightly embarrassed by the unsolicited compliments, but he was exhilarated by Suzanne's praise. He was also relieved that his mother was not openly hostile to his new girlfriend.

"Larry told me that you were a Native American," Agnes said to Suzanne. Agnes cared more about the welfare of her only son than the race of his girlfriend. She also had some empathy for the plight of Native Americans.

"Yes. I'm from the Colville Indian Reservation," Suzanne said cautiously, "I grew up in Coulee Dam, Washington."

"You are pretty," Agnes observed, "Larry told me you were

beautiful girl."

Suzanne blushed at the praise, she replied, "Thank you." She was beginning to like Mrs. Bucknell.

"Larry. You need to talk to your father," Agnes said.

"What about?"

"It's a private matter," Agnes responded.

"Is he still in the boathouse?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, Suzanne. I must leave you for a few minutes," Larry said, "You can stay here talk to my mother."

"Okay," Suzanne said.

"I'll be back soon."

"Will I meet your father?" Suzanne asked. She feared that she was the topic of their private conversation, but she quickly rejected that notion. The meeting had be about the bankruptcy.

"Don't worry - Suzanne. You'll meet him in time," Larry reassured. Leaving Suzanne and Agnes behind, he plodded towards the front entrance of the greenhouse, and he disappeared through the door.

Agnes glanced at Suzanne's alarmed face. She said with difficulty, "Larry must have told you about the bankruptcy."

"Yes. Larry did mention it to me."

"Chet needs Larry's advice on how to proceed with the bankruptcy," Agnes explained.

"Oh." Suzanne was relieved.

"Larry is very knowledgeable about business law," Agnes advised.

"He did mention it to me."

"Chet needs some advice on how to handle an important legal problem."

"Does Larry plan eventually to go into business with his father?" Suzanne asked. She thought it was logical for Larry to join his father in his business ventures. Though Chet was now bankrupt, he was an excellent businessman and, mostly importantly, had many friends willing to lend him money.

"It's up Larry," Agnes said, "But I hope so."

"Why is that?"

"Well. Larry is less a gambler than Chet," Agnes replied, "He bound to keep Chet out of trouble. They'll make a good team."

"Larry is cautious."

"Sometimes too cautious."

Suzanne found Agnes a likeable person, who was deeply concerned about her family. She appreciated that Agnes was communicative.

"Larry is shy."

"He's especially shy around young pretty women," Agnes added, "I'm surprised that he met you."

"It wasn't easy," Suzanne giggled.

"He'll out grow shyness."

Sensing a question mark about her, Suzanne decided to tell Agnes more about her background. She explained that she was a college senior at the University of Washington, and she was majoring in psychology. She planned to go to graduate school and obtain a Master of Social Work. Her parents were both Native Americans, and they were strict protestant Christians. Her roommate was a Caucasian woman from Mercer Island. She had met Larry at a fraternity party, but she had noticed him at other fraternity parties.

"Do you belong to a college sorority?" Agnes asked Suzanne.

"No. I didn't think it was necessary."

"You should have joined a sorority," Agnes said, "You're the sorority type."

"Well. My parents are strictly religious," Suzanne explained. "They wouldn't understand if I joined a college sorority." In fact her sorority girlfriends did offer to sponsor her, but she refused their kind offer.

"Your race probably has something to do with it too," Agnes added, "Sororities can be exclusive."

"Few of the sorority women had a problem with my race," Suzanne admitted reluctantly, "But you can find some racial prejudice anywhere if you look hard enough."

"So you can."

Suzanne wanted to change the topic, for she felt uncomfortable talking about racial prejudice. It was too sensitive of a subject for her. She never like the prospect of being socially ostracized just because of her race. It cheapened her as a person.

"Agnes. You grow prized flowers for a hobby?"

"Yes. I find it very relaxing," Agnes replied, "and I really love attending the flower shows."

"I never had a green thumb."

"Plants just need a lot of fertilizer and water and tender loving care."

"Well. I admire you for your genius at growing prized flowers," Suzanne commended.

Agnes thought about the relationship between her son and Suzanne. She said, "Suzanne. Are you serious about my son?"

"Yes. I attracted to him," Suzanne said guardedly.

"Well. I want Larry to make through graduate school," Agnes said, "before he gets serious about a woman."

Suzanne was slightly vexed by Agnes' remark. It was understandable that Agnes would be protective of her son. But love could also cancel out the best laid plans. She said, "Remember - I just met your son."

"Of course, you have."

"I also plan to complete graduate school before I become serious about any man," Suzanne said unemotionally.

"Let me apologize," Agnes blurted out.

"I wasn't offended."

Larry walked slowly to the boathouse. He was determined to tell his father that Suzanne was a Native American. He didn't know how Chet would react to the news. Chet did have a history of disdain for racial and ethnic minorities. He had never hired a minority person in his real estate business, and he loved to tell derogatory jokes about every imaginable racial or ethnic group in the United States. Native Americans were not exempt from his derision.

The boathouse was a high wooden building, painted brown. It housed family yacht, which was large and extravagant. Chet always bought the best, and he thrived to be the best. His luxurious yacht symbolized what he was and what he expected from members of his family. It wasn't easy to be the son of Chet Bucknell.

Larry entered the boathouse, and he saw his father working on the hull of the yacht. He quickly stepped to father's side. In his late forties, Chet was a tall and fleshy man with blond hair and blue eyes. He was wearing blue overalls.

"Father. I'm here."

Turned around, Chet said, "I need to talk to you about a legal problem."

"What the legal problem?" Larry asked.

"Everything of value that I own will be sold," Chet explained, "and the proceeds turned over to the bankruptcy trustee. "

"Yes, I know."

"Well. Once the bankruptcy is completed, I plan to go back into the estate real business," Chet continued.

"Where are you going to get the money?"

"I have a few friends who want to make a quick buck. "

"Nothing can keep you down," Larry said admiringly. He had always marveled at the business acumen of his father.

"Anyway, I don't want the bankruptcy to affect my future business ventures," Chet said.

"You got scores of good lawyers."

"Lawyers cost money," Chet said, "and you know something about

business law."

"Well. I'm no bankruptcy lawyer."

"I'm very aware of that fact."

Larry explained to his father what he knew about bankruptcy law. He opined that if there was no fraud, then the bankruptcy should have little effect on his father's future business ventures. He commented the purpose of the bankruptcy laws was to give the bankrupt a debt-free start. Of course, the credit of the bankrupt would be poor, and borrowing money would be a problem. He did his best to explain to his father consequences of bankruptcy.

"Well, son. Thanks for the advice," Chet said.

"I'm glad that I could help you."

Chet respected his son but wished that he wasn't so reserved. He only hoped that Larry would outgrow his shyness.

"I'm sure going to miss this old boat," Chet sighed. He put his hand on the hull of the yacht, which was painted white. The yacht had two steel propellers, and the topside was painted blue.

"It's too bad it has to be sold," Larry replied.

"There's nothing like boating on Lake Washington and Puget Sound," Chet exclaimed.

"We've spent many a weekend on the Maelstrom," Larry said, "She's quite a boat."

"I have many fond memories."

"Father. You're bound a comeback," Larry said enthusiastically, "Then you'll own several yachts."

"Well. We should become partners," Chet suggested, "Then we'd kill them."

"But first I want to obtain a MBA."

"Larry. You're too educated now," Chet said, "I never even attended high school."

"That was you."

"Only thing a person needs is brains," Chet lectured, "A college education can't give you business sense."

"You're assuming that I have entrepreneurial skills," Larry responded.

"Larry! Quit using big words on me."

"I'm sorry about the big words," Larry said, "But I may not possess any business sense."

"Go into business with me," Chet urged, "and I'll teach you business sense."

"No, father. I rather go to graduate school"

"Well. It's your life."

"I feel the need to attend graduate school."

"I feel guilty that I cannot provide you with any financial support," Chet said, "The bankruptcy has crippled me."

"We've been over this before," Larry said, "I'm prepared to support myself through graduate school"

"If you didn't have to support yourself, you might do better in school"

"I'll do all-right."

"Son. You got the right genes," Chet said, "You'll succeed."

Larry decided that it was time to talk to his father about his new girlfriend, Suzanne Redwood. He feared his father's reaction to the news that she was a Native American. He said cautiously, "Father. I have a new girlfriend."

Chet stared at his son. He was elated that Larry had found a girlfriend. He had his doubts about the virility of his son. Since puberty, Larry had dated few girls, and he never had a serious girlfriend. Larry had always been shy with young women, especially the pretty ones. Larry was his only son, and he wanted his son to produce male heirs capable of carrying on the family name. He said excitedly, "What's her name?"

"Suzanne Redwood."

"How did you meet her?"

"At a fraternity party."

"Is she pretty?"

"Yes. She's a beautiful young woman."

"Are you serious about her?"

"Well. I believe I am," Larry revealed, "but I just met her."

"Is her father a professional or businessman?" Chet wanted her to have an acceptable background. He didn't want Larry running around with a social inferior.

"No. He's an administrator for the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

"What is he doing working for the BIA?" Chet asked loudly. He despised government bureaucrats, and, apparently, Suzanne wasn't a White Anglo-Saxon.

Larry detected anger in his father's voice, and Larry was rapidly losing his nerve. He said haltingly, "I don't know."

Chet sensed that Larry was being evasive with him. He cross-examined, "Is her father a Native American?"

His father had discovered the truth. Larry said, "Yes. He is a Native American."

Chet fancied that Suzanne could be a mixed-blood Native American. He asked, "Is her mother White?"

"No. Her mother is also a Native American."

"So your girlfriend is a Native American?"

"Yes. But she is quite beautiful."

"Beauty isn't everything," Chet said bluntly, "Social class is more important."

"Suzanne has what it takes."

Chet decided not to discourage his son, though he was not thrilled about Suzanne being a Native American. He also disliked her lower class background. A protecting father, he believed that his son could do much better. But his son needed to gain more experience with young women. He thought that Larry would eventually outgrow the young Native American woman, and he find a woman with a more suitable background. He conceded, "It's up to you to choose your friends and girlfriends."

"Suzanne is also intelligent and thoughtful," Larry added. He was relieved that his father did not openly criticize Suzanne or chastise him for making a foolish decision.

"Let's go meet your new girlfriend." Chet's curiosity was fully aroused. He wanted to meet the young Native American woman who had corralled his son.

"Sure. Suzanne is a terrific young lady," Larry said, trying to reassure himself.

"Lead the way," Chet directed.

Larry walked leisurely to the door of the boathouse and exited. His father closely followed behind. Entering the door of the greenhouse, they quickened their pace as they could hear the delicate voices of two women.

As Chet approached Suzanne, he listened to her pleasant voice, and he eyed her pretty profile and elegant dress. He promptly concluded that Suzanne had some class and social grace. She didn't fit his preconceived stereotype of a Native American woman.

Hearing someone walking towards her, Suzanne looked up and saw it was Larry and possibly his father. She said anxiously, "Larry. You're back."

Larry and his father stopped before Suzanne and Agnes. Larry said, "Suzanne. I want to meet my father, Chet."

Suzanne forced herself to smile broadly, and she exclaimed, "Mr. Bucknell. I've heard such wonderful things about you."

"Just call me Chet."

Suzanne scrutinized Chet's mature face, which was beginning to develop wrinkles and to sag. He was a handsome man and a fit father for Larry.

"Suzanne and I have been chatting about my prized flowers," Agnes explained, "She's an excellent listener."

"Agnes is very talented," Suzanne praised.



"Mother was always exceptional at growing flowers," Larry said.

Wanting to discover more about Suzanne, Chet asked, "Are attending the University of Washington?"

"Yes. I'm a senior," Suzanne answered. She explained that she was majoring in psychology, and she planned to go to graduate school to obtain a Master of Social Work.

"My son tells me that you're a Native American," Chet said. He liked to be as direct as possible with people.

Suzanne stared into Chet's eyes, looking for signs of disapproval. She could find none. She replied, "Yes, I'm a Native American. I was born and raised on the Colville Indian Reservation."

"You are a pretty girl, and you have an excellent head on your shoulders," Chet praised.

"Thank you."

"My son is a lucky man to find a girlfriend like you," Chet said. She had the poise that he valued in any woman.

Suzanne was embarrassed by the favorable comments, but she remained unconvinced that Chet was sincere in his praise. In her mind, Chet had no other choice but to accept her. Otherwise, he would risked alienating his only son. She responded, "Larry is a fine young man too."

"Larry was always nice to the girls," Agnes said proudly, "and girls were dying to date him."

"Mother. You're embarrassing me," Larry remarked.

Suzanne visualized the young women who wanted to befriend Larry but who were put off by his shyness. Obviously, his pursuers had given up too soon. She was delighted that she had ignored his shyness and pursued him. His shyness would keep him loyal to her. He had so much to learn about women, and she would be the woman who would teach him. She said slyly, "Larry must have had lots of girlfriends."

"I had a few girlfriends," Larry said defensively.

"Larry's a chip off old the block," Chet offered unconvincingly.

Suzanne couldn't imagine Larry being extrovert personality like his father.

"Let's go get something to eat," Chet urged. He was feeling usually hungry.

Suzanne looked at Larry, and she nodded her assent. He said, "We're game."

Chet invited Suzanne and Larry to have an early dinner at a German-styled restaurant. They climbed into Chet's station wagon, and they headed to the restaurant where they ate an excellent meal and drank a few hearty drinks. After eating, they returned to the

home of Larry's parents.

"Well. Suzanne and I must be leaving," Larry said.

"Do you have to leave so soon?" Agnes asked.

"I'm taking Suzanne to a movie."

"You and Suzanne have a good time," Chet said, "and it was good to meet you Suzanne."

"I had a good time," Suzanne replied.

Suzanne and Larry exchanged goodbyes with Chet and Agnes, and they left the house. Climbing into Larry's car, they drove across Lake Washington using Interstate 90 and the Mercer Island Floating Bridge, and they proceeded to downtown Seattle. They searched the downtown area for an intriguing movie, and they elected to see a western movie. After watching movie, Larry drove Suzanne back to her apartment. Larry parked his car in front of the apartment and walked Suzanne up to her apartment.

Searched her purse for her keys, Suzanne said softly, "I hope that Vivien is not home yet. "

"Why?," Larry asked naively. He learned to expect the unexpected from Suzanne Redwood, who was an daring woman. Still hesitant, he was unwilling to take charge, and he waited for Suzanne to move first.

She said seductively, "Because we're not finished tonight."

Larry recalled the previous night events and was immediately excited about the promise a repeat performance. Suzanne was truly exciting and bewitching woman.

Suzanne found her key and opened the door. Finding the lights turned on, she immediately looked to the couch. Vivien was lying on the couch watching television. Looking up from the couch, Vivien saw Suzanne and Larry entered the apartment. Smiling, Vivien said, "Hi, Suzanne. You're home."

"Vivien. I'm surprise you're home so early," Suzanne said with little enthusiasm.

"I can leave if you two want to be alone," Vivien said, using a teasing tone. Her unexpected presence had obviously upset Suzanne's carefully laid plans.

"Vivien. It won't be necessary," Suzanne replied, "Larry will be leaving shortly."

"Well. What's your sweetheart's name?" Vivien asked.

"Oh, Larry. This is my roommate - Vivien Renwick."

"So you're Suzanne's roommate," Larry said, "I'm Larry Bucknell."

"I've heard some terrific things about you," Vivien disclosed.

He was slightly embarrassed by Vivien's praise, and he surmised that Vivien was teasing Suzanne. But he was happy

Suzanne might be infatuated with him. He responded, "Suzanne is a marvelous young woman."

"She has been wonderful roommate," Vivien said.

Larry concluded that his date with Suzanne was at an end, and he instinctively looked down at his wrist watch. He said, "Well. I'd better be leaving."

"So early?" Vivien questioned.

"It's getting late for me," Larry answered.

"Larry. Let me walk you to the elevator," Suzanne suggested.

"Sure."

"Well. Goodbye Larry," Vivien said.

Suzanne followed Larry out of the apartment, and she quietly shut the door. They stood together in the corridor, and Larry sighed, "You have a roommate who likes to tease."

"Vivien is merely jealous," Suzanne humored, "that I have a classy boyfriend."

He smiled at her unsolicited compliment. She made him feel worthy and desirable. He valued her support. He laughed, "Yeah. Envy can be a insidious."

"I do owe her a lot," she added.

"What do you mean?" he sounded surprised.

"Because Vivien introduced to her sorority friends," Suzanne revealed, "That's only reason why I was invited to the fraternity parties."

"Vivien isn't the sorority type to me."

Sensing skepticism in Larry, Suzanne said, "Vivien comes from a Mercer Island, and both her parents are college educated, though they are politically liberal."

"Yeah. I know type," Larry said disdainfully. He thought of the environmentalists who plagued his father's projects. It made sense that Vivien supported liberal causes.

"Try to understand by sharing an apartment with Vivien, I learned a lot about White middle class," Suzanne disclosed seriously. She hoped that her candid admission made some sense and that it didn't make her sound tacky.

Although first surprised at her class-conscious statement, he realized she did make sense. Since Suzanne was a Native American, she have little exposure the lifestyle and expectations of the White middle class. Of course, he wouldn't have used such a generic term, as he considered himself a White Anglo-Saxon. Without thinking, he responded, "Yeah. I suppose rooming with Vivien is culturally enriching."

"Larry! I'm not an ignorant pedant," Suzanne retorted.

"I was only teasing."

"Making the transition to the middle class wasn't easy," Suzanne admitted, "But I'm still a Native American." Though her comment was contradictory, she felt the urgent need to make it. It was obvious to her that Native American society had its own social classes and groupings. But the middle class of White society had no equivalence in Native American society. In spite of her grand ambitions, Suzanne didn't want to admit that she was a person of the White middle class. She was still a child of Native Americans..

"You made the transition well," Larry pointed out. He didn't like the seriousness of the conversation.

Suzanne was troubled by her admission, but she felt the need to explain to Larry that she was still a Native American, even after nearly four years of college. She had ambivalent feelings about her social responsibility towards the Native American race. These feelings also disquieted her. It was something that she wanted the other Native Americans to take care of. She wanted to be a bystander and not an activist and defender.

Her goal was to escape prejudice and poverty of being a Native American. But her race would follow her. Even if she married a White person, she would still bear children who would have dark hair and eyes and a dark complexion. Society would consider her children to be Native American. The ultimate test of being a Native American was always one's children. She said, "I didn't want to assimilate into White society, but I have no other choice."

"Suzanne. You're being too serious."

"I thought you'd understand."

"Well. It's an issue that I never had to face," Larry remarked, "I can't place myself in your shoes."

"It's not easy to explain," she said.

"I'm happy that you're a Native American," he said, "I greatly admire you."

"Oh, Larry. I do adore you."

Larry thought of Vivien's possible influence over Suzanne. He didn't like political liberals of any color or persuasion. He had often heard his father, Chet, raved against liberals and radical environmentalists. He naturally viewed them as persons to disdain. He said, "Is your roommate important to you?"

"Vivien has treated me like a sister," Suzanne divulged.

"Well. She's a liberal," Larry blurted out.

Suzanne frowned at his unfair remark, she said emphatically, "You're not asking to give up Vivien - are you?"

Her firm response unsettled him. He knew he'd made a grievous

mistake. He didn't want to appear to be prejudice against liberals.

He said weakly, "No. I didn't mean that."

"Larry! Vivien is my roommate."

"I meant no offense," Larry said grudgingly, "Vivien is a likable person."

"Well. She can get carried away with her liberal causes," Suzanne said. She thought of the protest marches that Vivien had participated in and meetings of the Native American Student Association that Vivien had attended.

"Anyway, I'm not dating Vivien; I'm dating you," Larry announced. He was relieved that Suzanne was not a political liberal like Vivien.

"I idolize you," Suzanne responded.

"And I love you." Larry embraced Suzanne and gave her a kiss. She was delighted that he had not hesitated to kiss her. She smiled, "Larry. You're learning fast."

"I trust you."

"I'm glad."

"Well. I'd better be leaving," he said.

"Larry. Telephone me tomorrow."

"Sure. I'll call you," Larry promised. He friskily walked to the elevator, and he gave a final wave to Suzanne. And he disappeared into the elevator.

Reentering her apartment, Suzanne capered into the living room. She was exhilarated that everything had gone well with Larry and his family. Most of all, Larry had given her the reassurance that she needed, as she still was insecure about Larry's wellborn family. She was fearful that his family would find her an unsuitable mate for Larry. She desperately wanted to please his family. His father, Chet, and his sister, Valencia, seemed cold when she met them. Only his mother, Agnes, had readily accepted her.

Vivien was still lying on the couch watching television. Suzanne asked, "Vivien. Did you go out with Michael Dodd tonight?"

"Yeah. I spent the afternoon studying with Michael," Vivien revealed, "Then we ate some food at a local tavern."

"Why are you home so early?"

"Michael had to play in a basketball tournament," Vivien replied,

"He plays at 8:00 p.m."

"I never knew Michael played basketball."

"He plays for the Native American Student Association."

"Why didn't you go with Michael?" Suzanne asked.

"I find basketball to be boring," Vivien replied.

Suzanne still found it hard to believe that Vivien and Michael

were dating. She said, "Michael Dodd really has you captivated."

"Michael is fascinating and witty," Vivien responded, "I'm in love with him."

"You just met him."

"It doesn't matter," Vivien remarked,

"Love at first sight," Suzanne remarked drily.

"I think so."

"It will wear off." Still not appreciating Michael, Suzanne couldn't imagine Vivien and him staying together for any length of time.

"How did your date go with Larry?" Vivien asked.

"Oh. We had a wonderful time," Suzanne exclaimed, "Larry and I took a tour of the Arboretum. Larry has an amazing knowledge of botany."

"Did you meet Larry's parents?"

"Yes. Larry has terrific parents," Suzanne feigned joyously, "Chet and Agnes are very fine people."

"That's good," Vivien replied. She decided it was useless to argue with an exhilarated Suzanne about the abominable Bucknell family.

"Chet took us to a late lunch at a fancy restaurant," Suzanne said, "Then Larry and I went to a movie."

"You had an eventful day," Vivien commented.

"I just feel great about everything."

"Suzanne. I'm very happy for you."

## Chapter 7

Suzanne Redwood guided her 1960 compact car through the basalt Grand Coulee. The town of Coulee Dam was minutes away. She pressed down on the gas pedal to speed her return home. Rock music was loudly playing on the car radio, though she was oblivious to the music.

The sky was cloudless, and the day was hotter than predicted by the radio weatherman. The sun had already heated the basalt rocks of the coulee and the broad plateau above on both sides of the Grand Coulee. The cheatgrass of the coulee was still green, as the sun had not yet turned grass brown. In the far distance, she observed the mountains of the Colville Indian Reservation and the lush blanket of evergreen trees, which covered the mountains.

Accelerating her car through a last rock-filled causeway, Suzanne entered the outskirts of the town of Electric City, and she then drove through the town of Grand Coulee. She sped down a steep grade by Grand Coulee Dam to the town Coulee Dam, and she crossed the bridge spanning the Columbia River, which was a boundary of the Colville Indian Reservation.

Her heart fluttered as she eyeballed a sign reading: You're Entering the Colville Indian Reservation. After traveling hundred yards, she made left turn and twisted through series of curves. Coming to a stop sign, she smiled broadly as she sighted her parents' house up the street.

After driving into their driveway, Suzanne exited her car, and she walked up to the front door. Entering the house, she saw her mother standing at the kitchen stove with a wash cloth in her hand.

In her early forties, her mother, Pauline, had retained much of her original beauty. But she liked to dye her hair black to cover her grayish hair. The same height as Suzanne, Pauline had the same brown eyes and brown skin.

Suzanne shouted, "Mother. I'm home."

Looking up, Pauline saw it was her oldest daughter, Suzanne. She immediately rushed into the living room and hugged Suzanne. She said cheerfully, "It's great to have you home."

"It's great to be home."

"It's hard to believe that you're grown up," Pauline said, "and a college graduate." Pauline was immensely proud of Suzanne, as she was the first one in the family to graduate from college. As a young bride, Pauline couldn't even imagine one of her children eventually

attending college. She was proud that her ambitious daughter had worked hard to graduate from college.

"Where's father?"

"Tom is in town getting a car part," Pauline answered, "He should be back soon."

"How did you like the graduation ceremony?"

"It was just beautiful," Pauline replied. She explained that the ritual music was stirring, and she loved students marching in their graduation gowns receiving their diplomas. She almost cried when she observed Suzanne receiving her diploma.

Hearing someone entering the modest house, Suzanne looked toward the door, and she saw her father, Tom. He immediately observed Suzanne and exclaimed, "It's my learned daughter."

"Father. I'm home." Suzanne scampered to her father's open arms. He hugged her and gave her a fatherly kiss.

"Let's sit down in the living room," he suggested.

"Sure, father." Suzanne sat down next to her mother on the couch. Tom sat down on his imitation-leather easy chair, which he received as a gift on his birthday.

"Well. How long do you plan to stay?" he asked.

"For one week," Suzanne said regretfully, "I've got a summer job with the City of Seattle."

"Are you still planning to attend graduate school this Fall?" Tom asked. His daughter's success in college already boggled his mind. Graduate school was something beyond his comprehension.

"Yes. I've already been accepted into the School of Social Work," Suzanne explained.

"I can't picture you as a social worker," Pauline added. As a youth, Suzanne had always acted patrician. Apparently, maturity had mellowed her.

"Well. I like working with socially disadvantaged people," Suzanne verbalized. She knew her parents disliked her using big college words. But there were not better words to convey her thoughts.

"Suzanne. You're going to have to speak at our level," Pauline urged, "We're just simple folk."

"I'm sorry," Suzanne said, "but I'm used of using those kind of words." She explained to them her desire to obtain a Master of Social Work and to eventually become a social worker. Her summer job with the City of Seattle would give her experience working with disadvantaged youth.

"Do you plan to make Seattle your home?" Tom asked.

"Yes. That's where are the opportunities," Suzanne replied.



"But there is a need for educated social workers on the Colville Indian Reservation," Pauline asserted.

Suzanne didn't want to tell her parents that she had no plans to return to the reservation. She preferred the urban lifestyle of Seattle. Anyway, for last six months, she had ongoing love affair with Larry Bucknell. She desperately wanted to marry Larry. She replied, "I want to stay close to my boyfriend, Larry Bucknell."

"Is Larry the young Caucasian man that we met at your graduation?" her father asked.

"Yes." Suzanne anticipate her parents would lecture her about the importance of marrying a Native American male who had strict religious values.

"Larry was that well-dressed young man that Suzanne introduced us to," Pauline related, "He is a handsome young man."

Tom discerned that Larry was a very important person to his head strong daughter. He asked, "Do you plan to marry Larry Bucknell?"

"He hasn't asked me yet," Suzanne admitted, "but I do want to marry him."

"Suzanne. Can't you find a young Native American man?" Pauline inquired.

"Mother! I'm in love Larry." Since her childhood, her parents had incessantly preached to Suzanne about her need to marry a Native American. It wasn't easy for her parents to abandon a cherished commitment. They were reluctant to accept the fact that their loving daughter didn't share their commitment to the Native American race.

"Chuck Cooper has just graduated from Bible college," Tom pointed out. He explained that Chuck was in Coulee Dam, visiting his father. He had accepted a junior pastorate at a charismatic church on an Indian reservation in Montana. Still a single man, the church had given Chuck an ultimatum to get married or else.

"Chuck is really dedicated to the Lord," Pauline added, "He would make a wonderful husband."

Suzanne was perturbed at her parents' naive suggestion that she should consider marrying Chuck Cooper. She exclaimed, "Chuck is not my type."

"What do you mean?" Pauline asked seriously.

"I'm just not as religious as Chuck," she said, "He must have met scores of young women at his Bible college, who are very willing to marry a future preacher."

"I merely wanted to mention his name," Tom said defensively. He also had reservations about Chuck Cooper, fearing that Chuck was not man enough for his beautiful daughter.

"I just don't want to live a life of poverty," Suzanne said adamantly.

"Suzanne. I wish you would attend church more," Pauline stressed.

"I haven't lost my religious values," Suzanne answered, "I attend church when I can." Suzanne failed to mention that she attended an old mainline protestant church in an exclusive suburb of Seattle. Her parents disapproved of mainline churches, preferring charismatic protestant churches.

Tom remembered that Michael Todd had graduated the same day as Suzanne. After the graduation ceremony, Michael had said hello to Pauline and himself. He appeared to be a friend of Suzanne and her roommate, Vivien Renwick. Tom said innocently, "What about Michael Dodd?"

"Michael Dodd! You can't be serious," Suzanne cried out.

"But he is a local boy and a college graduate," Pauline said, "and he's all for Native American causes."

"Michael has never attended church," Suzanne commented.

"Michael is a good Native American boy," Tom praised, "Maybe you could reform him and lead him to the Lord."

Suzanne didn't originally want to tell her parents that Michael was romantically involved with her roommate, Vivien. But they apparently looked up to Michael, which really irritated Suzanne. She also didn't like being singled out for fraternizing with non-Indian lovers. She smiled, "It may surprise you that Michael is in love with a White woman."

"He is!" Tom raised his voice, "How do you know?"

"Because Michael is in love with my roommate, Vivien," Suzanne announced gleefully.

"But I thought Vivien was a Cherokee," Pauline blurted out. Vivien did look part Indian with her black hair and dark eyes.

"No. Vivien was only feigning Native American ancestry," Suzanne disclosed.

"I can't find fault with Michael for loving Vivien," Tom said, "She's a nice girl."

"Vivien is a wonderful girl," Pauline agreed.

"Then don't find fault with me for loving Larry Bucknell," Suzanne asserted, "You're using a double standard."

"Well, Suzanne. You're right," Tom confessed, "Although we are your parents, we shouldn't be telling you whom to marry."

Suzanne appreciated the values of her parents and their commitment to the Native American race. And she didn't want to disappoint them, but she had taken a different path, and there was no retreating. Suzanne consoled, "If I wasn't in truly love with Larry, I would seriously consider marrying a Native American man."

"Then you should marry Larry," Pauline conceded.

"But Larry still has not asked me," Suzanne said.

"Give him time. He'll ask you to marry him," Tom urged, "Larry appears a little shy to me."

"Larry is a little reserved," Suzanne admitted grudgingly. They then proceeded to discuss the latest news of the Colville Indian Reservation.

A lumber company was planning to build a new lumber mill on the Reservation. The state was looking at the feasibility of building a new highway, which would directly link Grand Coulee Dam with towns on the upper Columbia River. They talked about Suzanne's brothers and her sister. Her sister, Vicky, was talking of marrying a local Native American boy, which made her parents happy. Her brothers had summer jobs with the Colville Tribe.

Suzanne thought of her childhood girlfriend, Trixie Spearman. It would be nice to pay her a visit. She inquired, "Does Trixie still live in town?"

"Yes. She does," Pauline replied, "She moved to a house down by the river."

"What's her new address?" Suzanne asked.

"It's 1808 Columbian Drive," Pauline answered.

"Down by the river?"

"Yeah." Pauline said, "Trixie will be excited to see you."

"It's been a couple of years since I've seen her," Suzanne said.

"She has been living in Portland, Oregon," Pauline said.

"I'm glad she return home," Suzanne replied.

"Well. Let me bring your luggage for you," Tom offered.

"That would great." Suzanne said. Standing up, they walked out of the house to Suzanne's car. Finding her car keys in her purse, Suzanne opened the trunk of the car. Tom grabbed two heavy suitcases, and he hauled them into the house.

Then Suzanne climbed into her car and pulled out of the driveway. Proceeding directly to Columbian Drive, she wound her car down a series of grades to the riverside. Trixie's house was two blocks up the street, close to the turbulent Columbia River. She noticed a couple of elderly fishermen who were fishing for the abundant Walleye fish in the river. Speeding down the bumpy street, she turned into Trixie's driveway, and she exited the car.

Painted pale yellow, the house was built in the early thirties and was constructed of wood. It had two bedrooms, and a small living room, dining room, and kitchen. The front yard was small, but the fenced backyard was large. An old wood garage was situated next to the house.

Sitting at a kitchen table, Trixie Spearman heard a car turn into her dirt driveway. She was working on beading a pair of buckskin

moccasins. Not expecting any company this afternoon, she said, "Allen. Go see who drove in our driveway."

"Are your legs broken?" Allen Tupper thundered, "I'm busy watching television. " Lying on the couch, he was watching a Saturday afternoon baseball game. Since graduating from high school. Allen added a few pounds, but he was still muscular. Adopting the dress of a hippie, he had let his black hair grow down to his shoulders. Looking unkempt, he was wearing a black t-shirt and faded blue jeans.

"Because I'm busy," Trixie yelled back.

Reluctantly, Allen got up from the couch and stepped to the door. Because of the heat of the day, the door was left open. Eyeing the car and occupant, he initially couldn't tell whom it was. When the occupant exited the car, he said excitedly, "Trixie! It's Suzanne Redwood."

"Suzanne's here!" Trixie yelled. She jumped up from the table and dashed to the front door. She immediately recognized Suzanne and hurried out of the house.

Suzanne spotted Trixie leaving the house, and she moved towards her. Suzanne exclaimed, "Trixie. It's great to see you again."

Meeting, they hugged each other. Trixie said, "Gosh, Suzanne. You should have written that you were coming."

"I wanted to surprise you."

"You sure did," Trixie said ecstatically.

Suzanne eyed Allen Tupper. He had changed remarkably since high school. He looked liked a hippie from the University of Washington. She said guardedly, "Hi Allen."

"It's great to see you again," Allen said cautiously. He always felt uncomfortable in the presence of Suzanne. He remembered the good old days when Michael Dodd and he would mock the pretentious Suzanne, who always responded to their torment with anger and disgust. He figured that she had not forgotten their mockery.

"Suzanne. Come into the house," Trixie requested, "and get out of the sun."

"It is hot," Suzanne agreed.

Plodding to the house, Trixie and Suzanne entered the house, and they went into the living room. Trixie turned off the television, and they sat down on a worn-out couch.

Allen was curious about what Suzanne had to say to Trixie. He followed them into the living room. To give him something to do, he decided to clean his rifles. Going to a closet, he gathered up his crusty rifles and a cleaning kit and returned to the living room. He positioned himself on an old wooden chair, and he quietly started

to disassemble the rifles.

"How do you like married life?" Suzanne asked Trixie.

"It has been a trying three years," Trixie responded, "but Allen and I have survived."

"Yeah. I've been unemployed a lot," Allen admitted.

"That's why we returned to the reservation from Portland, Oregon," Trixie said seriously, "Allen has found a job with a logging company."

"Yeah. I'm a logger," Alien said with pride. He was busily cleaning a rifle barrel with a long narrow rod.

Suzanne had little sympathy for a person who looked like a hippie and probably smoked marijuana. She had difficulty believing Allen couldn't find a job in Portland, Oregon. It was more likely that he couldn't keep a job. But she did feel sorry for her best friend, Trixie, who had precipitately married Alien Tupper against her strong advice. She asked Trixie, "Are you employed?"

"I work as a secretary to the Tribal Council," Trixie disclosed.

"Trixie gets all kinds of inside dope," Allen exclaimed.

"It must be an interesting job."

"I'm planning to run for the tribal council next year," Allen announced."

"Allen will make a great politician," Trixie encouraged. She was very much in love with her husband in spite of his anti-establishment lifestyle. Allen was the father of Trixie two children, ages two and one. She encouraged him whenever she could, though Allen had some unrealistic dreams and foolish ideas.

"I want to throw the crooks out," Allen cried, "The tribal councilmen are just drawing pay."

"Allen. You shouldn't say those kinds of things," Trixie warned, "Someone might hear you."

"I don't care."

Suzanne thought to herself how little Allen had changed over years. He was reckless as ever and still talking nonsense. Deciding to change the subject, she asked, "Trixie. Where are your children?"

"The boys are in the back bedroom," Trixie replied proudly, "taking their afternoon nap."

"They are beautiful children," Suzanne praised.

"They are going to be great hunters," Alien interrupted, "When they get older, I'm going to teach them how to track and hunt with a bow and arrow."

"Allen has a thousand plans for Jimmy and Abe," Trixie bragged.

"It's hard to believe that you are married and already have two kids," Suzanne said to Trixie.

"And we plan to have more kids," Allen said.

"Trixie will have something to say about that," Suzanne retorted.

"I just love children," Trixie said, "and I love Allen."

"I do have a good woman," Allen asserted.

Suzanne was beginning to resent Allen's presence. It was useless to talk Trixie with Allen present. Trixie appeared very dependent on and submissive to Allen. She hoped that she would never become so compliant and dependent on her future husband.

"Suzanne. When are you going to get married?" Trixie asked. In the letters from Suzanne, she rarely mentioned any boyfriends. Obviously Suzanne was delaying marriage for her career.

"I'm dating a terrific young man," Suzanne said cheerfully, "I would like to marry him someday."

"What's his name?" Trixie asked.

"Larry Bucknell," Suzanne said softly. She explained that Larry belong to a well known fraternity and to a well-to-do family. He was handsome and suave, and he planned to attend the graduate business school in the Fall.

"He's too good to be a Native American," Allen exclaimed.

Suzanne looked fiercely at Allen, and she said, "You're right. Larry is not a Native American. He's a Caucasian!"

"Oh. You're marrying White," Allen said smugly.

"Suzanne. What's wrong with Michael Dodd," Trixie said innocently. Trixie still admired Michael Dodd, and she always believed he'd make a good mate for Suzanne.

"Yeah. Michael is a college graduate," Allen said, though he couldn't imagine Michael and Suzanne ever marrying. But he wanted to humor Trixie.

Suzanne stared at Trixie and Allen in disbelief that they could suggest such a thing. It was second time today that the name of Michael Dodd had been mentioned as possible mate. The suggestion was ludicrous to Suzanne. Why should she marry someone just because he was a Native American, and especially someone who had been her nemesis since childhood. Her family and friends had unrealistic expectations about her. She revolted against the spurious idea.

"You know very little about Michael Dodd," Suzanne replied.

"Why Michael is one of my best friend," Allen argued, "There's little that I don't know about him."

"Michael is committed to the Native American race," Trixie agreed.

"And I'm not?" Suzanne asked.

"I didn't say that," Trixie responded.

"Did you know that Michael is running with a White woman?" Suzanne asked.

"A White woman!" Allen exclaimed in disbelief.

"Suzanne! How do you know?" Trixie asked.

"Because he running around with my roommate," Suzanne said.

"I thought Vivien Renwick was a Cherokee," Trixie reacted. She remembered Suzanne's letters mentioning Vivien Renwick.

"Vivien Renwick is not Native American," Suzanne announced, "She's a White woman."

"Well. There goes the great Native American revolution," Allen remarked facetiously, "Our leader has defected." He got up from his chair and placed the rifles and cleaning kit back in the closet. He started to walk to the door.

"Allen. Where are you going?" Trixie asked.

"I need to adjust the carburetor on the car," Allen said. He disappeared out of the door.

"Gosh, Trixie. We'll finally alone," Suzanne exclaimed.

"Allen can be Mr. Big Ears."

"I do like your husband," Suzanne admitted reluctantly, "But it's hard for me to separate him from Michael Dodd." She didn't want Allen to come between Trixie and her. If forced to make choice, Trixie was bound to choose her husband, Allen Tupper.

"Speak of the Devil," Trixie said, "Michael Dodd is in town."

"Michael is here." Suzanne acted surprise.

"Yeah. He's visiting his father and stepmother."

"Well. I don't need to see him," Suzanne responded, "I see enough of him when he comes over to visit Vivien."

"Allen and I plan to have a few beers with Michael tonight," Trixie explained, "You're welcome to come along."

"I'm not a beer drinker."

"If you change your mind, we'll be at the A & B Tavern around eight o'clock tonight," Trixie said.

"I won't change my mind."

Trixie thought of Michael Dodd and Vivien Renwick. Apparently, they were having some kind of love affair. Vivien must be something special to attract the attention of Michael Dodd, as he was a strong advocate of preserving the Native American race. It troubled her that Michael could be a hypocrite. She asked somberly, "What's happening between Michael and your roommate, Vivien?"

"Vivien is madly in love with Michael," Suzanne explained, "I suspect Michael is in love with Vivien."

"Do they sleep together?"

"Yes. Vivien has a habit of spending Friday nights at Michael's apartment," Suzanne related.

"Are they planning to get married, " Trixie asked.

"No."

"Why not?"

"Michael is positive that he will be drafted," Suzanne explained, "and be sent to Vietnam."

"Yeah. Michael could be drafted," Trixie agreed. Her husband, Allen, had faced the same problem until they got married and started having children.

"Michael has already taken the pre-induction physical."

"Did Michael pass the physical?"

"Yes, he did pass."

"Michael was always healthy," Trixie pointed out.

"He hasn't heard anything yet from the draft board," Suzanne informed.

"Do they plan to get married when Michael gets back from Vietnam," Trixie asked.

"I don't know," Suzanne said, "Vivien won't tell me."

"Well. I only hope that Michael isn't injured or killed in Vietnam."

"For Vivien's sake, I hope not."

Suzanne and Trixie started to chat about their old schoolmates and school teachers. They remembered the good old days when their lives were more innocent and younger. Suzanne asked, "Whatever happened to Ralph Cragmont?"

"Ralph joined the Air Force, and he is a sergeant in the military police," Trixie related.

"Does he plan to stay in the Air Force?"

"Why don't you come to the A & B Tavern tonight," Trixie said, "and ask him yourself."

"Is Ralph in town?"

"Yes. He's on leave for thirty days."

"No. I have no intentions to the A & B Tavern," Suzanne said.

"Suzanne. It's up to you."

Trixie thought of Clayton Shaw. Suzanne hadn't mentioned his name since the summer of 1966, and she had never revealed the details of her celebrated date with Clayton. Suzanne always maintained that she had a wonderful time. A few days later Trixie talked to Ralph Cragmont. He bragged that he given Suzanne a ride home late Saturday afternoon from the town of Grand Coulee and that Suzanne was provocatively dressed. She was not a woman who would dress seductively for men. But since Clayton Shaw was in Vietnam facing enemy fire, Trixie decided to bring up his name. "Suzanne. I've heard that Clayton Shaw is in Vietnam."

"Vietnam!"

"According to Dr. Shaw, he's a lieutenant in the infantry."



"I thought Clayton was attending graduate school at the University of Oregon," Suzanne stated.

"Clayton fuked out of graduate school," Trixie said, "and joined the army."

"Well. There was nothing between us," Suzanne said nervously, "Our affair ended after one date."

"Well. I was surprise about that."

"But I hope Clayton doesn't get injured." Suzanne feigned concern for the welfare of Clayton, but she silently hoped that Clayton would never return home. His dastardly deed would never be forgiven by her.

"Clayton is under enemy fire," Trixie disclosed, "and he has won a couple of medals."

"Why did he become a lieutenant?"

"According to his father, it was Clayton's love for his country."

"Clayton was an All-American boy," Suzanne said drily.

"But I heard through the grapevine that Clayton likes Vietnam," Trixie divulged.

"How can anyone like Vietnam?"

"Gosh, Suzanne. You know him better than I do."

"Is Ted Reed in Vietnam too?"

"No. Ted Reed is going to graduate school in San Francisco," Trixie answered.

"Clayton and Ted are such good buddies," Suzanne said, "I'm surprised that they didn't join the army together. " She thought of Clayton's homosexual relationship with Ted.

"I never was a friend of Ted Reed."

"I only met him once," Suzanne said, "Let's drop the subject."

"I just thought you might want to know about Clayton," Trixie said.

"Thanks."

"You're welcome."

"Well, Trixie. I must be leaving for home," Suzanne said, "It's nearly dinner time."

"Why don't you have dinner with Allen and me."

"My parents expect me home for dinner. "

"You're still welcome to join us at the A & B Tavern tonight," Trixie said.

"I'll think about it," Suzanne replied.

"Why don't you come over tomorrow?" Trixie asked.

"Sure. I'll come over after church."

"Do you still go to church?"

"Not really," Suzanne smiled, "But my parents expect me to go to the community church."

After exchanging goodbyes, Suzanne exited the house and climbed into her car. Starting the engine, she pulled out of the dirt driveway onto the Columbian Drive. Pushing down on the gas pedal, she sped up the series of grades leading to her parents' home.

Michael Dodd walked leisurely up a concrete walkway leading to his parents' home. It was Saturday afternoon, and day was sunny, bright, and hot for June.

After graduating from the University of Washington, he was visiting his parents for a couple of weeks before returning to Seattle to find work. But he was certain within a few weeks he would receive his draft notice ordering him to report for military service.

His parents owned a modest house, which was painted white and had brown trim and a green composite roof. It had three bedrooms, a fireplace, and a small cellar. The single car garage had been converted into a recreational room, and a small bedroom was built over the garage. A white picket fence surrounded the backyard, and both front and back yards were lush green and well-kept.

Stepping up several concrete steps, Michael reached the front door and entered the house. The living room was large and painted pale green. It was well furnished. Most of the furniture was well used. Kay Dodd, the stepmother of Michael, had kept the furniture clean and polished. The dining room and kitchen were modest in size and immaculate.

A quiet woman, Kay Dodd was thirty-nine years old. Graying, she had a light brown hair and grayish blue eyes. A housewife, she was five feet six inches tall, and she had a body pleasing to the eye. Her complexion was pinkish white. She had married Stanley Dodd, after Michael's mother, Grace, was killed in a tragic car accident. Michael was a child of four years old at the time. He had few memories of his natural mother.

Stanley married Kay within six months of the death of his first wife. At the time Kay was pretty, young and daring. She was ten years younger than Stanley, and no one faulted Stanley for marrying Kay so quickly. A man would be a fool not to try for her. They had four beautiful children of their own. Both Kay and Stanley were devoted to Michael.

The town of Coulee Dam never had a favorable opinion of Grace Todd during her brief life on earth. They silently and openly questioned whether Stanley Dodd was the natural father of Michael.

Michael's mother was a mixed-blood Native American, and his putative father was Caucasian. But Michael looked like a full-blooded Native American. They questioned whether Stanley could have fathered Michael while serving in the European theater during World War II. Grace had the reputation of frequenting the local

taverns, especially the A & B Tavern. She continued her practice during the time Stanley was in Europe, though it was illegal for Native Americans to drink alcoholic beverages.

Forty-nine years old, Stanley was six feet tall and had a slender body. His light brown hair was rapidly graying; his eyes were light brown; and his complexion light. He had worked as a lineman for the Bonneville Power Administration since the end of World War II.

Entering the house, Michael walked directly into the living room. Kay was reading a novel in an easy chair. Stanley was in the kitchen repairing a cupboard. Work tools were scattered over the kitchen floor and cabinet tops.

Michael said loudly, "I'm home."

Kay looked up and said emotionally, "Stanley! Michael has arrived." Getting up from the easy chair, she ran over to Michael and gave him a big hug.

Stanley rushed into the living room, and he said, "Son. It's good to have you home."

"Where are the kids?" Michael inquired.

"Oh. Randy took them for a ride," Stanley explained, "in his new car."

"New car?" Michael exclaimed.

"Yeah. Randy bought a used 1957 car," Stanley revealed.

"Randy is so proud of his car," Kay commented.

"Yes. I remember my first car," Michael said. He moved to the sofa in the living room and sat down. Stanley ambled to his comfortable easy chair. Kay sat down on a love seat across from Michael.

"We're very proud that you graduated from the University of Washington," Stanley said.

"Everyone in the family is really pleased with you," Kay said happily, "Your graduation ceremony was beautiful."

"It was a lot of hard work," Michael said, "But it worth it."

"Well. You maintained a B average," Stanley said proudly, "Good enough to make it into graduate school."

Kay was puzzled about graduate school. Michael had said very little about attending graduate school to her. She said, "Michael. I don't recall you applying to any graduate school."

"No. I haven't applied to any graduate school," Michael admitted reluctantly.

"Why?" Stanley asked, "You're intelligent enough."

"I'm still uncertain what I want to do with my life," Michael responded, "Right now, I don't want to go to graduate school."

"Well. You're facing the military draft," Stanley said, "You're wise to wait

until your stint in Vietnam is over." He was certain that his son would be drafted and sent to Vietnam since Michael had already passed his pre-induction physical.

"Vietnam has been on my mind," Michael divulged.

"Have you heard anything from the draft board?" Kay asked. She had agonized over the fate of her stepson.

"It doesn't look good," Michael said somberly, "I expect to receive my draft notice within the next few weeks."

"A mother never faces the reality of Vietnam until a beloved son is sent to Vietnam," Kay said emotionally.

"I spent three years in the army in World War II," Stanley said with pride, "I was proud to serve my country." He remembered his days of military service when the United States was at war to save world from tyranny. Then war was far nobler. The desperate struggle against Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo had the universal support of the populace. Patriotism was more easily understood, for the world was divided into black and white. He remembered the dark side of war: death and fear, youthful friends dying, and dreams being shattered. He remembered his bravery under fire and medals which he so deservedly won. He remembered beginning the war as buck private and coming home a proud lieutenant. He still had his officer's uniform after all these years.

"Your father was a brave soldier in World War II," Kay said. She recalled Stanley boasting about his military exploits, when he was courting. Since then, he said little about his military service. She surmised that his war experiences were too traumatic to re-live, and she respected his decision to remain silence about his war activities.

Michael had often heard his father speak proudly of his military service during World War II, but Stanley had refused to divulge the details of his war experiences. Stanley had served in North Africa, Italy, Southern France and Austria, and he had seen much fighting as an infantryman. He had won two brown stars for bravery in action and a purple heart for a wound received in Italy.

Michael didn't need to be told about his father's courageous deeds. But it had been a long time since the subject was mentioned. He said, "Yeah, I know. I've seen father's medals and his officer's uniform."

"Do you plan to become a second lieutenant?" Stanley inquired.

"I've been thinking about it," Michael revealed, "Why do you ask?"

"Well. Randy mentioned it to me," Stanley said, "He's very proud of you."

"Randy is pretty war crazy," Kay added, "He thinks that war is glorious and noble."

"Vietnam isn't a fantasy," Michael said.

"Maybe I'm guilty of encouraging Randy's fantasies," Stanley acknowledged, "I never told about the horrors of war."

"He'll outgrow it," Kay commented.

"I wished that Randy had kept quiet about becoming me a second lieutenant," Michael said.

"Why a second lieutenant?" Stanley asked, "You have nothing to prove to me."

"Well, father. You served in World War II as an officer," Michael responded, "I think it right for me to serve as an officer in Vietnam."

"Yeah. But second lieutenants have a short life spans in any war," Stanley disagreed, "You're safer being an enlisted man."

"Why take any unnecessary chances?" Kay urged. She believed in patriotism, but she also feared for the well-being of her stepson. Michael was a leader type, and he would be inevitably brave in the face of peril. And she had her inner doubts about the morality and necessity of the Vietnam War.

"It's the right to do," Michael stressed, "There are many other Native Americans serving in Vietnam who didn't have a choice about going. I should do my part."

"I don't want you to come home in a pine box," Stanley said gravely, "Maybe it's a selfish desire."

"Does your girlfriend know about your plans to become a second lieutenant?" Kay asked curiously.

"No. Vivien Renwick doesn't know," Michael answered.

"Are you going to tell her?" Kay asked. Michael had told Kay everything about Vivien Renwick, and Kay had met Vivien for the first time at the college graduation ceremony. She was very impressed with Vivien's wit, poise, and attractiveness.

But Kay was surprised that Vivien was a Caucasian woman. When Michael became a teenager, he quickly discovered his Native Americanness, and he became an relentless advocate for Native American rights. She thought that Michael was bound to marry a Native American woman. She was even more surprised that Vivien was the roommate of Suzanne Redwood. Suzanne and Michael had been antagonists since childhood, though she couldn't discern reason for their mutual enmity.

"In time I'll tell Vivien," Michael responded, "I haven't yet been drafted." He feared the day when he would tell Vivien about his plans to become a second lieutenant. His choices would be hard to justify to Vivien who was a stalwart anti-war protester.

"It's only a matter of time," Stanley said emphatically.

"Do you love Vivien?" Kay asked. She wanted to determine Michael's capacity to love a woman. Although Michael had numerous

girlfriends, he was hesitant about them. She especially remembered the comely Karen Harefoot, whom Michael had dropped for no apparent reason.

"Yes. I love Vivien," Michael said earnestly.

"Do you two plan to get married?" Kay inquired.

"We've talked about it," Michael admitted uneasily, "But we don't plan to do anything until I've finished my military service."

"It's the smart thing to do," Stanley commented. He liked his son for his foresight and intelligent. Michael was not impulsive or reckless, but he made thoughtful decisions.

"Well, Michael. You don't have be so calculating and proper," Kay said teasingly, "You might lose Vivien."

"Do you think I'm being too proper?" Michael asked.

"Michael. You've been always too proper," Kay said.

"Well. I'll leave it up to Vivien," Michael replied, "If she wants to get marry, we'll get married."

"Michael. You never were impulsive," Kay chided.

"Vivien is not kind of woman who can be swept off her feet," Michael explained.

"You might try," Kay suggested.

They chatted about family matters until dinner time. Randy returned with his brother and sisters. Stanley decided to celebrate Michael's homecoming by going to a dinner at a local restaurant. They piled into two cars and headed for business district of town of Grand Coulee above the Dam. After finishing the splendid meal, they chatted about changes which had occurred in the area.

Looking down at his wrist watch, Michael noticed it nearing eight o'clock and said, "Father. I plan to meet a few friend at the A & B Tavern tonight."

"How do you plan to get home tonight?" Stanley asked.

"I'm sure Allen Tupper or Ralph Cragmont can take me home," Michael answered. He stood up from the table.

"Well, Michael. Have a good time tonight," Stanley said, "and be careful."

"Yes. The A & B Tavern is a rough place," Kay added.

"I will be careful."

Michael quickly left the restaurant, and he walked up to Main street where most of the taverns were located. Two blocks up the street, he could see the cars of his friends parked in front of the A & B Tavern. It would be a joyous reunion as he hadn't seen Allen Tupper, Ralph Cragmont or Trixie (Spearman) Tupper in couple of years. He quickened his pace.

The A & B Tavern had the reputation of being the favorite hangout

for Native Americans. Made of wood, it was constructed during the 1930's to take advantage of dam construction on the Columbia River. When the construction died out, the tavern started to cater to its Native American customers. They liked the talkative owner, and they felt welcomed in his tavern.

With a rustic atmosphere, the tavern had a long wooden bar, which had been weathered by continually use. Careless cigarette burns covered the hardwood bar top. The walls and ceiling were once plastered white, but they were eventually painted a pale blue. The stain of cigarette smoke smeared the ceiling and walls, which made them appear soiled and greasy. Large windows surrounded the front door, facing Main Street. Booths for the thirsty customers lined the right wall, and there were stools for customers at the bar. A few wood tables were located in the back of the tavern. A jukebox constantly played country-western music. Two pool tables were busy with pool games, featuring the best players on the Coville Indian Reservation.

Entering the A&B Tavern, Michael Dodd immediately saw his old high school friends sitting at a large table in the back of the tavern. The tavern was unusually quiet for Saturday night. But tavern crowds were never predictable, and they varied from weekend to weekend. Because of the heat of the day, the front door was left opened. High ceiling fans turned quietly, circulating the warm air. Shielded light bulbs hanging from simple light fixtures lit the spacious tavern.

The night bartender was a woman in her early thirties. Short in height, she had dark brown hair and hazel eyes. Her complexion was pinkish white.

Michael walked to the table where his friends were sitting. He was surprised that Allen Tupper had grown his black hair to his shoulders. He pondered whether that Allen had become a Native American militant or at worst a hippie. Allen had always been a nonconformist and a protester. But long hair was becoming a popular style among the under-thirty Native Americans.

Trixie Spearman Tupper had gained some weight, but she looked as pretty as ever. He was surprise that she had eventually married Allen Tupper. Ralph Cragmont had put on some body fat. He still wore heavy black-rim glasses, and his black hair was cut very short. He was wearing a red casual shirt and a new pair of blue jeans, which were still stiff from their first washing.

Coming to a standstill at the table, Michael said happily, "Well. How are my old classmates doing?"

"Sit down - Michael," Allen directed, "Take the weight off your feet."

"We're doing fine," Ralph said, "We're enjoying the cold beer and

good conversation."

Michael grabbed a wood chair and sat down next to Trixie. Allen and Ralph sat across from Michael and Trixie. A large pitcher of beer sat in the middle of the table, half full. Trixie waved to Linda, the bartender, who came to the table to find out what Trixie wanted. Linda had not seen Michael enter the tavern, and she decided to check his identification. Stopping at the table, Linda said to Michael, "Can I see your I.D.?"

"Linda ! Michael is twenty-two years old," Trixie exclaimed.

"I still have to see his I.D.," Linda stressed, "Liquor Board is pretty strict about minors drinking on the premises." She pointed to printed liquor board sign on a wall.

"No problem," Michael responded. He pulled out his black leather wallet from his back pant pocket and produced his driver's license.

Grasping the driver's license, Linda scrutinized it for any defect, rendering it a forgery. Satisfied it was genuine, she handed it back to Michael and said, "What do you want to drink?"

"Bring us another beer glass for Michael," Trixie said, " We're all drinking draft beer."

"Also bring us another pitcher of cold beer," Ralph instructed.

Retreating to the bar, Linda quickly returned with a large pitcher of cold beer and another beer glass. She gave the beer glass to Michael and set the cold pitcher of beer on the table.

Searching his pant pockets for coins, Allen announced, "Let me paid for the pitcher of beer." He pulled several fifty-cent pieces from his pockets and handed them to Linda. After counting the coins, Linda returned to the bar.

Michael grabbed the half-emptied pitcher of beer and filled his tall glass and the other glasses with beer. He said, "It great to be back in Coulee Dam."

"I'm glad to be home too," Ralph said, "I'm home on thirty-day leave before I go to Germany."

"Germany!" Michael said, "I wouldn't mind going to Germany."

"Not if you're just going to guard jet planes," Ralph declared.

"Yeah. But Germany is still a splendid place," Michael said, "It's better than going to Vietnam." He had always dreamed of traveling in foreign countries. He envied Ralph for being stationed in Europe and having the opportunity to travel in foreign countries.

"You're right about Vietnam," Ralph nodded his agreement.

"How have Allen and you been doing?" Michael asked Trixie.

"Allen and I just moved back to the reservation from Portland, Oregon," Trixie disclosed, "We don't plan to leave again."

"Yeah. I'm tired of being an big city Native American," Allen said



testily, "I just can't handle stresses of the big city life."

"We couldn't adjust," Trixie proclaimed.

"We were part of the relocation program of Bureau of Indian Affairs," Allen explained.

"The relocation program is merely another way the BIA is trying to terminate the tribes," Michael commented.

"It was a disaster for us," Trixie related, "The BIA simply abandoned us in Portland, Oregon."

"I'm not surprised. The BIA is known to do that," Michael said, "Fast talk and lots of promises to get the Native Americans off the reservation."

"City is not a good place for reservation people," Allen asserted. He explained that once he lost his first job, he couldn't find a good job in Portland. He didn't have the training to find a good job. He was now working as a logger for a logging company, but he didn't plan to stay a logger.

"Is Trixie working?" Michael asked.

"Yeah. She is working for the tribe as a secretary for the tribal council," Allen responded.

"She's working for the big eagles," Michael said.

"Trixie is finding out where the tribal government skeletons are buried," Allen said. He revealed his dissatisfaction with the Tribal council and his plans to run for a seat on the tribal council in the next tribal elections. He explained his plans to reform the tribal government, which he believed to be incompetent. He vigorously voiced his complaints against the tribe and tribal government. If elected, he planned to immediately fire the boot-licking Executive Director and Administrative Director. He proceeded to roast the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Indian Health Service for supporting the incompetence of the tribal council.

Michael thought of Allen's election chances. Allen was little young to be a successful candidate for the tribal council. Anyway, he couldn't imagine the tribal membership voting for a young Native American with long hair and radical ideas.

"Allen would make a wonderful tribal councilman," Trixie exclaimed. She felt obligated to support her husband, as he had few Native American supporters. She conjectured privately that Allen would get few votes if he ran for the tribal council. But times were trying for Allen, and she wanted to encourage him as much as possible.

Michael and Ralph quickly decided that Allen's alienation with the tribal council and tribal government was unjustified. They were determined not to encourage Allen's youthful indiscretions. Their

refusal to make any comments silenced Allen. Dejected, Allen drank quietly from his beer.

For the sake of Allen Tupper, Michael decided to change the subject, and he said, "Ralph. How do you like the Air Force?"

"It's okay," Ralph responded, "I'm a sergeant in the military police."

"How long to you plan to stay in the Air force?" Trixie asked. Since high school, she had admired Ralph Cragmont. She wasn't surprised that he became a military police officer. He always had a conservative streak, and he was very much in favor of law and order to the chagrin of her husband, Allen.

"Probably twenty years," Ralph said, "Then I plan to return to the Colville Indian Reservation."

"To become a BIA cop?" Allen thundered, breaking out of his silent melancholy. Allen especially liked to get into protracted debates with Ralph. Because of Ralph's conservative views, he made an ideal debating partner for Allen.

"Well. I've been a military police officer for four years," Ralph replied with pride, "and I like being a police officer."

Allen disdained all cops. As a youth, he was constantly in trouble with the Bureau of Indian Affairs police and the Court of Indian Offenses. Because Allen had not seen Ralph in many years, he decided not to get into a heated debate with Ralph over the merits of being a police officer. Anyway, sixteen years from now was long time, and many things could change in the intervening years. Ralph might not return to the reservation, and Ralph might not become a reservation cop. Allen mumbled, "I didn't mean to say anything against you."

Trixie was disturbed by the quarrelsome conduct of Allen. She was determined to change the conversation to a more positive subject. She said, "Allen is thinking of becoming a lay public defender in tribal court."

"Yeah. I've been thinking about it," Allen admitted. In spite of his youthful alienation, Allen did have a good mind, though it was largely undeveloped, untapped, and misdirected.

"Allen really gets mad about the BIA police harassing Native Americans on the reservation," Trixie pointed out.

"The BIA police are pretty bad," Ralph conceded, "If I was the Chief of Police, the BIA police officers wouldn't last long with me." During Ralph's visit to the reservation, he had heard plenty about the misdeeds of the BIA police. Apparently, the BIA police were not well trained, and few Native American wanted to be police officers. The result was that BIA police officers were mostly incompetent and ill-trained.

"Ralph. You should become the tribal chief of police," Trixie urged.

"No. I'm little too young," Ralph replied, "and I'm happy with the military police." Several tribal members had already urged him to become the chief of police. But he was committed to staying with the Air Force.

Michael thought about Allen's idea to establish a lay public defender program for tribal court. He knew that few criminal defendants in tribal court were represented by lawyers. Many of the defendants received significant fines and jail sentences. Most of the defendant simply pleaded guilty without knowing their rights in tribal court. Allen was combative enough to provide effective legal representation. He said, "Allen. You got a good idea about becoming a lay public defender."

"Allen has the talent," Trixie opined.

"What Native American defendants need in tribal court is good legal representation," Michael asserted.

"You're the man who can do it," Ralph said to Allen.

"It will take a lot of work," Allen stressed. He felt good that his friends were encouraging him.

"Allen would make a great lay public defender in Tribal court," Trixie said enthusiastically. She was relieved that Allen's friends supported him. She knew that she could depend on Michael and Ralph.

"Allen. You'll need the support of the tribal council," Michael pointed out, "to set up a public defender program in tribal court."

"Oh. I've got plenty of friends on the tribal council," Allen boasted, "They may be incompetent but they are my friends."

"Allen! My uncle is on the tribal council," Trixie pointed out.

"I didn't mean say your uncle was incompetent," Allen defended, "it's just my way of talking."

"You're forgiven," Trixie smiled, "I never did like Uncle Ned."

Allen recalled Suzanne Redwood's statements about Michael and Vivien Renwick. He decided that it was time to confront Michael with his apostasy. He fired at Michael, "What's this about you running around with a White woman?"

Shaken by the poignant question, Michael stared directly into Allen's determined eyes. Allen's statement sounded infamous and ominous. He never really viewed his girlfriend, Vivien Renwick, as a White woman. Her liberalness and uninhibited behavior made her unlike any White woman that he had ever known. He speculated how Allen found out that Vivien was a White woman, and he immediately thought of Suzanne Redwood. He said, "You must have been talking

to Suzanne Redwood."

"Yeah. Trixie and I talked to Suzanne this afternoon," Allen replied with delight.

"It is true?" Ralph said in a somber voice. He always wants to get back at Michael. He had mercilessly teased Ralph at every opportunity when they were in high school together.

"Allen. You didn't have to mention Suzanne's name," Trixie scolded.

"Suzanne made good sense this afternoon," Allen continued. For the first time he had unintentionally praised Suzanne. But he still disliked her excessive pride and social climbing. But possibly, Michael was guilty of the some unpardonable sin. Michael was now a college graduate, and maybe he was forgetting his reservation origins. It wouldn't be the first time that a pretty young White woman had wooed a Native American male away from his roots. Allen thought of his cousin, Theodore, who attended an ivy league college back East, and he elected to remain back East after he married a comely White woman.

Michael had no choice but to reveal the truth about Vivien's race. He said reluctantly, "Allen. It's no sin to be White."

"I'm only quoting the very words of Suzanne," Allen responded.

"Allen. I wish you would quit," Trixie pleaded.

Michael asserted, "Well. Suzanne has no right to talk about Vivien and me."

"Vivien is Suzanne's roommate," Trixie retorted.

"Suzanne has no right to call Vivien a White woman," Michael blurted out.

"Vivien is a White woman - isn't she?" Ralph asked innocently, though he wished to stay out of the strife.

"I already said Vivien was a White woman," Michael replied

"Michael. The real issue is your commitment to Native American affairs," Allen analyzed aloud.

"What happened to the dauntless advocate for the preservation of the Native American race and culture?" Trixie pointed out.

"I haven't changed"

"But you're now having an affair a White woman," Allen asserted.

Michael thought Allen's statements, and he replied, "Vivien is different. She will fit into the Native American community."

"Michael. Your college education has changed you," Allen said seriously, "for better or worst."

"I'm still a Native American," Michael protested vehemently.

"You've changed into a White middle class person," Allen announced.

"No amount of education can change a Native American into a White person," Michael maintained, "and a White spouse can't change a Native American in a White person."

"Thank you -Suzanne Redwood," Allen cried out, "I rest my case."

Michael thought about the pretentious Suzanne Redwood and her attempt at social climbing. He said, "I hate to admit that Suzanne and I agree on something after all these years. But I'm different."

"How are you different?" Trixie asked Michael. She had steadfastly believed the Michael, Allen and Ralph had been too harsh on Suzanne. But she didn't like Suzanne's social climbing, as she believed it cheapened the Native American race.

"I'm not uppity like Suzanne," Michael responded.

"Gosh, Michael! You're so prejudiced against Suzanne," Trixie cried out, "Suzanne Redwood is not uppity."

"Well. I don't see Suzanne here socializing with us tonight," Michael countered.

"Suzanne comes from a Christian family, who don't drink alcoholic beverages," Trixie defended adamantly.

"Suzanne has changed," Michael uttered, "She drinks booze if it will benefit her."

"In spite of Vivien Renwick, Suzanne and you haven't reconciled," Trixie said to Michael.

"No. Nothing has changed between us," Michael declared.

Ralph Cragmont thought that the arguing between Michael and Trixie was getting out of hand. He blurted out, "I didn't come to the A & B Tavern to hear bickering between friends."

"Ralph. I'm sorry about the arguing," Michael apologized, "I don't know what came over me."

"Michael. I was just kidding you," Allen exclaimed. Allen was ecstatic about flustering Michael Dodd, though he meant every word that he said.

Trixie was still determined to find out whether Michael was truly in love with Vivien. She said, "Are you in love with Vivien Renwick?"

All eyes were focused on Michael. He said without hesitating, "Yes. I love Vivien. She's ideal woman."

Michael explained to them how he met Vivien through the Native American Student Association at the University of Washington. How she had identified herself as a Cherokee, and how she faithfully attended the meetings of the association. He took her at her word, but, years later, on their first date, she had admitted that she was a White woman. He did find her attractive, and he elected to continue dating her. Their romance turned quickly into love.

"A Cherokee princess?" Allen looked astounded. "It's a likely story."

"Allen! Suzanne told me the same thing," Trixie revealed.

Though she hadn't ever met Vivien, she instantly liked Vivien Renwick. Vivien's ruse didn't harm anyone.

"Then you are not responsible," Allen continued, "you were tricked."

Michael laughed loudly and said, "I'm guilty."

"Do you plan to marry Vivien?" Trixie asked.

"Vivien and I have discussed marriage," Michael divulged, "but I don't want to get married right now. "

"Why?" Trixie inquired.

"Well. There is such a thing as Vietnam War and the draft, " Michael said. He explained that he didn't want to marry Vivien until he completed his military service. He had already passed his pre-induction physical, and he expected soon to received his draft notice. He was certain that he was going to be sent to Vietnam. He thought it was unfair to Vivien to marry her with service in Vietnam hanging over his head.

"Well, Michael. You can always evade the draft," Allen suggested.

"No. I don't plan to avoid the draft," Michael stated.

"We can go into the mountains with our rifles and fight off the draft board," Allen said excitedly. He still had mad dreams of a great Native American revolution.

"No, Allen. It won't do," Michael replied. "I want to be drafted."

"You want to be drafted!" Alien exclaimed, "You should have your head examined."

"No one wants to go to Vietnam," Trixie scolded.

"Things are really hot over in Vietnam," Ralph warned, "There is plenty of fighting and killing going on."

"Ralph. Have you been to Vietnam?" Michael inquired.

"No, Michael," Ralph stated, "But I have a few Air Force pals who have gone to Vietnam. They have no desire to return."

"Well. I have no problem with going to Vietnam," Michael said flatly.

"A few of my buddies got shot up," Ralph disclosed, "It's not going to a hunting trip. The Viet Cong shoot back. "

"I know what I'm doing," Michael stressed.

"Are you planning to become a second lieutenant?" Ralph asked Michael.

"Yes," Michael replied.

"You are nuts," Allen cried out, "You're going to come back in a flag draped coffin."

"Michael. You're taking a big chance for nothing," Ralph said seriously.

"You must have a death wish," Allen added.

"No. I just want to serve my country," Michael stated emphatically, "My

father was a lieutenant in World War II."

"I knew it," Alien said loudly, "It had to be your father, Stanley Dodd, who persuaded to become a second lieutenant."

"It is a family tradition," Michael said unpersuasively.

"A very deadly family tradition," Allen analyzed aloud.

"My father won two brown stars," Michael explained, "and he received a battlefield promotion to lieutenant."

"You have a lot to be proud of," Ralph said. Of course, every resident of Coulee Dam heard of the heroic exploits of Stanley Dodd in World War II.

"That's still no reason to go to Vietnam," Allen replied.

"I have already made up my mind," Michael said, "You can't change my mind."

Trixie thought about Vivien Renwick. Vivien had to be despondent about Michael's imprudent decision. Trixie asked, "Have you told Vivien about your decision?"

"No. I haven't told her yet," Michael answered.

"Vivien is bound to be broken hearted," Trixie said, "about you becoming a second lieutenant in Vietnam."

"Yeah, I know," Michael said, "She's really anti-Vietnam War."

"Michael! You could get killed or seriously injured," Trixie cried out.

"Yes. I realize that Vivien is anxious about my safety," Michael replied.

"You know love is a two-way street," Trixie pointed out.

"I'm not ignoring the feelings of Vivien," Michael replied, "I do love her."

"Then you shouldn't become a second lieutenant?" Trixie stressed.

Vivien Renwick had already accepted the inevitable fact that Michael would be drafted and sent to Vietnam. She wasn't aware that he was planning to become a second lieutenant in a conflict that she greatly opposed on moral and political grounds. He was unsure whether she would accept his decision to become a second lieutenant. By becoming a second lieutenant, he had decided to play a more active role in the Vietnam War. He said, "Vivien loves me enough for our love to survive."

"Michael. Your decision will be the supreme test," Trixie said, "It's all up to Vivien."

"I think Vivien is a fair person," Michael finally said. The party then discussed less controversial subjects.

## Chapter 8

Larry Bucknell steered his luxury car through the maze of streets constituting the University District of Seattle, Washington. The "U" District was located next to University of Washington. Suzanne Redwood was sitting in the passenger seat. She was quietly observing the varied shops, quaint restaurants, busy stores and buildings of the "U" District. The weekend day was unusually hot for August, 1966. It had brought out a multitude of people traversing the streets of the "U" District by motor vehicle and on foot.

Suzanne and Larry were traveling to Suzanne's apartment in the "U" District.

The windows of Larry's car were rolled down, and the resulting breeze cooled the car. They had made numerous similar trips to Suzanne's apartment throughout the summer of 1966.

"Where's Vivien Renwick today?" Larry asked.

"Vivien and her boyfriend, Michael Dodd, are visiting her parents on Mercer Island," Suzanne explained.

"Michael is a pretty tough character," he said. He found Michael to be intimidating, and he suspected that Suzanne was secretly attracted to Michael as they were both Native Americans.

Suzanne smiled at Larry's statement about Michael Dodd. She was aware that Michael made Larry insecure. She reassured, "Oh, Michael only looks tough. And Michael and I have never been friends."

"How is that?" Larry asked incredulously. He couldn't believe that Suzanne and Michael were never friends, especially when they had grown up together in the same town - Coulee Dam.

"Michael just refused to be friends with me," she replied, "You'll have to ask Michael."

"Well. It is pretty strange," he persisted.

"Not if you really knew Michael," Suzanne said, "Michael has problems relating to women, especially pretty women."

"The last time I looked Vivien was pretty attractive."

Larry's statement caused Suzanne to pause while she thought of a rejoinder. Vivien was so idealistic and altruistic. She said, "Vivien is an exception. She is very liberal and believes Michael is a victim of racial prejudice."



"Oh, she feels sorry for Michael," Larry blurted out.

"Yes! She's simply trying to help Michael overcome some personal problems," Suzanne explained.

"Vivien is a noble woman."

"Yeah. She's so idealistic."

"Michael does have some rough edges," he commented.

"Vivien is doing a wonderful job with Michael," Suzanne declared, "He is totally different person."

Larry thought of Vivien's parents, and he pondered how they felt about their daughter having an affair with a Native American male. Of course, he conceded that Michael was handsome, intelligent, and educated. Surely, he thought, they must be upset at the prospect of having a Native American son-in-law. He inquired, "How does Vivien's parents feel about Michael?"

Suzanne silently resented the implication of Larry's question. But she supposed it was quite natural for a White Anglo-Saxon male to ask such a question. She responded, "Vivien's parents are more liberal more Vivien when it comes to racial matters."

"More liberal!"

"Apparently they really love Michael."

"Well. That's good to hear." Larry sounded disappointed.

"Vivien and Michael might even get married," Suzanne said.

"Married!"

"Yeah. Vivien and Michael have been sleeping together for months," Suzanne announced.

"Sleeping together!" Larry exclaimed.

"When Michael's roommate, Vernon Bitterroot, is out of town, she spends the night with him," she said.

"Do they use birth control?"

"I don't know."

"Vivien could get pregnant," he cried out.

Suzanne discerned that Larry was upset about Michael's relationship with Vivien. She speculated whether Larry's shyness was actually insecurity. She retorted mockingly, "I suppose that's the idea."

"Well. Vivien could have a baby," Larry said excitedly.

"It's not the first time that a woman had a baby," Suzanne replied, "Why are you so concerned about Vivien?"

"As I said before, Michael is a tough character."

"Oh, Larry! Michael is just a pussy cat."

Arriving at Suzanne's apartment building, Larry parked his car in front of the building. Exiting the car, they strolled up to the front entrance and entered the multi-story building. They rode the

elevator to the third floor, and they proceeded to apartment 311.

Pulling the apartment key from her red plastic purse, Suzanne opened her apartment door and entered. Larry followed her into the two-bedroom apartment. The daylight lighted the apartment, which was hot from the heat of the day. Suzanne walked over to the window and opened two windows. She immediately heard the sounds of traffic congestion from the busy streets below. Turning around, she looked seductively at Larry, who had sat down on the couch.

Moving to the couch, Suzanne sat next to Larry, and he gazed into his eyes. She said, "Larry. It's good to be alone with you,"

As usual, Larry was hesitant and restrained, and he was not sure what Suzanne expected of him. Except he was alone with a shapely Native American woman. Suzanne was the first woman that he had ever truly loved. He didn't want to lose her. He responded weakly, "Yes. We're alone."

Suzanne ran her soft hands over his white pullover shirt, and she said, "You need to be more romantic."

"Suzanne. I do love you."

She whispered, "Let's go to my bedroom."

Larry couldn't get enough of the beautiful Native American woman. He said, "My favorite words is that I love you."

"I love you too," Suzanne replied. They rose from the couch and headed to the bedroom. She led the way into the bedroom.

Her bedroom was not large, and it had a window which overlooked 15th Avenue. It had a full-size bed with the covers pulled back, exposing the white sheets. The bedroom had the sweet smell of women's perfume and makeup.

They quickly undressed, and they made love.

Laying still on the bed, he announced, "Suzanne! I desperately want to marry you."

"I want to marry you too," she replied passionately.

"Then we will get married," Larry cried out with elation.

Suzanne thought of Larry's parents, Chet and Agnes Bucknell. They might object to the interracial marriage. Chet has great plans for his son, Larry, businesswise and socially. Though Chet was kind to Suzanne, he was overly patronizing, which she resented. Agnes liked Suzanne, but Agnes might change her mind if she learned her precious son was marrying her. Suzanne had real doubts about the willingness of Chet and Agnes to let their son marry her.

"What about your parents?"

"I'll tell them today," he said.

"No. That's not what mean," Suzanne said seriously, "What if they object to the marriage?"

"Suzanne. I wouldn't worry about my parents," Larry declared.

"I'm not so sure."

"Meaning?"

"I'm a Native American and your family is Caucasian," she said.

"So what you are a Native American," Larry exclaimed, "and so what our marriage will be an interracial marriage."

"Larry. I'm only worried about your parents," Suzanne explained, "Your father has a lot of influence over you."

Larry was offended by Suzanne's statement about his father and himself. He said defiantly, "I'm my own man, and I'll marry whom I want."

Suzanne looked into his urgent eyes, and he believed his reassuring words. She didn't want to talk further about marriage. Over dinner they could renew their momentous dialogue. She suggested, "Let's get up and eat some dinner."

"I could eat something," he replied.

"We'll talk more about our marriage over dinner," Suzanne said.

"Great!" Larry was relieved that Suzanne wasn't backing away from his proposal of marriage.

Suzanne climbed off the bed and quickly donned her clothes. Not moving, Larry was still lying on her bed with his eyes closed. She asked, "Larry. Are you going to get up?"

"No," he said, "I want to rest a few minutes."

"You're welcome to rest."

"Call me when dinner is ready," he said.

"I thought you were going to cook dinner," Suzanne teased.

"I can't cook," Larry quipped, smiling at Suzanne.

"That's going to change," she warned teasingly.

"You're trying to change me already," he laughed, "and we're not even married yet."

"I'll call you when dinner is ready," Suzanne said softly. Leaving the bedroom, she walked into the bathroom and washed up. She then stepped into the kitchen, and she started to pull pots and pans down from the cupboard. She decided to cook a simple meal of hamburger patties, cooked rice, gravy, and green beans. Opening the refrigerator, she pulled a package of ground beef from the meat compartment, and she started to fashion the red meat into large patties.

Lying on the comfortable bed, Larry still could smell the pleasant fragrance of Suzanne's elegant perfume. He thought of his relationship with Suzanne. He could hardly believe that he was in love with such a lovely woman as Suzanne. More importantly, Suzanne loved him. He thought of the years he had gone without the love of a woman. He recalled the years of frustration and criticism that he endured for

not having a steady girlfriend. The last thing he wanted was to lose Suzanne, and the surest way to keep her would be to marry her.

Then Larry thought of his patrician father, Chet, and his possible objections to a marriage with Suzanne. A contentious man, Chet enjoyed telling derogatory jokes about racial minorities and ethnic groups. Larry had to admit that his vain father was funny but prejudice. Chet was given habitually to making racial slurs. He remembered his usually gregarious father had no friends who were racial minorities. He had never employed any racial minorities in his business office, though he grudgingly accepted minorities at his construction sites. Maybe Suzanne had raised a legitimate worry about his father.

Climbing out the bed, he donned his clothes and walked into the bathroom. After finishing, he ambled into the small dining room. Suzanne was busy setting the table. The meat patties, cooked rice, gravy, and green beans were already sitting on the table. She placed on the table some slices of bread and salt and pepper shakers.

Hearing someone enter the dining area, Suzanne glanced up and saw it was Larry. She said, "Huh. You finally got up."

"Yeah. I wasn't very sleepy."

"Well. Dinner is ready."

"I can see that."

"I hope you like meat patties and cooked rice," Suzanne stated.

"I like meat patties and rice," Larry confirmed. He sat down on one of the chairs at the wooden table, which covered by a white table cloth.

"Well. Dish up," she directed. She also sat at the table across from Larry. She picked up the plate holding the meat patties and gave herself one patty. She then placed some rice and green beans on her plate and covered the steaming rice with gravy.

Larry also dished up and started to slowly eat his meal. He said with unrestrained delight, "It's a delicious meal."

Suzanne smiled at Larry, and she replied, "Oh, Larry. You're just saying that to be polite."

"No. It's an excellent meal." Larry and Suzanne quietly start to eat their simple meal.

Suzanne consumed about half the food on her plate. She was now ready to talk about marriage. She decided that a few preliminary topics needed to be discussed before they returned to the crucial subject of marriage. She asked, "What's the status of your draft deferment?"

"Good news," Larry replied. He quickly pulled out his leather wallet from a pocket of his trousers. Searching his wallet, he found a card and

drew it out. Handing the card to Suzanne, he said, "Today I received the notice of my draft deferment in the mail."

"Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

"I wanted to surprise you."

Suzanne was ecstatic about the draft deferment. She scrutinized the card making out the letter 1-Y beside the words: draft status. She said in elation, "You got the medical deferment."

"It took a lot of work," Larry said, "but I got my 1-Y draft status."

"I'm relieved that you're not going to Vietnam," she said, "I would have worried about you every minute."

"Now I can go to graduate school without Vietnam hanging over my head," he declared.

Suzanne thought about Vivien Renwick's anxiety about Michael Dodd being drafted and sent to Vietnam. She said, "Vivien is very worried about Michael being draft."

"Well. I tried to explain to big ox how to get a medical deferment," Larry said with disgust, "but he wouldn't listen. He mumbled something about his father's service in World War II."

"Michael has already received I -A draft status," she said.

"It serves him right."

"Vivien is really anti-Vietnam War," Suzanne said.

"Yeah. I remember our double date with Vivien and Michael," Larry said reluctantly, "That won't happen again." On the double date, he suspected Michael of harboring secret desires for Suzanne and numerous times caught Michael looking at Suzanne.

Suzanne recalled the double date. Vivien had been especially vocal and anti-Vietnam War that night. She said, "Remember when Vivien called the Vietnam War a Whiteman's war and a poor Native American's fight."

"Yes. She's not even a Native American."

"But she's in love with Michael."

"With Michael about to go to Vietnam, she maybe has a right to be bitter," Larry conceded, "but someone has to fight the war."

"I understand what you're saying," Suzanne replied, "I just feel sorry for Vivien. She is my roommate."

"Well. I feel for sorry both of them," he said, "but I'm glad it's Michael going to Vietnam and not me."

"I never wanted you to go to Vietnam."

Suzanne thought about their plans to attend graduate school in the Fall. They both had already been accepted into graduate school. He planned to attend the University of Washington Business School for a Master of Business Administration degree. She planned to attend the University of Washington School of Social Work for a Master of

Social Work degree. She pondered whether their marriage might interfere with their plans to attend graduate school. She asked, "If we get married, will it affect our plans to go to graduate school?"

"Well. I wouldn't worry about it," Larry disclosed, "I won't be attending graduate school. "

Stunned at Larry's unexpected disclosure, Suzanne exclaimed, "But you're all set to go to graduate school."

"My financing for graduate school fell through."

"You don't have the money!"

"I'll have to save some money before I can attend graduate school," he said.

"Larry. It's waste," she said, "You need to go to graduate school this Fall."

"My father's bankruptcy affected my financing," he said, "It voided some large gifts of money that Chet made to me."

"I thought there weren't any problems."

"The bankruptcy judge ruled that the gifts were illegal," he explained, "and ordered the gifts of money restored to my father's assets."

"I don't understand," Suzanne said.

"The bankruptcy trustee found the gifts were an attempt to defraud my father's creditor's," he said.

"You must be really disappointed."

"No, because I still have you," Larry said, "and I still plan to marry you."

"Well. I love you too," Suzanne said emotionally.

"You're a lifesaver," he said.

Suzanne thought about Larry's problem with financing his way through graduate school. His grave troubles had automatically become her troubles. Her life goal was to be married to a man of class and money who was capable of providing her the best things in life. She wanted to live in a large expensive house in an exclusive area of Seattle, to drive luxury cars, to have intelligent and well-educated children, to have social standing in the community and maybe to own a yacht. Her goal of attending graduate school was superfluous and an unnecessary luxury. She preferred being a housewife with few domestic duties.

Since they first met, Suzanne had resolved to marry Larry. She believed that Larry had social standing and that he had the potential to make money if he graduated from business school with a MBA degree. She was determined that Larry should attend and graduate from the graduate business school. She said enthusiastically, "Larry. I have an idea about getting you through graduate school."

"What's your idea?" Larry asked incredulously.

"Once we are married, I can go to work and support you through graduate school."

"What?" Larry was astonished at Suzanne's suggestion of sacrifice.

"I don't need to attend graduate school," she announced, "At least not right now."

"But you were so excited about obtaining a Master of Social Work," he said.

"Larry! It's more important for you to obtain a MBA," she declared, "I'll simply wait."

"I can't allow you to give up graduate school."

"I've already made up my mind," Suzanne said adamantly, "I'll just keep working for the City of Seattle. The pay is good."

"I just don't know."

"Larry! I won't marry you if you don't go to graduate school," she said with little emotion.

Larry thought of Suzanne's selfless offer. He loved Suzanne and wanted to marry her. And he also wanted to attend graduate school. His future plans depended on him obtaining a MBA. He said reluctantly, "I'll go to graduate school on one condition."

"What is that condition?"

"That we get married immediately."

"What?" Suzanne exclaimed.

"I'm talking about eloping with you."

From the time that Suzanne was teenage girl, she dreamed of being married at big church wedding. She didn't want to give up that dream. She said, "What about your parents?"

"I don't care about my parents," he said freely, "I don't want them disrupting our marriage plans."

Suzanne thought about his prophetic words. She had always feared that his parents would persuade Larry not to marry her. She thought of Larry's father. Chet would not sit idly by and let his only son marry her. Eloping with Larry would eliminate the danger of interference. Her own parents, Tom and Pauline, would be disappointed, but she had her own life to live. She said eagerly, "Yes. We should elope."

"Great!"

"Where can we go to get marry?" she asked.

"Reno," he replied. "We'll fly to Reno tonight."

"Good. I'll go pack," Suzanne said.

"I don't need to pack," Larry said excitedly, "I don't want to see my parents before we leave."

"It's up to you."

"I'm making the right decision," he declared confidently.

"I love you," Suzanne said.

"I love you too."

Michael Dodd and Vivien Renwick entered the fashionable house of Vivien's parents. The house was located on Mercer Island, an island situated in Lake Washington across from Seattle. It was an affluent suburb of Seattle. Painted yellow, the large house had spacious rooms and yards and was well-furnished.

They walked into the living room where Vivien's parents were sitting. Vivien's father, Jack Renwick, was sitting on his leather easy chair watching an early pre-season pro football game. Vivien's mother, Joan Renwick, was sitting in the dining room, balancing her checking account.

With graying dark hair, Jack Renwick was a medium built man in his late forties. He had light brown eyes and a rosy white complexion. For the past fifteen years, he had been a successful engineer for the Boeing Aircraft Company in Seattle. Joining the Army Air Force, he had served as a fighter pilot in the Pacific theater in World War II. He had several citations for bravery.

Of average height, Joan Renwick had a wide but well-built body. She had dull blonde hair and blue eyes. She was a high school teacher at Mercer Island High School. Jack and Joan had met while they were students at the University of Washington. Although she had grown up in Portland, Oregon, she had elected to attend college in Seattle.

Jack Renwick looked up and saw Vivien and Michael entering the house. He said, "Well. It's Vivien and Michael."

Hearing the words of her husband, Joan stood up and hurried into the living room. Seeing Vivien and Michael, she said, "Vivien. You should have telephoned me that you were coming."

"It slipped my mind," Vivien replied somberly.

"Michael. How are you doing?" Jack inquired.

"I'm fine," Michael answered unconvincingly.

"Take a seat on the sofa," Joan directed.

Obeying, Michael and Vivien sat down on a sumptuous sofa. Rising from his easy chair, Jack turned off the television and sat back down on his chair. Joan sat down on a love seat.

"Have you heard anything from the draft board?" Jack asked Michael. He suspected that Michael had receive some disheartening news.

"Yes. I received my induction notice this morning," Michael admitted.

"Michael has been ordered to report for induction," Vivien verbalized with difficulty. After receiving the news of Michael's induction, she had been highly distressed, barely able to keep her composure. She had forced herself to wear a brave face before her



parents.

"That's too bad," Jack tried to ease the pain. In spite of his heroic military service, Jack was resolutely against the Vietnam War. He believe that the United States had nothing to gain from involving itself in a civil war between Asians in the Far East.

"Vivien. You must be horrified," Joan said.

"I was expecting Michael to be drafted," Vivien said tearfully, "but I still don't want to lose Michael."

"Oh. I'll be okay," Michael reassured.

"I just know you're going to be sent to Vietnam," Vivien cried out.

"I might not be sent to Vietnam," Michael said.

"Fat chance!" Vivien exclaimed, "It's Native Americans like you who get sent to Vietnam."

"Yes. There is disproportionate number of racial minorities being sent to Vietnam," Joan defended her daughter. Like her husband, she was anti-Vietnam War. A couple of her ex-students has already been killed in Vietnam, and she didn't want to have anymore of her students and friends killed.

"There is nothing I can do about Vietnam," Michael said grimly.

"I know!" Vivien conceded.

"What's date of your induction?" Jack asked. He had always admired Michael, and he hoped that Vivien and Michael would eventually marry.

"I'm ordered to report to duty on September 15, 1966," Michael responded.

"That's not much time," Jack said.

"It not enough time," Vivien said, "We have so many things to do before Michael leaves."

"I'm sure Michael will get some leave," Jack stated, "before he's shipped to Vietnam."

"Well. It's only two years of my life," Michael tried to soothe.

"But a very dangerous two years," Joan stated, "There's a lot of fighting going on in Vietnam."

"I'll survive," Michael promised.

"Do you have any intentions of becoming a second lieutenant?" Jacked asked calmly. He knew that Michael was patriotic and not overtly against the Vietnam War.

Michael looked at Vivien, who wanted to hear an answer from Michael. Hesitating, he didn't want to reveal his plans to Vivien.

"Well, Michael. What's your answer?" Vivien demanded. She had a suspicion that Michael wanted to be a second lieutenant in Vietnam. Since Michael's father, Stanley, was a war hero and an officer in World War II, it was natural for Michael also to aspire to be an officer.

"To be honest," Michael said, "I plan to apply for officer candidate

school."

When Vivien heard Michael's answer, she turned white, and she cried out, "Michael! Why are you doing this to me?"

"It's something I have to do," Michael said seriously.

"You know how much I'm against the Vietnam War," Vivien screamed out, "You're not showing any respect for me."

"You could easily get killed being a second lieutenant," Joan pointed out.

"I know the risks," Michael responded.

"I simply don't understand you," Vivien said to Michael, "You don't seem to care for the persons who love you."

"Vivien. I care for you," Michael said, "I happen to love you."

"You have a strange way of showing love," Vivien stormed.

"Vivien! You shouldn't treat Michael this way," Joan interjected.

"Mother. I'm just upset with Michael," Vivien replied, "Michael is so selfish."

Michael perceived that it was time to leave. Obviously, Vivien and him needed to be alone to discuss their future. He didn't want to lose Vivien. He said, "Vivien and I should be leaving."

"Michael. I'm not sure if I want to leave with you," Vivien asserted

Jack surmised that Michael and Vivien needed to be alone in the house. He said, "Michael and Vivien need to be alone."

"Don't leave me with Michael," Vivien cried out, "I have nothing to say to him."

"Jack. I think you're right," Joan said, "I need to do some shopping."

"I'll drive you to the shopping center," Jack suggested.

"Well. I'm ready to leave."

Both Jack and Joan rose to their feet and walked to the front door of the house. Exiting the house, they climbed into Jack's van. Pulling out of the driveway, Jack steered the van to a nearby shopping center.

Michael and Vivien silently watched Jack and Joan leave the house. When they had left the house, Vivien said angrily, "You know Michael you're really stupid."

"There's nothing that I can do about being drafted," he said.

"Larry Bucknell got a draft deferment," she retorted.

"I'm not eligible for a medical deferment."

"Larry isn't eligible either!"

"I'm not Larry Bucknell."

"Well. Larry is not being drafted and sent to Vietnam," Vivien cried out, "And he's not volunteering to become a second lieutenant."

"I feel obligated to become an officer," Michael said.

"You sure like to hang around the fort," she said. She had heard Clarence White Fox often denounced "fort Indians" at the meetings of the Native American Student Association.

"I'm not a fort Indian."

"Michael. You must know what is a fort Indian," Vivien declared.

"Yeah. I know."

"Fort Indians are Indians who like to hang around the fort during time of the Whiteman's wars with Native Americans," she cried out emotionally.

"I'm not a traitor to my race," Michael asserted. He had never seen Vivien so angry and upset. They never have argued so vehemently before.

"What am I going to tell my friends?" Vivien demanded.

"What do you mean?" Michael asked.

"It's really embarrassing to have a boyfriend who supports the war in Vietnam," she asserted. She immediately thought of the all anti-war demonstrations and activities in which she had actively participated. And she had good friends who were committing acts of violence to stop the war.

"Vivien. Try to understand," Michael pleaded.

"I don't have to understand."

"I don't support the Vietnam War," he declared, "But there's nothing I can do about it."

"You don't have to become a second lieutenant," Vivien asserted.

"Vivien. It's important for me to be an officer."

"I'd feel better if you didn't become an officer."

Michael looked into Vivien's dark eyes, he said reluctantly, "I'm committed to becoming an officer."

"Michael. I just don't know what to do with you," she said.

"You shouldn't try to understand a Native American male," he replied.

"I never have tried."

"Vivien. I do love you," he declared.

"Sometimes love is not enough," she replied.

Touching Vivien's hand, Michael said, "I don't want to lose you. Becoming an officer won't change me."

"But you could get killed," Vivien stressed.

"It won't make any difference whether I'm an officer or an enlisted man," he offered.

"Still it's the principle."

"Vivien. Will you wait for me?"

Vivien stared into Michael's eyes and said, "Yes. I'll wait for you. I don't know why, except I love you."

On Sunday night, Larry Bucknell and Suzanne Redwood had managed to catch a jet plane to Reno. They spent the night in a downtown Reno hotel. They had decided to wait until Monday to get married, as they didn't arrive in Reno until midnight. After checking into their hotel room, they gambled and

celebrated until four o'clock in the morning. They then returned to their hotel room.

Weary from the night of gambling and partying, they slept until noon the next day. Suzanne was the first to open her sleepy eyes. Turning her head towards the large window of the room, she saw it was daytime.

Feeling the body of Larry lying next to her, she stroke his body. Larry felt the stroking of his body and opened his eyes.

"Good morning!" Suzanne said excitedly.

"What time is it?" Larry asked.

Suzanne glanced at a clock sitting on a night stand by the queen-size bed. She answered, "It's ten minutes after twelve."

"It's late."

"Not too late for us." Suzanne gripped Larry's soft hand.

Stimulated by her gesture, he leaned over and took her into his strong arms. Embracing, they kissed until Suzanne needed to breath. They knew within a few hours that they would be husband and wife.

Larry then glanced at the clock, and he said, "Well. It's time to get up. We have a date with destiny."

She said, "Do you want to take a shower first?"

"No. You can take a shower first. "

"I want to take a bath."

"Go head."

"Thanks."

"What do you want to eat?" Larry asked, "I plan to call room service."

"I want to eat ham and eggs," Suzanne replied, smiling at Larry, "And I want the eggs over easy and whole wheat bread. "

Rolling off the bed, she quickly donned a white terry robe. After gathering up some clothes and an overnight case, she ambled to the bathroom.

Still lying in bed, Larry reached over and grabbed a white telephone sitting on a wood night stand on his side of the bed. Pulling the receiver to his head, he dialed for room service and ordered breakfast for Suzanne and himself. After searching the yellow pages, he dialed a tuxedo rental shop and rented a white suit for the wedding.

Lying on the bed, he waited patiently for Suzanne to complete her bathing. He calculated that Suzanne would at least spent a half hour taking a bath.

He decided to watch television, and he rolled off the bed. After putting on his pullover shirt and trousers, he turned on the television. He sat down on a comfortable gray cloth chair and watched a movie. He expected the food and white tuxedo arrive any minute.

Hearing a knock at the door, he walked to the door and cracked it open. It was a young tall blond waiter, dressed in a black

uniform, bringing the breakfast that Larry had ordered. Larry opened the door and let the waiter carry the food to a table. Next to the table was a wall-sized window, which overlooked the hotel parking lot. After receiving a hefty tip, the waiter quickly exited the room. Larry followed the waiter to the door, and he saw the Monday morning newspaper lying on carpeted floor of the hallway. Picking up the newspaper, he carried it into the room, and he placed it next to the metal platters containing the food.

Once she had bathed and dressed, Suzanne heard Larry and the waiter talking. She decided to wait for the waiter to leave, and when the waiter left, she exited the bathroom. She was attired in a white clinging dress that accented her shapely body. Seeing Larry watching television, she said, "Larry. You can use the bathroom. I'm finished."

Larry looked over to Suzanne and exclaimed, "You're looking beautiful this morning."

"Thank you."

"Is it a new dress?"

"Yes. I bought it a week ago," Suzanne related, "I have never worn it before."

"It is very elegant dress," he said.

Again there was knocking at the room door. Suzanne opened the door, and she saw a short dark man in a bluish uniform standing in the doorway. Over his shoulder, he was carrying a bundle of clothes hanging from clothes hangers.

The man announced, "I'm from the Tuxedo rental shop."

Hearing the man speak, Larry hurried over to the door, and he said to the man, "I ordered a white tuxedo."

"Yeah. I have it here." The man handed Larry the white tuxedo.

Grasping the white tuxedo, Larry said, "I need a blue dress shirt and a black tie."

"Yeah. I got that too," the man said. He handed Larry a shirt and a tie.

Holding the clothes, Larry asked, "How much is it?"

"Fifty dollars per day for the rental clothes and a hundred dollars for the deposit," the man answered.

Reaching for his leather wallet, Larry pulled out hundred fifty dollars and gave to the man. He asked, "Where do I return the suit?"

"We're located in the hotel lobby downstairs," the man explained, "We're open until eight o'clock tonight." The man turned around and walked down the hallway.

Larry crossed the room and set the white tuxedo on the

queen-size bed. Suzanne had already sat down at the white-topped table, holding their breakfast. She had found the newspaper and, while she drank coffee, she read the headlines. She glanced up at Larry placing the white suit on the bed, and she said, "It's a stylish tuxedo."

"Yes. I like white tuxedo," Larry said.

"It's going to look marvelous on you."

Larry observed Suzanne drinking some coffee. He said, "Don't start without me. I need to wash up."

"I'm just drinking coffee."

Larry walked into bathroom and quickly washed his face and hands. Leaving the bathroom, he walked to the table and sat down. He lifted carefully the metal cover, covering the platter holding his breakfast of bacon and eggs. Picking up a fork, he started to consume slowly his meal.

Suzanne lifted the cover from her platter of food and said, "I'm starved for once."

"I'm hungry too," Larry replied, "It was a long night of gambling."

"But I enjoyed every minute of it," she replied.

"It was a lot of fun."

"Larry. When are we getting married?" Suzanne inquired.

"After we finish eating," Larry said, "We'll take a taxi cab to the wedding chapel and get married."

"That's what I want," she exclaimed.

"I'll be glad when it's over."

After they finished their breakfast, Larry took a long shower and put on his white tuxedo. They then caught a taxi cab to the nearest wedding chapel in Reno.

Entering the brightly-painted chapel, Larry purchased the marriage license. A gray-haired chaplain performed a simple wedding ceremony.

When the chaplain declared them husband and wife, Larry and Suzanne embraced and kissed. Breaking apart, Larry said happily to Suzanne, "You're now Mrs. Larry Bucknell."

"I'm very honored to be your wife," she said softly.

"And I'm very honored to be your husband."

"Larry. I truly love you."

"I love you too," he responded. They again kissed.

After they finished filling out the necessary marriage forms, they left the wedding chapel. Waving down a taxi cab, Larry directed the taxi driver to return them to the hotel.

"Well," Suzanne asked Larry, "When are we going to tell your parents about our marriage?"

"When we return to Seattle," he responded tersely, "What about your parents?"

Suzanne said, "We should telephone both our parents when we get back to the hotel room."

"You're right," he conceded, "We'll telephone them from Reno."

"It will give them time to simmer down," she said, "before we return home."

"Good idea."

"How long are we going to stay in Reno?"

"A couple of days," he answered.

"That's good," Suzanne said, "There is no reason to rush back to Seattle."

Suzanne thought about Larry's parents, Chet and Agnes Bucknell. They were bound to be shocked and hurt about Larry and her precipitate elopement to Reno. She thought that Chet was bound to resist the marriage, but she had faith in Agnes who was more egalitarian. She asked, "Larry. Do you think your parents will be really upset?"

"Probably," he answered. He didn't relish telling his class-conscious parents about his elopement with Suzanne. His volcanic father was bound to be irate. And he resolved to hang up on them if they verbally attacked Suzanne.

"I'm afraid," Suzanne said.

"It's too late now. Chet and Agnes will get over it."

"I know."

"Suzanne. What about your parents?" he asked.

"Tom and Pauline will be very happy for us," Suzanne replied, "They've always like you. " Her parents were resigned to the fact that she would eventually marry Larry. At this late date, they would say nothing against the marriage, as they were good Christians. Her mother was bound be critical about elopement to Reno. And she would cry about losing the opportunity to celebrate her eldest daughter's wedding. But they would accept the marriage and her husband, Larry.

"You got understanding parents," Larry said.

"Yes. They're good parents."

Suzanne had achieved her goal of marrying a man of class, who had the potential to provide her the best things in life. She liked her new social economic class, and she never wanted to lose it. Smiling inwardly, she was contented and at peace with herself.

Leaving the University District of Seattle, Larry Bucknell drove his car down 50th street towards Ballard, an residential area of Seattle. Suzanne Redwood was sitting in passenger seat next to

Larry. Michael Dodd and Vivien Renwick was sitting in the back seat. Larry was driving Michael to the induction center, as Michael had to report for induction into the army. It was a typically rainy day for Seattle, an appropriate day for Michael's induction into the army.

"Larry and I have finally located a one bedroom apartment," Suzanne said to Vivien.

"Where is the apartment?" Vivien asked.

"Up the block from our present apartment," Suzanne replied, "Larry and I plan to move out this coming weekend."

"Have you already found a new roommate?" Larry asked Vivien.

"No. But I have a few girlfriends who want to move in," Vivien answered.

"I hope it's only girlfriends," Michael humored.

"No, Michael. I haven't found a replacement for you," Vivien said jokingly.

"Vivien. I thank you for putting up with us newlyweds this past month," Suzanne said.

"I enjoyed having you," she responded.

"It must not have been easy for you," Larry added.

"I survived," Vivien said.

Vivien thought of Suzanne's new in-laws, Chet and Agnes Bucknell. She still distrusted the high and mighty Chet Bucknell. Although Chet was now bankrupt and penniless, he was bound make another small fortune through more shady and environmentally unsound real estate developments. She asked, "Larry. How did Chet and Agnes take your elopement to Reno?"

"Well. My mother was elated about our marriage," Larry revealed, "She had always like Suzanne."

"And your father?" Vivien repeated.

"My dad hasn't talk to me," Larry explained somberly, "since I telephoned him from Reno."

"He's taking hard," Vivien reacted.

"Chet will get over it." Suzanne tried to soothe.

"He's eventually come around," Michael said. He had never met bourgeois Chet Bucknell, but he heard plenty about him from Vivien. She would always get indignant about his shady estate developments, which she believed were environmentally damaging.

"My father is pretty hardheaded," Larry responded.

"We shouldn't have eloped," Suzanne said regretfully.

"No way." Larry fired back, "Chet would have somehow prevented us getting married."

"He can be a very persuasive person," Suzanne agreed.

"Give him a few years," Larry stated, "He'll accept our marriage."



"Especially, when you two start having babies," Vivien point out.

"Not for a few years," Suzanne said cheerfully, "I'll be busy supporting my hubby through school." Suzanne had kept her job with the City of Seattle, but she was busy looking for higher paying jobs.

"We don't need babies right now," Larry agreed, but he secretly desired to make Suzanne pregnant as he was still insecure about losing her to another man. He was happy that Suzanne and him were getting their own apartment. He wouldn't have to hear and see Michael Dodd anymore. He suspected Michael of desiring his pretty wife.

"Larry and I have agreed to have two children," Suzanne disclosed.

"Only two children!" Vivien exclaimed.

"Two enough," Suzanne said.

"Well. Michael and I plan to have lots of babies," Vivien cried out with exhilaration. She was attempting to tease Michael, who had delayed any discussion of marriage and children until he returned from the army.

"Vivien. You'd better talk to me first," Michael said.

"I was just kidding," Vivien replied with delight.

Larry's car reached 15th avenue Northwest, and he turned the car south onto 15th avenue. The induction center was a few miles away. Larry said, "Well, Michael. You're about to become a soldier in the army."

"There's nothing I can do about it," Michael replied.

Vivien's stomach turned sour and acidic. She blurted out, "Michael. You still could go to Canada."

"Hey," Larry said, "You forget that our brave but foolish soldier is volunteering to become a second lieutenant."

"I don't see you volunteering," Michael responded.

"Michael. Larry has a medical deferment," Suzanne explained, "He has a bum knee from an old football injury."

"Yeah. I heard about Larry's fortuitous knee injury," Michael said. He never believe that Larry was entitled to a medical deferment. He remembered that Larry had counseled him on how to get a medical deferment.

"Michael. You sound bitter," Larry replied.

"No. I'm not bitter," Michael said, "I'm proud to serve my country."

"Famous last words," Larry said.

"Now, Michael. You shouldn't accuse Larry of being unpatriotic," Suzanne said harshly, "Larry would serve if it was possible."

"I wasn't being critical of Larry," Michael replied, "I was only expressing my feeling about this country."

"You're not the only one who loves this country," Suzanne

announced with self-righteous indignation.

"Forgive me!" Michael said sarcastically.

Grimacing, Suzanne turned her head and glared at Michael. It was not the proper time to argue with the impossible Michael about patriotism. He would soon be fighting in Vietnam. But she didn't appreciate Michael's implication that her husband was some kind of slacker. She said with difficulty, "Michael. I apologize. I shouldn't be arguing with you, because you'll be soon facing death in Vietnam."

"Suzanne. I humbly accept your apology," Michael jested.

"Are you serious about becoming a second lieutenant," Larry asked Michael.

"Why not?"

"Yeah. I'd do the same thing if I was entering military service," Larry patronized, "The Bucknell family has a proud history of serving as officers during war."

"Michael. For my sake, don't become a second lieutenant," Vivien pleaded.

"Vivien. We've been over this before," Michael said, "There's no sense in covering it again."

"I'm proud of Michael," Suzanne added. It was the first time she had ever praised Michael. Though at a track meet in high school, she recalled cheering for Michael to win the hundred yard dash.

"Suzanne. You're no help at all," Vivien exclaimed.

"Vivien. I'm sorry," she said.

Larry sighted the induction center up the block. In front of the induction was an old gray military bus. He said, "We're also there."

"I'll be glad when it is over," Vivien sighed.

"Me too," Michael agreed.

Larry drove into the parking lot of the induction center and parked the car. Michael quickly exited the car, walking to the rear end. Tearfully, Vivien opened her door and climbed out of the car, and she went to Michael's side. Leaving the car, Larry walked to trunk and opened it.

Michael grabbed his small bag containing some personal items, and he walked towards the induction center. Vivien followed. Twenty feet from the induction center, Michael stopped and turned towards Vivien. He took into Vivien into arms and kissed her. When they broke apart, he whispered, "I love you."

"I love you too," Vivien said softly.

"I'll write as often as I can," he said.

"Don't do anything foolish."

"I won't be foolish." Michael gripped Vivien's hand.

"I'll miss you," she said.

With tears in his eyes, Michael said, "Goodbye." Breaking his grip, he turned around and walked towards the induction center.

Vivien was too emotional to return the goodbye. Not moving, she watched Michael disappear through the door of the induction center. Turning around, she headed back to Larry's waiting car.

Suzanne was standing by the car door, waiting for Vivien to return. When Vivien was ten feet away, she said, "Vivien. We want you to sit in the front."

"Okay." Vivien moved past by Suzanne and climbed into the middle seat of car.

After Suzanne entered the car, Larry pulled out of the parking lot onto 15th avenue and headed north.

"Vivien. Are you alright?" Suzanne asked.

"Yes," Vivien said, "I've done my crying long ago."

"Did you get that newspaper job in Seattle?" Larry asked Vivien.

"No, I didn't," Vivien replied slowly, "but I got a job as an editor for Vietnam Chronicle."

"That anti-Vietnam War newspaper!" Larry cried out.

"Yes."

"Well. What's a strange turnabout," Larry exclaimed.

"Just because Michael supports the war, doesn't mean I have to," Vivien said unemotionally.

"At least you'll keep busy until Michael returns," Suzanne said.

"If he returns," Vivien said bitterly.

"Does the job pay anything?" Larry asked. He was skeptical of viability of newspaper that was against the Vietnam War. He couldn't imagine anyone being against the fight against communism. He believed in the motto: "My Country Right Or Wrong!"

"It pays some money," Vivien said, "enough to live on."

"Well, Vivien. Your job will be good experience for you in the newspaper business," Suzanne said.

"Suzanne. You don't understand," Vivien responded, "I'm doing it because I'm against the war."

"It's still good experience." They drove back to the "U" District.

## Chapter 9

Wearing battle fatigues and a steel helmet, Michael Dodd was riding in a large helicopter. It was carrying four soldiers of the two infantry squads assigned to him. They were traveling to a forward staging area. The whirling sound of the helicopter was deafening.

There were nine other helicopters, which were ferrying the troops of the infantry platoon, to which Michael was assigned. By the end of the morning, Michael and his two squads would be searching for the elusive Viet Cong, who were reported in the area.

Though it was six o'clock, in the morning, the late April day of 1967 was hot, humid, and oppressive. Michael was carrying a M-16 rifle. Looking out over the lush green landscape below, he eyed the dense hilly jungle of South Vietnam.

After graduating from officer candidate school, he was sent to South Vietnam. He had been in South Vietnam only a few weeks, and he had been newly assigned to his platoon as a replacement second lieutenant. Because he was green, the captain of the company placed under a more experienced first lieutenant. He gave Michael command of two squads.

His two squads were made up of young men with youthful faces and youthful experiences. They generally resented having a new second lieutenant leading them into combat, and they had upmost confidence in their battle-hardened squad sergeants. Michael was sensitive about his newness to the platoon, and he was overly accommodating to his sergeants who obviously knew more about Vietnam and combat than him. He secretly feared that he would panic in combat or would fall short of the expectations of the members of his squads.

Flying in formation, the helicopters headed for a clearing in the dense jungle. Sighting the clearing, Michael spotted a military outpost. There was a battery of large howitzers located at the camp. Soldiers and military supplies were scattered over the outpost. The soldiers had dug underground facilities, trenches and dirt pillboxes, and heavy machine guns were strategically placed.

When the helicopter land, Michael turned to his men, and he said, "I want you men to remain on the helicopter. We'll be here only a few minutes."

Sergeant Barnette quickly jumped out of the helicopter and waited for Michael. Medium-built, Barnette had dark blond, hazel eyes, and a ruddy complexion. He was twenty-eight years, and he had been in the army ten years. Fearless, he was combat experienced and ready to lead men into battle. From Georgia, he didn't like serving under a young Native American lieutenant, who lacked any combat experience.

Michael Dodd leaped out of the helicopter. Sergeant Wood scurried toward Michael. Wood was a tall husky African American man, who had been in the army for twelve years, and he was thirty years old.

Wood was from Chicago. He had been in Vietnam for two years, and he seen much combat. He thought that the new lieutenant would be overly cautious or reckless.

Once the two sergeants joined him, Michael said, "We need to get final instructions from the Captain Daniels."

Michael asked a soldier guarding the helicopter landing site where the command post was located. The young African American soldier pointed to an underground bunker.

Michael and his sergeants proceeded to the bunker, holding the command post.

Once inside, Michael discovered the bunker to be spacious and able to hold three dozen men. At the time there were twenty men in the heavily fortified bunker.

Captain Daniels was standing at a table and in front of map of the immediate area. He had a pointer in his hands. A tall man, the captain had reddish hair and a booming voice. He was graduate of West Point and from Kansas City. When Michael entered the bunker, Captain Daniels immediately sighted Michael, and he said harshly, "Lieutenant Dodd! You're late."

"The helicopters were delayed by enemy activity," Michael responded.

Feeling challenged by Michael's reply, Captain Daniels barked, "We can't start the meeting without you. Don't be late again."

Saying nothing, Michael and his sergeants stood at the back of the bunker. With everyone present, the captain started to explain the coming search and destroy mission. He said that a small Vietcong outpost had been located up a valley, thirty miles away. He estimated that the enemy strength in the valley was less than eighty men. The Vietcong outpost was growing in strength, and it needed to be eliminate before it grew too strong.

"Captain. We've heard such estimates before," warned Sergeant Barnette, "We could be walking into trap."

"Sergeant Barnette. It's best intelligence we have, and the best

intelligence we're going to get," the captain averred.

"I just don't like fighting with just a single company of men in a Vietcong-infested valley," Sergeant Barnette pleaded

"Orders are orders," the captain said sardonically. He explained further that Lieutenant Dodd and his two squads were to be helicoptered to the north end of the valley where they were to dig in and wait for the fleeing enemy. The rest of the company would start at the south end and marched north. It hoped that the Vietcong would be trapped between the forces.

"Why my squad?" Sergeant Wood protested, "We have a green second lieutenant."

"Orders are orders," the captain stated bluntly, "Anyway, it's time for the third squad to take a little of the heat. " He gave further details of the mission.

When meeting broke up, Michael, Sergeant Barnette and Sergeant Wood left the bunker, and they started to walk towards the waiting helicopters. Anxiety-ridden, Michael's stomach was sour, and he felt like urinating. For first in his life, he was facing death, and he did not know whether he would see tomorrow. All of life now appeared delicate and immaculate to him. The armaments of war were now dark harbingers of death.

Sergeant Barnette curiously eyed Michael. Michael was pale and silent, as if he was experiencing his death. Barnette said mockingly, "Well, Lieutenant. You're going to get your opportunity to lead men into combat. "

"Yes. It's something I'm not looking forward to," Michael replied.

"It shouldn't be too bad," Sergeant Wood said, "unless the Vietcong get behind us. Then we'll be the ones trapped."

"It will be Little Bighorn all over again," Sergeant Barnette taunted.

"It would be ironical," Michael replied.

"Well, just do what I say," Sergeant Barnette directed, "and we'll live to fight another day."

"You won't have any problems from me," Michael added, "I have plenty to learn about combat."

"But it's still your responsibility to lead the men for better or worst," Sergeant Wood commented.

"Well. That's what they taught me at officer command school," Michael responded.

"I've sent a few second lieutenant come back in body bags," Sergeant Barnette said somberly. He intended to chill any enthusiasm of Lieutenant Dodd.

Reaching the helicopters, Michael and Sergeant Barnette climbed

abroad the helicopter carrying three members of Barnette's squad. Michael had decided to ride with Sergeant Barnette. Sergeant Wood boarded his waiting helicopter.

Ten minutes later, the helicopters lifted off and headed towards the sun. Michael sighted U.S. fighter-bombers flying high overhead. The jets gave him some reassurance. He looked down at the ground, and he saw that rest of K company getting ready to move towards the valley. They were boarding jeeps and heavy trucks. In the far distance, he could see the ominous valley, which threatened his short life. It was hard to distinguish the valley from the rest of the jungle terrain. Lush green vegetation of the valley covered everything, and it blurred the valley and its gentle slopes.

Reaching the valley, the helicopters swept downward towards the valley then upwards towards its northern end. When they reached the northern end, the helicopters veered west to deceive the Vietcong of their true destination. Flying out of the valley, the helicopters flew several miles west and then doubled back. Flying low over the trees, they landed on ridge overlooking the valley. The ridge would provide an excellent view of any Vietcong fleeing north but little protection from the rear.

Sergeant Barnette quickly exited the helicopter first, and his men followed. The last man out, Michael jumped to the ground. After jumping out of their helicopters, Barnette's squad was already taking positions on the ridge.

As soon as Michael jumped to the ground, the hovering helicopter and its frightful blades flew away. Sergeant Wood's squad was also exiting their helicopters, and soon all the helicopters were rapidly leaving the valley. Both Sergeant Barnette and Sergeant Wood were busy establishing a perimeter and machine gun positions. Their squads were busy digging foxholes and crude bunkers.

Michael had full confidence in his combat experienced sergeants. He worked with the radio man to set up the radio as communications with company headquarters would be vital to the survival of the squads. When the radio was set up and secure, he moved towards his two sergeants who were crouched near a large tree.

The uneven ridge was covered by dense jungle, which obscured any movement. Behind the ridge were jungle-covered mountains that terminated the valley. The mountains acted as a crossroads, which Vietcong used to enter or leave the valley.

From the ridge, the two squads could easily detect a Vietcong force coming up the valley, and effective fire power directed the down valley should quickly decimate any Vietcong troops coming up. But the squads might not spot a Vietcong force coming over the mountains

until it was too late. However, no Vietcong troops were expected to be north of the two squads.

Michael squatted down by Sergeant Barnette and Sergeant Wood. He asked nervously, "Sergeant Barnette. Have all sentries been posted?"

"Yeah. All the men that we can spare," Sergeant Barnette responded, "I don't like those mountains behind us."

Michael glanced at the jungle-covered mountains. They looked very different from the high pine-tree covered mountains of the Colville Indian Reservation. He said, "Yes. The mountains are pretty mean looking."

"I don't like the squads being made sacrificial lambs," Sergeant Wood blurted out.

"Apparently that's way you win wars," Michael replied.

"Within an hour, Captain Daniels and K company should be moving up the valley," Sergeant Barnette related, "Approximately, an hour later they should reached the Vietcong outpost."

"So we should see the enemy in about three hours," Michael said.

"Yes. That's what I figured," Sergeant Barnette said.

"That's if Vietcong don't hit us first," Sergeant Wood added.

"Sergeant Wood. I should inspect your squad's positions," Michael suggested.

"Maybe I can teach you something about war," Sergeant Wood replied.

"Well. You have a willing student," Michael replied. Sergeant Wood and Michael moved towards Wood's squad, who were busy digging in fifty yards away.

Sergeant Barnette decided to talk to three young soldiers digging in by a heavy machine gun, pointed down the valley. Approaching the three soldiers, Sergeant Barnette said, "Have you seen anything?"

"No, Sarge," Corporal Paul Flint said in southern drawl. From Mississippi, he was a medium built man with light brown hair and a light complexion. He was a draftee who didn't want to be in Vietnam. Like War between the States, he believed that the Vietnam War was a rich man's war, offering little to a boy from northern Mississippi.

"Do you think the Vietcong are coming?" Private Jerome Pitt asked nervously. He was an African American man from New York City, who was also a draftee. He thought that the Vietnam War was a Whiteman's war, and he wanted no part of Vietnam. He had brown eyes, a dark complexion, and wooly hair.

"Yeah. They're coming. You can bet on that," Sergeant Barnette said.

"I don't like those mountains behind us," Private Jose Ruez asserted in Mexican accent. He was a Chicano from Los Angeles. He had dark eyes, a bronze complexion, and dark hair with a slight curl. Like his buddies,



Flint and Pitt, Raez was a draftee and resented being in Vietnam.

"There's nothing I can do about those mountains," Sergeant Barnette said.

"It's like playing Russian roulette," Pitt offered.

"I can't wait until we get out of here," Flint whined.

Seeking to reassure them, Sergeant Barnette explained, "If everything goes well, we should meet up with Captain Daniels and K company in about five hours."

"Too long for me," Raez retorted.

Private Pitt had no confidence in any young lieutenant, who belong to a racial minority group, such as the Native Americans.

Pitt believed that, because Lieutenant Dodd was a Native American, he would have something to prove to superiors, his troops and himself. This made Lieutenant Dodd a dangerous person. He asked, "How is the Lieutenant Dodd doing?"

"Lieutenant Dodd is green like all new second lieutenants," Barnette disclosed, "but he'll learn."

Corporal Flint didn't like officers of any rank. Lieutenant Dodd was no exception. He inquired, "Will the lieutenant panic under fire?"

"No. The lieutenant won't run," Sergeant Barnette predicted, "His father was a war hero in World War II."

"What did he do?" Raez questioned with interest.

"I don't know," Barnette answered, "But he did receive two brown stars and a battle field promotion to lieutenant."

"Two brown stars!" Pitt cried out.

Corporal Flint now imagined the young Lieutenant Dodd to be an overzealous, gun happy warmonger who might get them all killed. He exclaimed, "A war hero!"

"Just our luck!" Pitt cried out, "I just know he has something to prove."

"Was it the lieutenant who got us in this dangerous valley?" Raez asked heatedly. He now attributed the planning of the search and destroy mission to the lieutenant. He was silently praying the mission wouldn't be a disaster.

"I don't know," Sergeant Barnette said, "I'm not privy to the planning of the officers." He had no qualms about undermining the decision-making of his superiors. He did not like their arrogance and overconfidence.

"The lieutenant must have volunteered our squads for this dangerous mission," Pitt offered.

"I don't think so," Sergeant Barnette responded, "It is Captain Daniels who does all the planning."

"I got no confidence in Lieutenant Dodd," Flint opined.

"You shouldn't be talking that way," Sergeant Barnette scolded, "The lieutenant will do alright."

"I hope you're right," Raez answered back.

"I need to talk to the lieutenant," Sergeant Barnette announced. Leaving the threesome behind, he walked towards where Michael was talking to Sergeant Wood.

When Sergeant Barnette was beyond hearing distance, Corporal Flint exclaimed, "That Native American is going to get us all killed."

"Yeah. He has something to prove to the world," Private Pitt cried out, "Lord, why us?"

"I just know Lieutenant Dodd will spill our blood," Flint ruminated.

"Someone is going to have to kill the lieutenant before its too late," Private Raez suggested boldly.

"Yeah. The lieutenant has to go," Pitt agreed spontaneously.

"The quicker the better," Corporal Flint agreed..

"But who's going to kill him?" Pitt inquired seriously.

Raez had heard of soldiers fragging their officers or other soldiers. He never dreamed that he would be participating in such a plot. He asked, "Do we have any volunteers?"

"I'm not going to do it," Pitt said adamantly, "I'm no murderer."

"It's not exactly murder," Raez said, "It's more like self-preservation."

"Yeah. Self-preservation!" Pitt confirmed.

"We must make it look like that the lieutenant was killed by the Vietcong," Corporal Flint analyzed aloud.

"Yes. During a fire fight is a good time," Raez suggested.

"But who's going to do it?" Corporal Flint asked.

"Maybe we could draw lots," Pitt proposed.

"Good idea!" Raez reacted.

Corporal Flint was beginning to doubt the wisdom of venture, and his initial enthusiasm was quickly waning. He asked suddenly, "Why should it be only us three?"

"Good point," Pitt exclaimed.

"Yeah. Maybe the whole squad should be involved," Raez said.

"Why not both squads?" Pitt asserted, "I mean it's for the good of everyone."

"I don't know," Corporal Flint responded, "It's going to be hard to keep it a secret."

"Maybe we should forget whole thing," Pitt proposed.

"Yeah. Maybe we're being rash," Corporal Flint said.

"I can't figure you two out," Raez said in a frustrated tone of voice, "I'm not sticking out my neck."

Carrying an automatic weapon in his hand, Sergeant Barnette walked toward Sergeant Wood and Michael. Sergeant Wood was talking on a portable radio to a sentry who was guarding the approaches from the mountains. Sergeant Wood was growing visibly excited. Sergeant Barnette knew immediately that a Vietcong force had been

sighted. He speculated the force must be coming down from the jungle-covered mountains. The two squads were in jeopardy. When Sergeant Barnette reached Michael, he asked Michael, "Is it the Vietcong?"

"Yes. A large Vietcong force is moving towards us from the mountains," Michael explained uneasily.

"Have they spotted us?" Sergeant Barnette asked hastily.

"Yes. They are now getting ready to attack," Michael said, "We could be under attack any minute."

"How many men?" Sergeant Barnette asked firmly.

"Over hundred men," Michael responded.

"It's too large of a force for us to fight," Sergeant Barnette offered excitedly, "It looks like we have to get out of here."

"You mean retreat?" Michael asked incredulously.

"We have no other choice," Sergeant Barnette mouthed.

"Well. Get your men ready to move down the valley," Michael instructed.

Sergeant Wood finished talking with the sentry. Turning to Michael, he said, "We'd better contact Captain Daniels."

"I'll get on the radio," Michael said, "and tell the captain we need to retreat."

"Yes. We should also ask for some air strikes," Sergeant Barnette suggested. "We'll probably need some."

"I'll stay here with my men," Sergeant Wood said. Turning away from Michael and Sergeant Barnette, Sergeant Wood started to yell orders to his men. Obeying, they were gathering up their weapons and concealed themselves behind jungle trees and vegetation.

Michael and Sergeant Barnette hurried over to the radioman, Private Carl Cole. With brown hair and a whitish complexion, he was an innocent young man from Cleveland, Ohio, who believed in the Vietnam War. Just as they reached Private Cole, they hear the whining sound of incoming mortar shells.

Sergeant Barnette yelled, "Take cover!"

Diving to the ground behind a tree, Michael could hear and feel the exploding shells. He heard screaming and looked up. Sergeant Barnette had been wounded in the right shoulder, and he was lying on the ground in pain. Grievously wounded, the radioman lay prostrate on the ground. The radio was destroyed beyond repair. Michael dashed to where Sergeant Barnette was lying on the ground. He said, "Sergeant. Where are you hit?"

"I'm hit in the shoulder," Sergeant Barnette cried out. Red blood was gushing from his shoulder.

Michael applied pressure on the wound and slowed the bleeding. Looking around, Michael saw Corporal Flint crouching on the ground. He yelled to Flint, "Corporal. Bring the medical bag."

Crawling on his hands and knees, Corporal Flint got to the medical equipment and grasped a medical bag in his hands. Stooping low to the ground, he scrambled back to where Sergeant Barnette were lying on the ground with Michael by his side. Immediately Corporal Flint started to administer medical assistance to Sergeant Barnette. He managed to stop the binding with pressure bandages.

Over shooting the platoon, the mortar shells were intermittently landing harmlessly in the valley below. Suddenly, Michael heard the fire of automatic weapons. He yelled at the squads, "Hold your fire until you have something to shoot at."

Staring at Michael, the squad first hesitated and than obeyed. Private Pitt and Private Raez were trying to revive the radio man, who had been wounded in the chest. Bleeding profusely, the radio man quickly died without regaining consciousness.

Michael said to Corporal Flint, "Let's move Sergeant Barnette behind those trees." Michael grabbed the sergeant by his shoulder and lifted him to his feet.

Still in pain, Sergeant Barnette walked unassisted to the trees. On his own, he sat down on the ground against a tree. Michael was certain that Sergeant Barnette's wounds were not serious.

"Lieutenant. What are we going to do?" Corporal Flint moaned.

"Well. We're getting out of here," Michael said with no hesitation.

"Without notifying the captain?"

"Yes."

"Captain Daniels isn't going to like that," Corporal Flint said.

"There's nothing I can do about it," Michael replied. "With radio smashed, there's no way to communicate with the captain."

"The captain is a hard man."

Sergeant Wood came running up to Michael, and he said excitedly, "Vietcong are ready to attack. What are you going to do?"

"We're retreating," Michael said tersely.

Sergeant Wood was elated at Michael's reply. At the least, the decision would be the lieutenant's responsibility and not his. He said, "Well. We'd better get moving."

"I want the squads to destroy any equipment, which cannot be easily carried," Michael ordered, "Sergeant Wood's squad will move out first."

"How far do you want my squad to go?" Sergeant Wood asked.

"I want you to keep moving down the valley," Michael ordered, "If there are any problems, I will contact you by portable radio."

"What if your squad is cut off by the Vietcong," Sergeant Wood asked.

"Then I want you and your squad to make a run for it," Michael directed, "Leave us behind. There's nothing you can do for us."

"Good luck," Sergeant Wood said sincerely. He hurried back to his squad, and he commenced to give orders to withdraw. His men began to wreck any equipment which could not be carried away. When his men finished, the

sergeant and his men started to slowly withdraw south into the jungle-covered valley.

Using a portable radio, Michael was talking to the sentry, who had not yet been discovered by the Vietcong. Sam Brown was a burly young man with reddish hair and a light complexion. Twenty years old, he was from Phoenix, Arizona.

Michael said to the sentry, "Are you in sight of the Vietcong?"

"Yes. I see them."

"How many Vietcong are there?"

"I would estimate over two hundred men."

"Are Vietcong ready to attack?"

"Yes. They're getting ready to attack."

"When?"

"Any minute," Private Brown replied nervously.

"Private. I want you to get out of there," Michael ordered.

"You don't have to tell me twice." Grabbing his M-16 rifle, Private Brown started to crawl back to where the squad was located. After he crawled fifty feet, he got his feet and scrambled the remaining way to the squad.

Michael walked over to Sergeant Barnette, and he asked, "Can you still use a weapon?"

"Yeah. I got my 45 pistol," Sergeant Barnette replied. Reaching into his military holster, he drew out a 45 pistol and flashed it at Michael.

Michael concluded that Sergeant Barnette could easily defend himself with the pistol. He said, "Sergeant, I want you to leave right now and catch up to Sergeant Wood."

"And ran away from a fight," Sergeant Barnette said disappointedly.

"You won't do us any good with your wounded shoulder," Michael explained, "so take off."

"I follow orders," Sergeant Barnette said. Re-holstering pistol, he ungainly climbed to his feet and struggled down the ridge to the jungle-covered valley. He soon found the path that Sergeant Wood's squad had taken.

"Where is Sergeant Barnette going?" Corporal Flint cried out emotionally. His worst nightmare had come true.

"Sergeant Barnette is headed down the valley to join Sergeant Wood," Michael answered.

"Who's in command," Flint cried out without thinking.

"Corporal. I'm in command," Michael said firmly.

"Sorry."

Michael turned to the squad, who had positioned themselves among the trees. He commanded, "I want you men to spread out along the ridge."

"What do you want us to do if the Vietcong come?" Corporal Flint asked fearfully. He figured that Michael would order them to fight to the last man.

"First, we're going to have fire fight with the Vietcong," Michael explained, "before we retreat down the valley."

"Why the rearguard action?" Corporal Flint exclaimed, "Someone could get killed."

"I want the Vietcong to think that we are a large force and willing to stand and fight," Michael said, "If the Vietcong fall for the ruse, we should be able to make a safe retreat."

"What if the Vietcong don't fall for the trick?" Corporal Flint cried fearfully.

"Then we will meet up with Sergeant Wood's squad and try again," Michael responded.

"And you're in command," Corporal Flint moaned.

"Yes. I'm in command," Michael stressed, "Obey my orders."

"Yes, sir," Corporal Flint replied reluctantly.

In accordance with Michael's command, the squad promptly spread out along the ridge and quickly dug themselves in. Abruptly, Michael heard loud rattle of automatic weapon fire. He immediately knew that the Vietcong were attacking in force. The mortar shells resumed coming in on the ridge, exploding among the trees. Michael ordered, "Start firing."

The squad opened up with their automatic weapons. They directed their fire at sound of the firing of the Vietcong weapons. The firing sound of the weapons was deafening and violent. When a few Vietcong broke into the open, the squad directed fire at them, and they threw grenades at them. After a few minutes, the Vietcong were forced to withdraw, but they kept up their automatic weapon fire and shelling with mortars.

Michael looked directly at Private Ruez who was not firing his rifle. He yelled at Ruez, "Soldier! Start firing."

Turning his head to Michael, Ruez flinched and then hesitated. Staring at Michael, he slowly raised his rifle and started to shoot in the direction of the Vietcong.

When the Vietcong stopping firing their automatic weapons, Michael ordered the squad to cease firing. And he yelled out, "Are there any casualties?"

The squad had sustained few casualties, minor wounds from exploding from mortar shells and grenades. The squad had been lucky. Corporal Flint yelled back, "Only minor wounds from mortar rounds."

"Then pick up your weapons," Michael ordered, "and start moving down the valley. "

"What about body of Private Cole?" Corporal Flint asked.

"Leave it, " Michael yelled out, "The company will pick it up later."

"The men won't like it," Corporal Flint commented.

"I don't care what the men like or don't like," Michael replied,  
"Move out."

"Yes, sir."

"Private Pitt and Private Raez," Michael cried out, "I want you to  
stay behind with me. "

Faces of Pitt and Raez turned green at Michael's announcement.

Corporal Flint could see apprehension in their faces, as they eyed  
one another. Their worst fears about Lieutenant Dodd had come  
true. Corporal Flint gave them a little wave goodbye.

Raez asked nervously, "Lieutenant. What do you need us for?"

Michael sensed a reluctance to obey his order. He pondered  
whether every combat officer had the same problem in Vietnam. He  
barked, "Just obey my orders. "

Led by Corporal Flint, the rest of the squad started to proceed  
down the ridge to the inhospitable valley below. They wouldn't feel  
safe until they reached Captain Daniels and K Company.

Michael watched the squad disappear over the ridge into the  
jungle of the valley. Turning towards Pitt and Raez, he said, "Okay.  
We need to provide some rearguard action."

"Have you provided rearguard action before?" Pitt asked fearfully.

"No. This is the first time I've been on patrol," Michael disclosed.  
He may have made a mistake by admitting that fact to the two frightened  
soldiers. He was concerned about their morale.

"Do you know what you're doing?" Raez blurted out.

"Yes, I do," Michael said facetiously, "They taught to me what do in  
officer candidate school."

Raez and Pitt turned silent. Eventually Raez moaned, "That's good  
to hear."

Waiting twenty minutes, Michael looked towards the jungle-  
covered mountains. They observe the mountains for five minutes  
more. He couldn't see any movement of the Vietcong. Waving to Pitt  
and Raez, he ordered, "Let's fall back."

Greatly relieved, Raez and Pitt followed Michael down the ridge  
to the valley. Their spirits rose, because they were now retreating,  
and they headed toward safety. When they entered the jungle of the  
valley and had gone hundred and fifty yards, Michael commanded them to  
stop and take cover behind some trees and vegetation. They had an  
excellent view of the ridge

"Why are we stopping?" Pitt asked in a concerned voice.

"We're going to provide some more rearguard action," Michael

announced.

"We could get killed," Pitt reacted instantly.

"Well. That's why we're in Vietnam," Michael said drily.

"I didn't come to Vietnam," Raez said heatedly, "to get killed."

Michael turned to Raez and said, "Soldier! Don't worry. I know what I'm doing."

Michael picked up his portable radio and radioed Sergeant Wood. He said, "Sergeant Wood. Are you there?"

When Wood got on the portable radio, he said, "Yeah, it's me. How are things up there?"

"Fine," Michael said, "The Vietcong haven't yet advanced."

"Sergeant Barnette and his squad have caught up with us," Wood revealed.

"How did they catch up so fast?"

"Apparently, they ran all the way."

"Good."

"What do you want us to do?"

"Continue down the valley."

"What about you?"

"Pitt, Raez, and I will work our way down the valley," Michael explained, "When possible we'll provide rearguard action."

"Lieutenant. You don't need to worry about us," Sergeant Wood declared, "You don't need to take any chances."

"I'm not going to take chances."

"Well, good luck."

Eyeing the ridge, Pitt spotted a few Vietcong guerrillas. He cried out, "The Vietcong are on the ridge."

Eyeballing the Vietcong, Michael instructed, "We'll going let off a few rounds of fire, then we'll escape down the valley."

Aiming their automatic weapons, they pulled the triggers and let go with a volley of fire towards the ridge. Vietcong heard the shots, and they jumped to the ground. They immediately started to return fire down the valley. But Michael and the two privates had left their positions and moved further down the valley. The Vietcong's fire was misdirected.

Five hundred yards further down the valley, Michael ordered, "Let's take cover behind those trees."

Pitt and Raez quickly concealed themselves behind the trees. The oppressive heat and the tension of immediate death had taken their toll. Exhausted, they both were sweating profusely, and their fatigues were wet from humidity and perspiration. Their lungs and legs ached from their mad dash for life. Their morale was shattered. Breathing hard, Raez said, "Lieutenant. What are we going to do next?"



Michael was trying to observe the ridge, but it was obscured by the jungle. Turning towards Ruez, he said, "There's not much more three men can do."

"That's good news," Pitt exclaimed joyfully. He relieved that the lieutenant had come to his senses.

"I can't see anything through this jungle," Michael said. Without warning, automatic weapon fire was directed at the threesome. Michael leaped behind a tree, and he returned the automatic weapon fire. Hesitating for a moment, Pitt and Ruez opened up with their weapons at the unseen enemy. Michael saw a grenade flying through the air, aimed at him.

Instinctively, he dropped to the ground. The resulting explosion contorted and lifted his fragile body. His eardrums felt an excruciating pain, and his eyes went black. After the explosion passed, he lay motionless on the ground and still dazed by the explosion. Within a few seconds, he started to feel the pain of the grenade fragments.

Ruez and Pitt both unleashed their own grenades towards the firing sounds of the automatic weapons. After their grenades exploded, the shooting ceased. Pitt and Ruez spurted to where Michael was lying prostrate.

Reaching Michael's body, Pitt yelled, "Lieutenant. Are you okay?"

Attempting to roll over, Michael fell back down to the ground, disoriented from the explosion. He replied, "I don't know."

Examining the back of Michael's body, Pitt could find no serious wounds. He said excitedly, "I can't find any wounds on your backside. Let me roll you over."

Private Pitt rolled Michael onto his back and quickly examined his body for wounds.

Regaining his wits, Michael asked, "Did you find anything?"

"Nope. Just some minor fragment wounds," Pitt disclosed, "but there could be internal injuries."

"Well. We'd better get going," Michael said, "Vietcong could open up again any second." He offered his hand to Pitt, who pulled him to his feet. Feeling his body for the fragment wounds, he knew that he was lucky to be alive.

"We should get out of here," Ruez agreed nervously.

"We could be surrounded," Pitt pointed out.

Pointing down the valley to the southeast, Michael said, "We'll head in that direction." Staggering as he walked, he moved with difficulty towards the southeast. As he stepped, his tender limbs began to respond. Tasting blood in his mouth, he put a hand to his face and found grenade fragment wounds.

When they reached a clearing in the jungle, they saw Vietcong on

the edge of the grass-covered clearing. The Vietcong had weapons in their hands, and they were sitting on the ground under a tall tree. One guerrilla was acting as a lookout.

Stopping at the edge of the clearing, Michael said, "We're going to have run for our lives."

"I was a cross country runner in high school," Pitt divulged.

"The only thing I ran from was the police," Raez announced, "and they never caught me."

Scrutinizing the jungle clearing, Michael saw a path leading south. From a map that he was carrying, he knew that path went down the length of the valley. The path was the quickest way to safety. They had few alternatives, as the Vietcong guerrillas were everywhere in the upper part of the valley.

"What if the Vietcong are waiting in ambush on the path?" Pitt asked seriously.

"We'll just have take our chances," Michael replied.

"When we cross the clearing, the Vietcong could see us," Raez commented.

"We will only be exposed for a few seconds," Michael said, "If we are quick and careful, we shouldn't have any problems."

"Who is going first?" Pitt asked.

"Any volunteers?" Michael quipped.

"My mother told me never to volunteer for anything," Raez disclosed.

"Not me," Pitt exclaimed.

"I could order you, but I won't," Michael said, "I'll be the first one to cross the clearing."

"Don't leave us behind," Pitt cried out.

"I won't leave you."

With Pitt and Raez staying put, Michael inched his way towards the clearing under the cover of the jungle vegetation. Stopping, he again looked across the clearing to where the Vietcong were sitting. Staring at the sole lookout, Michael readied himself to run. When Vietcong outlook turned north, he broke into a full sprint. In a few yards, he was running at full stride. Several seconds later, he had successfully crossed the clearing, and he concealed himself in the jungle vegetation. With his hand, he waved to Raez and Pitt to cross the clearing.

"Gosh. The lieutenant made!" Pitt exclaimed. He was relieved that the crossing the clearing unseen was possible.

"Who's next?" Raez asked.

"Us African Americans are good at running," Pitt answered.

"Like Jesse Owens."

"Yes."

"You're welcome to try."

Leaving Raez, Pitt crept to the clearing. With ominous feelings, he watched the Vietcong across the clearing. They appeared oblivious to his presence. When the Vietcong lookout turned his head north, he made a mad dash across the grass-covered clearing into the jungle. Unseen by the Vietcong, he stopped when he reached Michael.

"Good work," Michael cried out in elation.

"Yeah. But it wasn't easy," Pitt retorted, "A man could get killed out there."

Michael waved to Raez to cross the perilous clearing. Positioning himself at the edge of the clearing, Raez waited for an opportune time to race across. The Vietcong still had not discovered their presence. When the Vietcong lookout looked north, Raez took one long leap and scurried across clearing.

Dressed in loose dark clothes, a young Vietcong guerrilla happened to look south towards the path. He immediately saw Raez dashing across. Letting out a beastly yell, he warned his companions. They immediately seized their arms and started to fire their weapons at the fleeing soldier.

Observing the Vietcong shooting, Michael cried, "Raez. Hit the dirt."

Hearing Michael's exhortation, Raez jumped to the ground and then crawled towards the path. The grass obscured the view of the Vietcong soldiers. Michael and Pitt opened up with their automatic weapons until Raez was safely across the clearing.

Michael yelled, "Let's get going on down the path."

Jumping to his feet, Michael ran down the path to an unknown destination. The path was just a narrow opening cutting through the jungle, which intermittently disappeared and appeared. Pitt and Raez wasted no time in following Michael down path.

The Vietcong fired their weapons at the three, but their fire was inaccurate. Vietcong then chased the three American soldiers down the path.

With their lives in danger, Michael decided keep running down the twisting path until they got to safety. After they had ran one mile, he stopped and roared at Pitt and Raez, "Keep on moving until you're exhausted."

"You don't have to worry about me stopping," Pitt cried out as he passed Michael on the path. His face had turned red from the exertion of running down the path.

Trailing behind, Raez had turned pale from fear, and he was breathing with difficulty. Though he desperately needed to rest, he forced himself to keep

moving his legs forward. He didn't know where he was getting strength to keep moving.

"Private. You're going to make it," Michael said to Raez.

"I hope so."

Raising his automatic weapon, Michael let off a volley of shots towards any Vietcong following behind. Hearing the shots, Raez doubled his running speed. After he re-loaded his weapon, Michael resumed his running. When he caught up to Raez, he kept pace with him.

Three miles down the path, Pitt had come to an abrupt halt, and he was bending over at the waist, trying to catch his breath. His face was red and his fatigues completely wet from perspiration. Salty sweat was rolling from his brow. A minute later, both Michael and Raez caught up Pitt, and they stopped by his side.

"I can't go any further," Pitt pleaded.

"Okay. Let's take a break," Michael ordered, "and get off the path."

Staggering to edge of the path, Raez dropped to his knees and leaned against a tree. Clutching his weapon, Michael went to one knee but faced north. He wanted to be able to see any Vietcong coming down the path. When fifteen minutes passed, Michael cried out, "Ready or not, we got to get moving."

"I need another five minutes," Pitt hollered.

"I can't go any further," Raez cried out.

Standing up, Michael exhorted, "Let's getting moving. We don't want the Vietcong to get ahead of us." Lifting his feet, he moved down the path towards the south.

"Lieutenant. You're going to kill us with all of this running," Pitt exclaimed.

"Just keep moving," Michael yelled back.

Reluctantly, Raez and Pitt chased after Michael, as they wanted to keep him in sight. Through the morning and early afternoon, the three kept running then resting, and then back to running. Finally they reached the out perimeter of K company. K company had come to a stop at a clearing in the valley.

"Private Pitt. I want you to make contact with K company," Michael ordered. He figured that an African-American soldier would be more quickly identified as friendly than two brown-skinned men.

"I can't walk any further," Pitt protested.

"Just follow orders," Michael replied.

Moving to the edge of the clearing, Pitt stopped and then yelled to some soldiers dug in on the perimeter. He explained that he was a part of the second platoon. After receiving permission, he moved forward

to talk to the soldiers on the perimeter.

Grabbing his portable radio and lifting it to his mouth, Michael asked to speak to Captain Daniels. Speaking into his radio, the captain yelled, "Lieutenant Dodd. Where are you?"

"Just north of your perimeter."

"What!"

"I got separated from my two squads."

"Where's your squads?"

"Haven't they returned?"

"No."

"Well. Then they should reach your perimeter shortly," Michael informed.

"Lieutenant. I want you to report to me in person," the captain hollered, "and I mean now."

"Yes, sir." Michael put down his portable radio. His stomach was churning, as he didn't relish talking to the stiff and formal captain. The captain was clearly unhappy with his conduct and command of his two squads. He was worried about meeting Captain Daniels and explaining to him why he wasn't with his squads. His explanation was simple, but would the captain believe him.

"Lieutenant. Are you in trouble?" Raez asked curiously.

"Yeah. The captain is upset with me," Michael admitted.

"It's not the first time that a second lieutenant got separated from his men," Raez encouraged.

"I'll just explain to Captain Daniels what happened."

"The captain is not a very understanding man," Raez cautioned.

Pitt and a couple of other soldiers came through the perimeter to where Michael and Raez were standing.

Private Pitt announced, "Everything is okay. We can go through the perimeter. "

"Well. Let's go through," Michael ordered. He followed the soldiers through the perimeter. Once through, he asked a soldier where the captain was. The soldier pointed to an old heavy truck. Michael immediately recognized the outline of Captain Daniels. He reluctantly walked towards the petulant captain.

As Michael neared Captain Daniels, he saw that the captain was on the radio speaking to someone. He was visibly upset as he spoke. When he finished, the captain hung up the telephone, and he turned towards Michael, who was standing next to the heavy truck.

"Captain Daniels. You wanted to talk to me."

"Yes, Lieutenant Dodd," the captain said, "I just finished talking to the Major Chase about you."

"What about?"

"Major Chase wants you court-marshaled for insubordination," the captain replied with little passion, "You could easily spend the rest of the war in a military prison."

Michael was shaken by the news of his alleged insubordination. He, said, "I didn't do anything wrong."

"Well. Major Chase does not see it that way."

"I was separated from my men by enemy fire and superior numbers," Michael explained.

"The major thinks that you deserted your men in battle," Captain Daniels said, "He wants to make an example of you."

Michael resented being accused of cowardice. He said, "You only need to talk to Sergeant Wood, Sergeant Barnette, and other men."

"You'll have a chance to defend yourself," the captain commented.

"And you should talk to Private Pitt and Private Raez," Michael urged, "They will confirm my story."

"Lieutenant. You completely ruined today's operation."

"But I was confronted by a superior force."

"Your squads had the firepower to cope with the Vietcong force."

"I was in an indefensible position," Michael said firmly.

"You should have stayed and fought," Captain Daniels stressed.

"And suffered heavy casualties."

"Yes. You should fought to the last man."

"Well. I thought that making a desperate stand was ill-advised."

The captain's face turned angry, and he said, "You can tell that to a board of inquiry."

"I stand by my decision," Michael replied.

"You withdrew without my permission," the captain retorted, "I don't like second lieutenants disobeying my orders."

"I withdrew under my authority."

"The only authority that you have comes from me," the captain said, "My men never retreat."

"But I saved lives of my men," Michael countered.

"Lieutenant Dodd! You are under arrest," the captain screamed.

"I did what I believed was right," Michael said.

"I don't want to hear another word from you."

"Yes, sir."

"Sergeant Baker!" the captain hollered.

Sergeant Baker was stocky man with brown hair and eyes and a light complexion. He grew up in Fargo, North Dakota. Turning to the captain, he replied. "Captain. What is it."

"I have placed Lieutenant Dodd under arrest for insubordination," the captain cried out emotionally, "You are to immediately transport him to battalion headquarters."

"Yes, sir."

Captain Daniels noticed that Michael had suffered minor injuries. He said, "When you get to battalion headquarters, take Lieutenant Dodd to the field medical unit."

"Yes, sir."

"I don't want Lieutenant Dodd to bleed to death before his court-martial," the captain said sarcastically.

"Yes, sir."

"Once his wounds are taken care up, take the lieutenant to see Major Chase," the captain explained, "Major Chase is on the staff of Lieutenant Colonel Packard."

"Is there anything else?" Sergeant Baker asked.

"Yes. Take the first available helicopter."

"Yes, sir," the sergeant said, "Lieutenant Dodd follow me."

Sergeant Baker walked towards a waiting helicopter, which was about to leave for battalion headquarters twenty miles away. Michael followed the sergeant to the helicopter.

"Is this helicopter going to battalion headquarters?" Sergeant Baker asked a soldier inside the helicopter.

"Yes. We're about ready to leave," the soldier said. With light hair and complexion, he was an average-looking young man from from Houston, Texas.

"I got a prisoner to transport to battalion headquarters."

"A Vietcong wearing a second lieutenant's uniform," the soldier jested, "What will they do next?"

"No. Lieutenant Dodd is not a Vietcong guerrilla," Sergeant Baker replied excitedly, failing to realize he was being teased.

"I thought he was rather big to be a Vietnamese."

"The lieutenant is charged with insubordination," Sergeant Baker stated.

"What did he do?"

"He's charged with disobeying an order of Captain Daniels," Sergeant related, "He withdrew his men without getting the permission of the captain."

"Captain Daniels wanted my squads to make a futile stand against the Vietcong rather than retreat," Michael finally reacted.

"Captain Daniels is severe man," the soldier offered.

Sergeant Baker and Michael climbed aboard the helicopter. Five minutes later, the blades of the helicopter began to twirl, and the helicopter lifted up rapidly from the ground. It flew west towards the bright yellow sun. Looking down at the ground, Michael could see his men enter the perimeter. He quickly counted the men and determined that all his men had returned, except the radio man.

Twenty minutes later, the helicopter circled the headquarters of the battalion. It was located by a slow-moving river, and it was fortified on all sides. The jungle had been cut down around the compound. Within the compound was an emergency medical unit. Michael watched the medical helicopters come and go.

When the helicopter received permission to land, it descended to a landing pad near a vast underground bunker. After the helicopter landed, Sergeant Baker and Michael jumped to the ground.

"The emergency medical unit is over there," the sergeant said. He pointed a complex of prefabricated buildings.

"I'm been here before," Michael stated. He then walked towards the emergency medical unit. The sergeant followed. After they walked two hundred yards, they arrived at the unit.

A corpsman was standing at an entrance of a building. He was a short young man with a strong face. He had black hair and eyes and a sun-tanned complexion. He looked at Michael, and he asked, "Lieutenant. Are you seriously wounded?"

"No. I don't think so," Michael said, "but I did receive a few grenade fragments."

After examining Michael, the corpsman determined that Michael was not serious wounded. He said, "It looks like you only suffered some minor fragment wounds."

"The wounds do look minor," Michael said, "Did I receive any internal injuries?"

"No. Not according to your vital signs," the corpsman explained, "but you will be extremely sore the tomorrow."

"I'm already becoming stiff."

The corpsman put some medication on the fragment wounds, but he did little else. Handing Michael a tube of greasy medication, he said, "Your wounds will heal faster without any dressing. Just keep putting on this medication on the wounds."

"Is that all?"

"You can return to your unit."

While they were talking, a medical helicopter landed nearby on a landing pad. A group of corpsmen rushed to the helicopter, and they carried three wounded men on stretchers to the medical unit. The corpsmen set down the stretchers by a building near where Michael was standing. A doctor rushed to a wounded soldier lying on a stretcher. His fatigues were covered with blood, and he appeared to be a first lieutenant. The doctor dropped to his knees and desperately tried to save the young man's life.

Disturbed by the heart-rendering scene, Michael strained his eyes to see how badly the man was wounded. The man had suffered a



grievous chest injury. He had blond hair and a familiar face.

Michael pondered whether he had previously met the wounded first lieutenant. Then he realized with horror that the wounded man was Clayton Shaw, an old high school classmate.

Clayton was two years ahead of him in high school, and he had gone on to attend the University of Oregon. After flunking out graduate school, Clayton had been drafted into the army. Within a month, Clayton was scheduled to be released from the army. Michael had always admired the athletic Clayton Shaw.

The young doctor attending Clayton got to his feet and walked away from Clayton. When the doctor approached Michael Dodd, he said, "Doctor. Is the wounded man going to live?"

With a deep gloom in his eyes, the doctor answered, "No. There's nothing more I can do for him."

"Can I talk to him?"

"Why?"

"I'm a old high school classmate," Michael said, "I know his mother and father."

"Okay. You can talk to him," the doctor said, "He'll die any minute."

Michael slowly walked over to the stretcher holding Clayton Shaw. Looking down at Clayton, he realized how much Clayton had aged in a few short years.

Clayton saw a figure standing over him, and he said in a subdued voice, "Is it you - doctor?"

Michael bent down to his knees beside Clayton, and he said, "No. It's me - Michael Dodd."

Clayton's eyes widened as he tried to make out Michael. He replied in a weak voice, "Yes. It's you - Michael."

"It's a hell of a place to have a school reunion," Michael said in a pained voice.

"It's good to see you again."

"What happened to you?"

"My platoon was on a search and destroy mission," Clayton related, "and one of my men stepped on a mine. The mine blast got me in the chest."

"You'll be okay," Michael encouraged.

"I heard that you were an officer. "

"Yes. I'm a second lieutenant. "

"My father, Dr. Shaw, told me that you were an officer."

Michael recalled the days when he attended high school. He was a sophomore and Clayton was a senior. He said, "Remember the good old days at Coulee Dam High school."

"Yeah. I remember."

"I remember when you were a football star," Michael said, "I worshiped you."

"I was a good quarterback," Clayton said weakly, "I should have made it in college."

"But you still gave the Grand Coulee Dam a thrill."

"Michael. I want to tell you something."

"What is it?"

"Suzanne Redwood has the wrong idea about me."

"Yeah. I heard about your date with Suzanne. "

"But it was quite a date," Clayton said, "Suzanne is good kid."

"I'm the wrong person to tell that to," Michael replied.

"Michael. I'm having problems seeing you."

"I'll move closer."

"I want to tell you something about Suzanne," Clayton said weakly, "but I want to whisper it to you."

Michael lowered his ear to Clayton's head, and Clayton whispered into his ear. It was the last thing that Clayton said on earth. When Clayton finished, he went into convulsions. Michael jumped to his feet, and he cried, "Doctor. Something is wrong with Lieutenant Shaw."

A doctor ran over to Clayton's body, and he tried to revive him. But it was no use. Clayton had died of his wounds. The doctor closed Clayton's eyes and covered his lifeless body.

Distraught and tears in his eyes, Michael staggered over to Sergeant Baker, who was waiting patiently.

"Lieutenant. Was he a friend?" the sergeant asked.

"An old high school classmate."

"That's too bad."

"Yeah. It's a horrible war."

"Well. I'm not here in Vietnam, because I want to be," the sergeant replied sardonically.

"I wonder why I ever became a second lieutenant," Michael said bitterly.

"You have a right to be bitter," the sergeant said, "You're shortly going to face a court-martial."

"That the least of my worries," Michael replied.

"Well. I got to take you to Major Chase."

"Lead the way."

Sergeant Baker and Michael walked slowly to the vast underground bunker two hundred yards away. When they reached the bunker, a guard was standing at the entrance. He was a tall African American from Detroit, Michigan. The sergeant said, "I have a prisoner for Major Chase."

Picking up a telephone, the guard spoke into it. After he finished speaking, he said, "You can enter. Major Chase is waiting for you."

"How do I find the major?"

"Walk to the end of the hallway and make a right turn."

Entering the bunker, the sergeant and Michael headed down the hallway. After making a right turn, they found the major's office. The door was opened, and they walked in. Major Chase was sitting at an old gray metal desk. He was a medium-built man with reddish-brown hair and gray eyes. He was from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and a graduate of West Point.

"Major Chase. I have your prisoner," Sergeant Baker announced.

Major Chase looked up from his desk and eyed Michael. He said, "Are you Lieutenant Dodd?"

"Yes."

"Lieutenant, You are a lucky man," the major said,

"What do you mean?" Michael asked.

"I just got word that Captain Daniels got killed."

"How was he killed?"

"A Vietcong mortar barrage," the major said.

"I'll not be subject to a court-martial?" Michael asked, greatly relieved.

"No. Not with the captain dead," the major explained, "You can return to your men."

"Why was I charged?"

"I don't know why you were charged," the major said, "Maybe Captain Daniels did not like Native Americans."

The sergeant and Michael then left the major's office, and left the bunker to find a helicopter to return to Company K.

## Chapter 10

Flying in from the north, the 727 passenger plane made a gentle approach to the Seattle-Tacoma Airport. Michael Dodd glanced down at the rapidly changing downtown area of Seattle with its many multi-story buildings. As the plane neared the airport, he scanned the industrial area of Seattle with its many railroad tracks, warehouses, and assembly buildings. It was an unusually warm March day in 1969. The normally overcast sky had few clouds, and the afternoon temperature had reached a mild sixty-five degrees.

For Michael, the jet plane ride was the end of a convoluted journey that took him to Vietnam and back. His life was now permanently entwined with the motley lives of innocent young men - some whom were now dead. With the internecine war behind him, he could start a new life, forgetting the anxieties and duties of war. The two and half years of military service had aged him, and he had lost his youthful naivete that he once cherished. But he was determined to make renew his civilian life and fulfil his myriad expectations.

Gliding into the airport, the plane made a smooth landing on the runway and slowly taxied into the airport terminal. Michael waited quietly in his seat for the door of the airplane to open. He observed the stiff-dressed passengers in front of him climbing to their feet and pulling their briefcases and luggage from the overhead compartments and from under their seats. Getting to his feet, he got his gray blazer from an overhead compartment, and he stepped into the aisle way. When the passengers in front moved forward, he followed them to the main door of the airplane. Exiting the plane, he rambled up the enclosed ramp to the passenger arrival area.

When Michael walked through a final door, he immediately saw Vivien Renwick anxiously waiting for his arrival. Suzanne Redwood and her husband, Larry Bucknell, were standing by her.

Overjoyed at the sight of pretty sweetheart, Michael hurried to where Vivien was standing, and before she could react, he took her into his firm arms. They kissed and held each other tightly. Vivien cried out emotionally, "Never leave me again."

"I promise," Michael replied in a wavering voice.

Breaking apart from a tearful Vivien, Michael looked carefully

at Suzanne. Her abdomen was bulging outward, and she was wearing maternity clothes. She was obviously pregnant. He said, "Larry and Suzanne. It's good to see you again."

"It's great to meet a war hero," Larry humored.

"No. I didn't win any medals," Michael said, "and I almost got court-marshaled."

"Yeah. But you were combat lieutenant in Vietnam," Larry commented.

"Yes. I got shot at, injured and almost killed," Michael responded.

"Let's quit talking about Vietnam and the war," Vivien cried out, "We're here to welcome Michael home." She wanted to quickly forget that Michael had served in Vietnam. She was anti-war activist, and she planned to continue her anti-war activities. When Michael was in Vietnam, she had experienced many sleepless nights worrying about his fate.

"Vietnam is a subject I rather forget too," Michael agreed.

"Michael. How are you?" Suzanne asked. For the first time in her life, she actually admired Michael. Maybe it was because he was more mature or because he had served so well in Vietnam as a combat officer. He glowed with confidence and masculinity.

"Well. I survived, except for a few minor wounds," Michael replied, "I feel good."

"I can see the small scars on your face," Suzanne said.

"The scars will fade in time," Larry offered. His inborn jealousy towards Michael resurfaced. He sensed that Suzanne was attracted to the handsome war soldier, and he convinced that their animosity was a ruse. He suspected that they had been lovers in their youth.

"Suzanne. You are pregnant," Michael observed.

"Yes. I'm going to have Larry's baby in two months," Suzanne said ecstatically.

"That's great," Michael replied.

"We're both very happy about becoming parents," Larry said proudly.

"Vivien. When are you and Michael getting married?" Suzanne asked.

"Not for awhile," Vivien answered. She didn't want to discuss the possibility of marrying Michael in public.

"We want to wait," Michael said,

"Let's head to the baggage area," Larry suggested.

With Larry leading the way, they walked down a long corridor to the main airport terminal, and then they rode an escalator down to the baggage area. Retrieving the Michael's baggage, Larry helped Michael carry his baggage to Larry's car. Larry had bought a brand new lavish

sedan, of which Suzanne was tremendously proud. After putting the baggage in the trunk, Larry and Suzanne climbed in front seats, and Michael and Vivien in back. Larry maneuvered the car through the airport, and then he steered the car onto the freeway.

"Larry. I heard that you finished graduate school," Michael said.

"Yeah. Last Summer," Larry replied, "I have a MBA."

"Congratulations!," Michael said.

"Larry works for his father's real estate development company," Suzanne explained, "He makes a good income."

"Already a junior partner," Michael humored.

"I do okay," Larry replied, "I made Suzanne quit working. She likes being a housewife, and she's soon to be mother."

"Where do you live?" Michael asked Larry.

"We live in an apartment in Bellevue," Larry divulged, "but we're saving money to purchase a home. "

"It's going to be a beautiful home," Suzanne emphasized.

Larry was curious what Michael planned to do with his life. He asked, "Michael. What are you going to do now?"

"Well. I've been accepted into law school," Michael answered.

"Law school!" Larry exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Ah. You plan to become a lawyer."

"Law school is going to be tough," Michael said.

"Which law school?" Larry asked.

"The University of Washington," Michael answered.

"I'm going to help Michael get through law school," Vivien said.

"Are you two going to live together?" Larry asked in shocked tone of voice."

"Yes, we plan to," Vivien said defiantly.

"Without the benefit of marriage!" Larry cried out. He was always moralistic and prudish, and he did not approve of couples living together.

"Yes, yes," Vivien said forcefully.

"It's Vivien's idea," Michael disclosed.

"Blame the woman!" Vivien exclaimed.

"Well. It's your idea."

"I just don't believe in marriage right now," Vivien related.

"It's strange words coming from a woman," Larry commented.

"Larry!" Suzanne cautioned.

But Larry Bucknell wanted to speak his mind, as he was expecting Michael to move in with Vivien after he returned from Vietnam. He asked, "Vivien. Do your parents know?"

"Of course!"

"What do they say?"

"Not a word. They are quite modern persons."

"That's hard to believe," Larry replied.

"What can they say?" Vivien countered.

"They might object to you living in sin," Larry said.

"I told my parents that Michael and I are Native American married."

"But you're not a Native American," Larry pointed out.

"Michael is a Native American."

"I just think that couples living together without being married is wrong," Larry finally said.

"We'll get marry when I graduate from law school," Michael commented.

"Michael. It takes two to get married," Vivien said, smiling.

"I'll just have to get you pregnant," Michael said to Vivien in a teasing tone.

"I do have birth control pills," Vivien answered, nodding her head.

Larry drove his car passed the downtown area of Seattle and headed to the "U" District, next to the University of Washington. Vivien still lived in the same apartment building.

Michael thought of Clayton Shaw. He debated whether he should tell Suzanne about his deathbed meeting with Clayton in Vietnam. Since Clayton was a mutual schoolmate, he decided it was okay. Out of respect for Larry's feelings, he decided not to mention that Clayton had spoke of Suzanne. He said, "Suzanne. I talked to Clayton Shaw just before he died. He was mortally wounded at the time."

"What?" Suzanne's emotions grew cold. She pondered whether Michael knew something about the date rape.

"Who's Clayton Shaw?" Larry asked.

"Clayton was a schoolmate of Michael and I," Suzanne explained, "He was killed in Vietnam."

"Oh, that's too bad."

"What did Clayton say?" Suzanne asked Michael. She was distressed that Clayton might have made a deathbed confession to Michael about his date rape of her.

Michael answered, "Clayton just spoke of the good times when we attended Coulee Dam High School."

"How did Clayton die?" Larry inquired.

"He stepped on a land mine in Vietnam," Suzanne said eagerly,

"No. He didn't step on a land mine," Michael corrected.

"I understood that Clayton did."

"One of his men stepped on a mine, Michael explained, "and the resulting mine explosion got him in the chest."

"Okay. I stand corrected," Suzanne conceded.

"Well. I was there," Michael said.

Suzanne eyed Michael. She was uncertain whether he knew

anything about the rape. She resented Michael playing games with her. She said, "I was really upset when my mother told me Clayton Shaw was killed in Vietnam."

"Clayton was a man that I admired," Michael said.

Blood drained from Suzanne's face, but she didn't say a word. She simply kept looking ahead.

After driving through the "U" District, Larry parked his car in front of Vivien's apartment building. Michael retrieved his luggage from the trunk. Vivien and Michael said their goodbyes, and they walked into the apartment building. Vivien had rented a one-bedroom apartment, as the rent was cheaper. Riding the elevator to the second floor, they walked down the corridor to apartment 225.

"Well. We're here," Vivien announced. Unlocking the door, she entered the apartment, and Michael followed her into the modest apartment.

Dropping his luggage to the carpeted floor, Michael took Vivien into his arms, and she kissed her hard. He said, "Vivien. I love you so much."

"I love you too," she responded.

"I'm so glad to be home."

Breaking his embrace, Vivien said seductively, "Follow me into the bedroom."

"Sure."

Vivien hurried into the bedroom, and they quickly undressed.

"It had been a long time," Vivien whispered.

"We have a lot of catching up to do," he said. They made love.

When they finished, she announced, "Someday we will have children," she confirmed.

"When we can afford them," Michael added.

"When I want to have kids," Vivien said, "we'll have kids."

"Well. Like children."

"So do I," she said, "But I'm not ready yet."

"Let me know when you are ready," he said.

Vivien rolled off the bed and stood on her feet. She said, "I need to wash up." Carrying her clothes, she headed into the bathroom.

Michael donned his clothes, and he walked into the kitchen where he washed his hands and face. Sitting down at the dining room table, he scrutinized the modest apartment. It was simply furnished, as Vivien had made little money working for an anti-war newspaper. She had acquired some Native American art objects, as she had become a collector of Native American art. The art sculptures and paintings were prominently displayed in her apartment.

After washing up, Vivien walked into the dining area. She said,



"This apartment will be home for the next few years."

"It's a fine apartment."

"Modest but cheap," she said.

"We can't afford too much."

"At least we have each other."

Michael thought of the Vivien's new job. He asked, "How do you like your new job?"

"I like being the editor of Seattle Native American Voice," she responded.

"It must pay more than your job with the anti-war newspaper." Michael speculated.

"Yeah. It pays a little more," Vivien said, "We won't get rich."

"I never expected to be rich."

"What are you going to do for a temporary job?"

"I haven't given it much thought," he said.

"You must have some ideas."

"Well, my father, Stanley, has a few contractor friends living in Seattle," Michael explained.

"Your father is going to help you?"

"Yes. Once I get to Coulee Dam I'll talk to him about a Summer job."

Vivien thought of their trip to the Colville Indian Reservation. She had only visited the reservation twice with Michael. She asked, "When are we leaving for the reservation?"

"As soon as we get up tomorrow morning," he answered.

"It should a long drive."

"I'll be glad again to see the Colville Indian Reservation," Michael said.

Several months later in the summer of 1969, Larry Bucknell and his wife, Suzanne Redwood, walked up to the front door of the unpretentious house of Suzanne's parents, Tom and Pauline Redwood. A month earlier, she had given birth to a pretty baby girl, whom she had named Crystal. She carried the baby in her arms.

Because of her pregnancy, Suzanne had gained a few pounds. But she was quickly losing the excess pounds and regaining her shapely figure.

Larry Bucknell opened the door to the house, and Suzanne walked in. She immediately saw her mother, Pauline, sitting on a couch, and she was reading a mystery novel. Looking up, Pauline saw that it was Suzanne, Larry and their precious new baby. She cried out emotionally to them, "Suzanne and Larry! You made."

"Yeah. We're here," Suzanne replied with a deep smile.

Pauline climbed to her feet and hurried to Suzanne and the baby. She exclaimed, "Let me see the baby," She took the baby into her arms.

"Sure mother."

"Crystal is such a lovely baby," Pauline offered.

A lively baby, Crystal had dark hair and eyes and a tan- like complexion. Pauline cradled the baby and made playful sounds to baby Crystal. The baby smiled brightly at Pauline and her antics.

"Crystal is so beautiful," Larry added. But he was silently disappointed with the outer features of Crystal, though he knew that Suzanne was mostly Native American. Crystal's Native American blood had determined the color of her skin, hair, and eyes. He was hoping that Crystal would be more Caucasian-looking. Of course, the baby had a lighter skin than Suzanne, and she had more Caucasian facial features.

Tom Redwood entered the living room. His black hair was turning gray. He had been working on the lawn mower in the backyard. When heard a car drive up, he decided to find out whom it was. Seeing Suzanne and Larry, he exclaimed, "Kids. It's great to see you again."

"Dad. I'm glad to be home," Suzanne said cheerfully.

"And you brought the baby," Tom said proudly.

"Of course! We wouldn't leave her in Seattle," Suzanne stated.

Moving to where Pauline was holding the baby, Tom clasped her little hand and shook it. He said happily, "Crystal is going to be a beautiful lady when she grows up."

"Crystal has a beautiful mother," Larry stated.

"And a handsome father," Suzanne replied.

"Let's sit down," Tom directed.

Pauline sat down on a love seat with the baby, and Tom sat down on his old, soft easy chair. Suzanne and Larry sat down on the weathered but clean couch.

"Larry. How's your job going with your father?" Tom inquired. He knew little about Suzanne's in-laws, Chet and Agnes Bucknell, and he had only met them once when Crystal was born in Seattle. Chet and Agnes were obviously high-class White people, and he felt uncomfortable with them. He didn't like Chet's patronizing attitude and his constant need to compete. Agnes was okay, but she was subservient to and supportive of Chet

Torn was also skeptical about Suzanne's marriage to Larry, who was constantly threatened by any man showing attention to Suzanne. Such a weakness in a man frightened him. He wished that Suzanne wasn't a social climber. He decided that she could have done better

in marrying a different man, who was more secure and less dominant by his father.

Of course, Tom never revealed his true feelings to his loving daughter. Being a religious man, he prayed that Suzanne's marriage would be happy and successful.

"My job is great," Larry exclaimed, "My father is really teaching me the real estate development business."

"Chet is making tons of money," Suzanne said in exhilaration.

"Apparently, his bankruptcy didn't hindered him any," Tom pointed out.

Suzanne was irate at her father for bringing up the bankruptcy. Larry was always defensive about his father's bankruptcy. Chet was just now beginning to make his new venture successful. She pointed out, "Chet is a brilliant entrepreneur."

"My father is very talented at real estate development," Larry defended testily, "His bankruptcy had nothing to do with his business." Larry resented defending his father's business affairs, especially to a man who was a minor administrator with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. But he knew when he married Suzanne, that her humble origins might cause problems.

"I meant no offense to your father," Tom apologized, "He must be a gifted and intelligent man."

"I wasn't offended," Larry said, "I'm still a little sensitive about my father's bankruptcy. "

"Chet appears to be doing quite well," Tom said.

"Yeah. Chet is involved in a number of real estate developments," Suzanne stated.

"Men like my father are hard to find," Larry said, "This society could not exist without them."

"Well. Chet is a wheeler-dealer," Tom said unintentionally.

"It's obvious you have very little knowledge of business practices," Larry exclaimed.

"I wasn't using the term - wheeler-dealer- in a negative sense," Tom replied.

"Well. My family is sensitive about the term - wheeler-dealer," Larry explained.

"I apologize," Tom said.

Hearing the discord, Pauline decided to change the subject from business dealings of Chet Bucknell. She said, "Suzanne. What are Vivien and Michael doing?"

Suzanne was pleased that her mother asked that question. She disclosed mercilessly, "Oh. Vivien and Michael are living together in Seattle."

"You mean that they are living in sin," Pauline said in an astonished voice. Both she and Tom were devoted members of a local charismatic protestant church, and they were strict Christians.

"Yes. They are not married."

"That's disturbing to hear," Pauline said, "I thought that Vivien was a better woman than that."

"It's not Vivien," Suzanne said gleefully, "It's Michael who corrupting Vivien."

"Michael!" Pauline exclaimed, "But he comes from such a good family."

Larry was greatly relieved that Suzanne had badmouthed Michael. It meant that Michael and Suzanne were not clandestine lovers. Supporting his wife, he said, "Yeah. Michael really dominates Vivien."

"It's strange," Pauline said, "It doesn't sound Michael."

"Mother. People do change," Suzanne retorted, "Michael is hardly a youngster anymore."

"But he was a lieutenant in Vietnam," Pauline asserted, "He's gentleman."

"But he was almost court-maritaled for insubordination," Suzanne countered.

"Suzanne. How you know that?"

"Because Michael told us that he was almost court-maritaled."

"Yeah. Suzanne is right," Larry agreed, "Vietnam can change a person."

"At least their Native American married," Tom finally said.

"Yes. Michael is a Native American, " Suzanne conceded, smiling, "But Vivien is not a Native American."

"Well. There's nothing we can do about it," Pauline commented.

"You're always making excuses for Michael," Suzanne protested.

"But he grew up in Coulee Dam, Washington," Pauline said.

"It makes no difference."

Desiring to change the disagreeable subject, Tom asked , "What is Michael going to do next?"

Suzanne explained that Michael planned to go to law school in the Fall. His father, Stanley, had gotten Michael a job with a building contractor in Seattle.

Larry was displeased about the unrestrained enthusiasm that Pauline and Tom had shown for Michael. It was apparent to Larry that all along they had wanted Suzanne to marry Michael and not him. He was not a Native American, and they clearly wanted their beautiful daughter to marry a fellow tribesmen.

Glancing at her wrist watch, Suzanne said, "Larry and I have to

be going. We're suppose to visit Allen and Trixie Tupper this afternoon."

"Which motel are you staying at?" Pauline asked. She had wanted Suzanne and Larry to stay with them during their visit, but Larry had vehemently protested. He wanted more privacy and to stay in more comfortable surroundings.

"At the River Cliff Motel," Suzanne responded.

"It's an excellent motel," Larry said.

"You're welcome to have dinner with us tonight," Pauline said.

"Sure, mother. We'll be here for dinner tonight."

"You can count on it," Larry replied. In spite of his alienation, he still wanted to please Suzanne's parents.

Getting to her feet, Suzanne walked over to her mother, and she picked up her baby. She said cheerfully, "Trixie is really excited about seeing Crystal for the first time."

"That's all Trixie has been talking about," Pauline confirmed.

"We'll see you two at five o'clock," Suzanne announced.

"We'll be waiting," Tom replied.

With the baby in her arms, Suzanne strolled to the door. Larry opened the door, and they left the house. Climbing into Larry's car, they pulled out of the driveway and drove to Trixie's house, down near the Columbia River.

"Let's go back to the motel first," Suzanne requested, "I need to change the baby and get some diapers."

"Good idea," Larry replied, "I need to find out whether there are any messages for me."

"Take a left at the next intersection."

Following instructions, he made a left turn onto a road, which led to the bridge over the Columbia River and to East Coulee Dam and the motel.

"I don't know about your parents," he said in an exasperated voice.

Suzanne thought of her parents and Larry. She noted that Larry was upset at them. He was not use of dealing with Native Americans and their expectations. Her parents were especially demanding about Native American expectations.

She asked, "What do you mean?"

"I think that your parents resent me."

"My parents don't resent you," Suzanne said, "They're just not use to you."

"Because I'm a White man."

"It has nothing to do with your race."

"Because my family is well-to-do," he continued.

"Maybe. My parents aren't to use dealing with people who have

class and money," Suzanne responded. She would be the first one to admit that her parents were simple Native American folk, who were god-fearing Christians.

"And I was affronted by your father's criticism of my father's bankruptcy," Larry cried out.

"My father wasn't being critical."

"But Tom doesn't have the right to mention the bankruptcy."

Suzanne decided that it was useless to argue further with Larry, who at times could be unreasonable and demanding. She said, "Larry. I'll talk to my family about not mentioning your father's bankruptcy."

"And the business of my father!" he added.

"Okay."

"Suzanne. I married you in spite of your family," he said emotionally.

"I know you did," she agreed reluctantly, hoping to avoid further conflict.

"I don't know what I would do if I lost you," Larry sighed, "I do love you."

"Larry. I'm not going to let my family come between us," Suzanne stated flatly.

"I knew that you'd understand my feelings." After crossing the bridge, Larry maneuvered his car through a maze of streets, and they finally entered the parking lot of a motel. After parking the car, they walked into the motel office.

Approaching the motel counter, Suzanne asked, "There are any messages for Room 101."

A young female attendant was behind the counter. Wearing a brown dress, she had dull blonde hair and light brown eyes, and she probably was the daughter of the owner. She was a rather short and plain looking girl. The attendant checked the key box for Room 101, and she pulled out several messages. Returning to the counter, she said cheerfully, "I have three messages for Room 101."

Reaching for the messages, Suzanne saw that there were two messages for Larry and one message for her. She handed Larry the two messages for him. Glancing at her message, she discovered that Trixie Spearman Tupper had telephoned and left a message. She said to Larry, "Trixie wants me to come alone to her house. Something has happened to her."

"Did her husband beat her up?" Larry speculated. Relieved, he didn't want to visit Allen and Trixie, and he was getting paranoid about meeting any more Native Americans. He was beginning to think that they had it in for him.

"The message doesn't say what's wrong," Suzanne replied.

"Well. My father, Chet, has left two urgent messages for me," he explained, "I need to immediately telephone him."

They walked to their motel room and entered. Suzanne quickly changed Crystal's diaper and put more diapers in a leather bag. Stepping towards the door, she said, "I'm taking Crystal with me."

"Fine. I'll see you in a couple of hours," Larry replied. Sitting on a wooden stair, he grasped the telephone receiver, and he dialed his father's telephone number.

After placing Crystal in the car, Suzanne drove the car through the town of Coulee Dam and then down a winding grade to the Columbia River. Allen and Trixie Tupper's house was located on a river road near the turbulent river.

Suzanne spotted Trixie's humble house on the left side of the road. Pulling into the dirt driveway, she exited the car. With her baby in her hands, she plodded up to the front door of Trixie's house. Knocking on the door, she waited patiently for someone to answer the door.

Inside the house, Trixie drew back a curtain and looked out of the living room window. She feared that her husband, Allen, might have returned home. She was relieved to see Suzanne and her baby at the front door.

Hurrying to the front door, Trixie opened door, and she said excitedly, "Suzanne. Come here."

"Sure."

"You brought your baby - Crystal." Trixie seized the baby from Suzanne's arms and carried her into the house.

Looking at Trixie's face, Suzanne was surprised that Trixie was wearing dark glasses in the house. She noticed that Trixie had a large bruise on her jaw and scratches on her face. She suspected that her husband, Allen Tupper, had beat her up. She cried out, "Trixie! What happened to you?"

"Suzanne. It's not what you think," Trixie blurted out.

"Did Allen beat you up?"

"Yes. But I deserved it," she said.

"You got to be joking," Suzanne exclaimed, "No man has a right to beat up a woman."

"I know," Vivien cried out, "But Allen is so depressed and frustrated because of his job."

"What does his job have to do with beating you up?"

"He just gets so angry about being a logger," Trixie explained, "He hates working outdoors. " She explained that the work of a logger was dangerous and physical demanding. Allen had to work

outdoors in the oppressive hot weather of Summer and freezing cold weather of Winter. He longed for a pleasant office job.

"Why doesn't Allen just quit being a logger?" Suzanne asked.

"He has quit several times, but he can't find other work," Trixie divulged, "Eventually he has to return to working as a logger." She related that Allen wants to be a public defender in the tribal court system. But the Business Council of the Tribe was unwilling to create a public defender system. They believed that Allen was a Native American militant, and they want nothing to do with him.

"Well. Allen shouldn't criticize the tribal council so much," Suzanne urged, "And he is a militant."

"Suzanne. I know my husband."

"He's taking his frustrations out on you!"

"I suppose so," Trixie replied.

"Why did you ever marry Allen Tupper?"

"Because I love him."

"Trixie. You're a handsome woman," Suzanne said, "You could have married the man of your choice."

"A White man like you," Trixie exclaimed.

"Trixie. No one is beating me up," Suzanne countered.

"You'll never understand how I feel about my Native Americanness," Trixie said, "I want to preserve the race."

"Well. Michael Dodd felt the same way," Suzanne snickered, "but he's now living with a White woman."

"You and Michael are very much alike," Trixie analyzed aloud, "You're both college educated and high class Native Americans."

"I'm nothing like Michael Dodd."

"Yes. You are."

"You resent me for having a White man's baby," Suzanne charged.

"No. I don't resent you - Suzanne," Trixie said, "because that's what you always wanted."

"Trixie. My goal was to marry a classy young man with money," Suzanne said.

"And that's what you did."

Feeling redeemed, Suzanne looked at Trixie's bruised and scratched face. She asked, "What exactly happened between you and Allen?"

Trixie explained that last night Allen came home from the A & B Tavern drunk and abusive. He had gotten into a fist fight outside the tavern with a local logger. Though he won the fight, he had been knocked to the pavement twice. After returning home, he started to badmouth the policies of the tribal council, because she was a secretary for the tribal council. She explained to Allen that she had



nothing to do with the policies of the tribal council. But he refused to quit, and he began to viciously denounce her uncle who was a member of the tribal council

Trixie could take no more, and they got into a violent argument about the tribal council. She told Allen that if he wanted to get a different job, he was going to have quit criticizing the tribal council. He then exploded into a violent rage, and he threatened to shoot the tribal councilmen. She then told Allen to quit talking nonsense. That's when he started to hit her in the face with his fists. After he had struck her a couple of times in the face, she grabbed a whiskey bottle and hit him on the head, knocking him to the floor.

Staggering to his feet, Allen became enraged and charged her. He again hit her in the body and face with punches. After he had knocked her down once, she grabbed an Indian head bust and again struck him on the head. The impact knocked him out cold. Then she called the tribal police who hauled Allen to the hospital. After staying overnight at the hospital, the tribal police transported Allen to the tribal jail where he remained. After taking her four young children over to her mother's place, she returned home to sleep.

Suzanne looked hard at Trixie, trying to determine whether she was capable of knocking out Allen. Trixie did have long strong arms. Though Allen was a tough logger, he had short muscular arms. If Trixie was quick enough, Allen would be at a disadvantage in a fight. She finally said, "Well.. He deserved to be knocked out."

"I really feel guilty about the whole thing," Trixie moaned.

"Are you going to divorce him?"

"Of course, not. Allen is the father of my four children," Trixie replied, "and I still love him."

"If my husband ever hit me," Suzanne said defiantly, "that's last thing he would do on earth."

"I'm a little more forgiving."

Suzanne had never liked Allen Tupper, as he was a good friend of Michael Dodd. She recalled vividly Allen and Michael mocking her at school. She couldn't wait to tell Vivien Renwick about Michael's one-time best friend.

"I knew that Allen was a potential wife beater," she said smugly, "Do you know that Allen's father beat his mother?"

"Yes. I heard the gossip all over the Coville Reservation," Trixie admitted.

"What is the tribal membership going to say about you?"

"I don't know, and I don't care," Trixie answered, "But this is the

first time, Allen has ever dared to hit me."

"Allen won't change."

"Allen must be really humiliated about being knocked out by a woman," Trixie said.

"But he beat you up,"

"He did hit me, but Allen is different from his father."

"How?" Suzanne inquired.

"Allen cares about me and the children."

"But he still beat you up."

"Allen won't try it again," Trixie predicted.

"Once a wife beater, always a wife beater," Suzanne commented.

"Allen is different."

"You'll soon find out."

"That's right," Trixie said.

"How's your job coming?" Suzanne asked.

Trixie explained that she was still a secretary for the tribal council of the Tribe. But she was growing dissatisfied with the routine work. She was thinking of going to college and bettering herself. She was now taking a few college courses at the local community college, but she would eventually have to leave the area and attend a four-year college. She explained that Allen was against her going to college, because didn't want her to change. But she had protested, and Allen had given in to her demands.

Suzanne was not surprised that Trixie wanted to go to college. Trixie had the innate intelligence to go to college, but she had always underrated herself. She knew that if Trixie applied herself to her schooling, she would have little trouble making it through college. Since their high school days, she had encouraged Trixie to better herself.

Trixie thought of Michael Dodd and Vivien Renwick. They had visited town of Coulee Dam a couple of months ago. At that time, Michael just returned from Vietnam, and he was looking for work. She asked Suzanne, "How's Vivien and Michael doing?"

"They're doing okay," Suzanne replied, "As I said before, they're living together in Seattle."

"It's hard to believe that Michael would live with a White woman," Trixie commented.

"Michael has changed."

"At least they're Native American married."

"What do you mean by Native American married?" Suzanne had always resented the use of the term.

"Native Americans don't celebrate marriages like White people," Trixie announced.

"They just starting living together."

"Vivien is a White woman," Suzanne pointed out.

"But Michael is a Native American. "

"Does that make Vivien a Native American?"

"I don't know," Trixie said, "I thought that the wife takes the status of the husband."

"Hardly," Suzanne protested, "It still doesn't make it right."

"Common law marriages are pretty common among Indians," Trixie announced.

"Whatever you call it. It is still a sin."

"I don't have anything against common law marriages," Trixie revealed, "There's nothing sacred about a marriage ceremony."

"Trixie. You're worst than Vivien and Michael."

"Well. I happen to like Vivien and Michael."

"Vivien Renwick is still my friend too," Suzanne retorted.

Trixie thought of Michael's future plans. He didn't mention it when he was on the reservation two months ago. She asked, "What is Michael planning to do with his life?"

"He's going to law school in the Fall."

"So Michael moving up in the world."

"How's that?"

"Well. He has a White woman, and he will soon be a professional," Trixie joked, laughing.

"I never really thought of Vivien as a White woman," Suzanne said, "She has always been wonderful to me."

"Yeah. It's hard to think of her as one."

"Vivien is a very unusual White woman," Suzanne explained. Trixie was one of few people who get her to talk about Native American - White relations. Trixie 's reservation talk was contagious, as Suzanne rarely ever call a Caucasian woman a White woman.

"I understand Vivien is a liberal activist." Trixie continued.

"Yeah. Vivien committed to all kind of liberal causes," Suzanne disclosed, "She's always marching and protesting against something."

"Which movements is she involved in?"

"The anti-war movement, civil rights movement, free speech movement, Native American rights movement, etc.," Suzanne mentioned.

"Vivien must really sympathize with poor and oppressed people," Trixie said.

"I suppose that why Vivien runs around with Michael."

"Besides belonging to an oppressed minority group, Michael is also a handsome and intelligent man," Trixie said.

"Vivien still is a liberal White woman."

"Michael is attractive to me," Trixie commented, smiling.

"Trixie. Don't get me wrong," Suzanne said, "I'm very happy for Vivien and Michael They deserve one another."

They talked about Suzanne's new baby, Crystal. Trixie thought that Crystal was a beautiful baby. She mentioned that her four children were all boys. Suzanne indicated that Larry and her planned to have one more child. Trixie wouldn't make any promises about future children, but she thought that four children was enough.

Looking at Crystal, Trixie pointed out, "Crystal has many Native American features."

"Well. I'm mostly Native American," Suzanne replied.

"Crystal has dark hair and eyes," Trixie described, " and an olive complexion."

"She's nearly half Native American."

"I thought that Larry's eyes and hair would show up in Crystal more," Trixie stated.

"Maybe not his eyes and hair, but Crystal has his chin and nose," Suzanne pointed out, "She's handsome like her father."

"She looks more like her beautiful mother."

"Well. Crystal is a pretty baby girl."

Trixie thought about the marriage of Suzanne and Larry Bucknell. They appeared to be doing okay. But they were racially mixed couple, and Larry came from a well-to-do family. Their marriage had to be under some stress. She wanted to ask Suzanne about her marriage. Trixie knew that she risked alienating Suzanne. She asked anyway, "How is your marriage going with Larry?"

Suzanne was displeased with Trixie's prying question. She replied, "Everything is fine."

"That's is good to hear."

"Larry is a wonderful husband."

"But Larry and you are a racially mixed couple," Trixie asserted.

"I never viewed Larry and I as being a racially mixed couple," Suzanne stated, "We're happily married."

"And his wellborn parents have no problems with you?"

"Are there suppose to be problems?" Suzanne countered.

"Well. You did elope with their precious son," Trixie replied.

"So we eloped."

"It was a little sneaky."

"Chet and Agnes Bucknell eventually got over it," Suzanne said.

"I was just wondering."

"There's nothing illicit about our marriage," Suzanne said, "If that's what you're saying."

"Suzanne. I wasn't saying that," Trixie said, "You know that well-to-do parents can be demanding on their children and have ways of manipulating them."

"I didn't trick Larry into marrying me," Suzanne said.

"I wasn't saying that," Trixie responded.

"It was Larry's idea to elope to Reno. "

"And his parents?"

"Larry's parents never objected to our marriage."

"Because they didn't have a chance," Trixie replied.

"We did elope."

"I thought so."

"Chet and Agnes Bucknell treat me as if I was their natural daughter," Suzanne retorted.

"And they're not unhappy about Crystal having dark hair and eyes and an olive complexion?" Trixie asked.

"No. Why should they?" Suzanne asked in a shocked voice, "They really love Crystal."

"Suzanne. I'm just concerned about your welfare."

"I'm very glad to put to rest any doubts that you had about my marriage to Larry," Suzanne said heatedly.

"I know that you're mad at me."

"You're simply getting even with me," Suzanne commented, "for me criticizing Allen for beating you up."

"Suzanne! Calm down."

"Trixie. I'm not on trial."

"I apologize."

"Don't ever bring up this subject again," Suzanne cried out.

"I won't." Trixie said, "I'm sorry I asked."

Trixie and Suzanne continued their visit until Suzanne had to leave to return to her husband at the motel.

## Chapter 11

Pushing a baby stroller before her, Suzanne Redwood Bucknell entered the ground floor of a multi-story building in the downtown area of Bellevue, Washington. She marveled at the rapid growth of Bellevue from a suburb of Seattle to a metropolis in its own right. New buildings were under construction through the city. The city was gaining the reputation as being fastest growing city in the State of Washington. It had become the commercial hub of the east side of Lake Washington.

Dressed in a blue jumpsuit, her daughter, Crystal, was riding in a two seat stroller. In the other seat was Suzanne's new baby daughter, Stephanie, who was six months old and attired in a red outfit.

The summer day of July, 1972 was perfect for a walk outdoors. The sky was cloudless; the temperature was warm; the humidity was low; and the sun shone brightly overhead. The lofty Cascade Mountains could easily be seen from the city.

Pushing the stroller into an elevator, she rode it up to the fourth floor of the building. Leaving the elevator, she pushed the stroller to the entrance of an office of a real estate development company. A large sign near the door read: Chet Bucknell & Son - Real Estate Developers and Investors.

A young female receptionist with red hair saw Suzanne coming. Jumping up from her desk, she quickly opened the glass door to the office. Recognizing Suzanne, she said politely, "Mr. Larry Bucknell is his office with his father. Let me help you with the stroller."

"Thank you," Suzanne said. The receptionist helped Suzanne to push the stroller to Larry's office.

Larry's office was located down a long corridor at the corner of the tall office building. His spacious office overlooked the downtown area, and it had a terrific view of the Cascade Mountains. When she reached his office, she looked in and saw Larry sitting behind a large oak desk. Larry's father, Chet Bucknell, was sitting on a large sofa, which was situated in front of the desk. They were busily talking about a construction project, which was about to begin in the downtown area.

Pushing the stroller into the office, Suzanne said cheerfully, "Honey. I'm here."

Both Larry and Chet climbed to their feet. Larry said, "Ah,

Suzanne. You made it."

"Hello Suzanne," Chet said.

Looking at Chet, Suzanne responded, "How are you?"

"Great."

"Why is Suzanne and the children here?" Chet asked. He wasn't expecting any visitors, and Larry and he had important business to complete.

"I promised Suzanne a tour of our new office." Larry said defensively. He was still intimidated by the presence of his influential and omnipotent father.

"I couldn't find a baby sitter for Crystal and Stephanie," she explained. She rarely visited Larry at his office, but she had made an exception today. She sensed the resentment that Chet had towards her for marrying his son without his permission. She silently wished that Larry would quit his job with father and start his own business. But she realized that Larry was highly dependent on his father, and he would never quit his job.

Pointing to a soft leather chair, Larry said to Suzanne, "Sit down on the chair." He then picked up Crystal from the stroller and placed her on the floor. Frightened of her new surroundings, Crystal scooted directly to her mother and clasped her dress for security.

Larry lifted Stephanie from the stroller, and he took her into his arms.

"You have beautiful children," Chet praised.

"Stephanie is almost six months old," Larry said. Like sister, Crystal, Stephanie had dark hair and eyes and an olive skin. He carried Stephanie to his large plate glass window overlooking the city.

Chet followed his son to the large window. He said, "It's a magnificent view of Bellevue and the Cascade Mountains."

"Yeah. It's a beautiful view," Larry replied.

"There's not a better office building in town."

"It's a great location."

"In a few years we'll own this building," Chet promised.

"Well. Business couldn't be better."

Suzanne joined them at the window. With pride, Chet pointed to and identified the various buildings and projects that his company had investments or were managing. He talked about the glorious future of the company and new projects, which were being planned. When he finished, he said, "Well. I have a meeting with the mayor at city hall. I'll leave you to your pretty wife."

"When will you be back?" Larry asked Chet.

"In a couple of hours." Grabbing his leather briefcase, he quickly left Larry's office.

Returning to his desk, Larry turned on the intercom, and he said, "Mary. Come in here."

"Sure. I'll be right in," Mary Fallworth said cheerfully. Mary was Larry's executive secretary. Twenty-three years, she was a graduate of the University of Washington, and her father was a successful oral surgeon on Mercer Island. A striking woman of medium height, she had blonde hair, blue eyes, and pinkish complexion. A single woman, she was completely loyal to Larry, for whom she had work for one year. She was wearing a modish red dress, which revealed her sexy figure.

Mary walked smartly into Larry's office, and she was surprised to see Suzanne. She said, "Suzanne. I didn't see you come in."

"When we came in, you were not sitting at your desk," Suzanne replied. She was rarely jealous of another woman, even if the other woman was comely like Mary. She had complete confidence in Larry, who was devoted to her and the children.

"I must have gone to the copy room," Mary asserted. She had only met the shapely Native American lady a few times. She didn't like Suzanne's pretentious attitude, as if Suzanne was some kind of Native American princess. Only class and money mattered to Mary, and the older the better.

Mary pondered how Suzanne could have managed to trap Larry. There was talk in the office of a hastily elopement to Reno. She knew that Larry was a shy man, who had difficulties relating to pretty women. She pictured Suzanne weaving her web around an unsuspecting Larry, who didn't know any better.

"Mary. I want you to watch my children," Larry directed, "while I take Suzanne on a tour of the office."

"Sure. I love children," Mary replied. Walking over to Larry, she took Stephanie from his arms and held her.

"Well. Thank you Mary," Suzanne said.

"They're such beautiful children," Mary exclaimed. She sat down on the luxurious sofa in the office and began playing with Stephanie.

Suzanne said to Crystal, "I want you to stay with Mary. Do you understand?"

"Yes, mommy," Crystal replied. She made her way to the sofa where Mary was sitting.

Picking up her purse, Suzanne walked to her husband, who was waiting at the entrance of his office. She said to Larry, "I'm ready."

"Then follow me," he said enthusiastically, "You're going to be impressed with the company's new office." He ambled down the hallway.



Suzanne followed Larry to a large window-filled room. He said, "This is the planning room."

The brightly lit room was full of large wooden tables, holding maps and blueprints. Engineers and planners were poring over the papers on the wooden tables.

"Are all these people employees of your father?" Suzanne asked. She was impressed with whole operation.

"No. Most of them work for building contractors who are working on the company's projects," Larry explained.

"Why are they here?"

"They're using our facilities, because it's convenient to Chet," Larry related, "He likes to be up on everything."

"Chet has certainly done well, since the bankruptcy," Suzanne said without thinking. The bankruptcy was subject that troubled Larry, as if it was a badge of dishonor.

"He's gifted. Chet has made some great investments."

"What has he done with his profits?"

"Like most good businessmen, Chet has reinvested it," Larry explained proudly, "He's a brilliant entrepreneur."

Suzanne thought about Larry's future with his father's company. Larry had said to her little about Chet's future plans for him. She asked, "When is Chet going to make you a partner?"

Frowning, Larry replied, "I'm not ready to be a business partner with my father. I still have a lot more to learn about business management."

"Has Chet offered you a partnership?"

"No. Why should he?"

"Because you're his only son," Suzanne declared, "and you're already a vice-president with his company."

"It's not enough."

"But it's your right," she asserted.

"Suzanne. I don't want you to ever mention partnership to my father," Larry said, "It would be embarrassing to me."

"I don't ever talk to your father about business matters," Suzanne replied. Anyway she rarely talked to her father-in-law about anything, except for brief exchanges about Larry and the children.

"That's good," he said firmly, "Keep it that way."

Continuing the tour of the office, Larry showed Suzanne the copy room and its machines, the typing pool, the lunch room, the spacious library, the numerous conference rooms, the working area of the junior employees, and the individual offices of the senior employees. She was especially impressed with the

sumptuous office of Chet Bucknell. The office was well-furnished, and it had a better view than Larry's office. It fit his pompous personality well.

After completing the office tour, Larry said, "Let's return to my office."

"Okay," Suzanne replied, "I really love your new location."

"Our new office should help business."

"I'm really excited about the future of the company."

Leading Suzanne back to his office, Larry wound his way through a maze of hallways and offices until he reached his office. Walking into the office, he saw his executive secretary, Mary, playing with Crystal. Stephanie was lying on the sofa sleeping.

He asked Mary, "How were Crystal and Stephanie?"

"Stephanie just slept," Mary replied, "and Crystal has been playing games with me."

"Well. Thanks for watching them," Suzanne said.

"They're wonderful kids," Mary praised. She did think that they were cute Native American children. She could easily see Suzanne's blood in them. Their Caucasian blood was not so easy to identify, except they were lighter in skin color than Suzanne, and they had a few Caucasian features. She thought that they would be exotic beauties when they grew up.

Upon seeing her mother, Crystal ran to Suzanne, who picked up her and held her in her arms. Suzanne said, "I'd better be leaving. I don't want to keep Larry from his work."

Larry said to Mary, "Why don't you help Suzanne take the children to the car?"

"I would be delighted," Mary exclaimed.

"I could use some help," Suzanne admitted.

Mary reached down and took Stephanie into her arms, and she walked towards the opened door of the office. Suzanne placed Crystal in the stroller and pushed the stroller to the door. Once Suzanne left the office, Mary followed her down the hallway to the main door.

"Mary. How long have you been my husband's secretary?"

"For about one year, "

"Aren't you rather young to be an executive secretary?"

"Well. I was a honors English major at the University of Washington," Mary answered. She knew that people were saying that she got her job because of her sexy looks. Few realized that she was an intelligent woman.

"You're a college graduate?" Suzanne said in a surprised voice.

"Yes."

"How did you get your job with Larry?" Suzanne always liked to

be direct with other women.

"Well. My father is an oral surgeon on Mercer Island," Mary disclosed, "He's a good friend of Chet Bucknell."

"Larry had nothing to do with hiring you."

"No. Chet does all of the hiring for the company."

Suzanne was relieved that Larry did not hire the comely young secretary. She was suspicious of men who surrounded themselves with agreeable young females. She was happy that Larry was not one of them. She asked, "How do you like working for Larry?"

"Larry is a great boss," Mary answered, "Did you expect me to say something else?"

"No. It was a stupid question."

Reaching the elevator, they entered it and rode it to the ground floor. Leaving the elevator, they headed to a building exit.

"Since you're playing twenty questions," Mary said, "How did you meet Larry?"

"At a fraternity party at the University of Washington."

"You belonged to a college sorority?"

"No. But I had girlfriends who belong to sororities," Suzanne said, "They would invite to the fraternity parties."

"How convenient."

Suzanne thought of Vivien Renwick who also grew up on Mercer Island. Possibly Mary knew Vivien or her family. She said, "I had a roommate who grew up on Mercer island."

"What was his name?" Mary quipped.

"Gosh, Mary. You have a wicked sense of humor."

"I've been known to take no prisoners."

"My roommate was Vivien Renwick," Suzanne divulged.

Mary recalled going to high school with a Terri Mae Renwick. She remembered the school assembly where Terri Mae's parents, Jack and Joan Renwick, gave a presentation on the civil rights movement. It was quite an emotional presentation, and Jack had charged the student body with racism. She remembered Terri Mae trying to get her to participate in the anti-war movement and environmental movement. She said cautiously, "Yes, I remember the Renwick family."

"Didn't you ever meet Vivien?"

"No. But I met her sister, Terri Mae," Mary said, "The Renwicks are quite a family."

"What do you mean?"

"They're radical environmentalists," Mary revealed with relish, "They're always protesting and fighting Chet Bucknell and his projects."

"Well. They are social activists," Suzanne admitted.

"I wouldn't mention their names around Chet Bucknell," Mary warned, "He's bound to explode with anger."

"I know," Suzanne said, "Vivien is still a good friend of mine."

"Are Larry and Vivien friends?"

"No. There is no reason for them to be friends," Suzanne said, "Anyway, Vivien is very liberal like her parents."

"It figures," Mary said.

"Larry and Vivien are always arguing over some injustice."

"They must fight like cats and dogs."

"Sometimes I think that Vivien deliberately tries to provoke Larry into an argument," Suzanne disclosed.

"Vivien sounds exactly like the other Renwicks," Mary said.

"But she is a good friend."

"I'll try to remember that."

Suzanne and Mary arrived at the car. After placing Crystal and Stephanie in the car, Suzanne placed the stroller in the trunk. Saying goodbye to Mary, she drove her car down the street and headed towards Lake Washington.

Mary Fallworth retreated to the building and caught an elevator to the fourth floor. Returning to her desk, she peered into Larry's office. Apparently, Chet Bucknell had returned early, because he was talking to Larry. She predicted rightly that Suzanne would be a topic of their conversation. She sensed that Chet did not like Suzanne, and he would someday try to force her out of the picture. It was just a matter of time.

Her boss, Larry, was too dependent of a man not to give up Suzanne if Chet ordered him to. Larry had his whole future at stake. Mary imagined herself becoming the new Mrs. Larry Bucknell after Suzanne had been pushed out of the picture. She liked the sound of the name and status and money it would bring.

Larry Bucknell perceived that his father, Chet, was more agitated than usual. Chet Bucknell was an workaholic who easily got upset and angry. A demanding man, his father was not an easy man to work for. However, Chet was an excellent businessman who was a genius at the real estate development. Chet had few equals in the Pacific Northwest.

Larry understood fully that his future was tied to his father. He had been working for Chet for the past three years as a junior vice-president of development. It was a meaningless job. However, he was making a substantial salary and receiving great fringe benefits. He liked belonging to the country club and prestige of working for his father's company. He had recently bought a new

house on Lake Washington. Though Chet had not mentioned a partnership, he knew someday his father would offer him a partnership in the company.

Larry wanted to please his father. His marriage to Suzanne Redwood had greatly strained his relationship with his father. After their elopement to Reno, Chet had refused to talk to him for six months. His mother, Agnes, finally brought about a frosty reconciliation. Chet had even grudgingly accepted Suzanne into the family. But she had always felt out of place and unwanted in Chet's presence. Chet was a hard man, and his opinion of Suzanne probably would never change.

"Larry. You are my only son," Chet said, "You're only person who can carry on the family name."

"I'm sure you still can father a few children," Larry jested.

"I'm not in a humorous mood."

"Well. Suzanne and I can keep trying to have a son. "

"Suzanne is the person whom I want to talk to you about," Chet said seriously.

Larry was stunned by Chet's words, and he was predicting the worst. He dreaded this moment, as it would eventually force him to make tough decisions. His father was a long-term strategist, who like to set into motion events, which would eventually lead to the desired results. That's probably why he had accepted Suzanne into the family. All along, Chet had planned this moment and result it would bring. Larry said with resignation in his voice, "What do you have to say about Suzanne?"

"Things aren't working out between you and Suzanne," Chet said bluntly.

"That's a surprise to me."

"I'm the one saying it."

"Suzanne and I are very happy together. "

"I'm not talking about being happy," Chet said.

"Then what are you talking about?" Larry asked. His father always confused the issues and the facts until his prey was helpless. Then he would spring his trap.

"I'm talking about grandsons."

Larry immediately thought of his babies - Crystal and Stephanie. He thought of their dark hair and eyes and olive complexion. He thought of their hybrid features, their Native American features, and finally their Caucasian features. He said, "You have two lovely granddaughters."

"But they're Native American grandchildren," Chet said.

"Well. Suzanne is a Native American."

"Larry. I want grandsons who have blonde hair and blue eyes," Chet said bluntly.

Larry immediately understood what his father wanted. He knew it was not possible for him and Suzanne to have children with blonde hair and blue eyes. His father was pressuring him to divorce Suzanne and marry a woman of his own class and race. He said, "Father. I happen to love Suzanne, and I won't divorce her."

"But she trapped you into marrying her."

"I don't remember being trapped into marrying anyone."

"Well. Suzanne and you eloped."

"I know that I should have gotten your permission to marry her," Larry conceded.

"I'd have never permitted you to marry Suzanne."

"That's why we eloped."

"Was it your idea to elope?" Chet asked.

"Of course, it was my idea."

"But Suzanne must have maneuvered you into marriage," Chet blurted out.

"No. She didn't."

"Suzanne is a scheming Native American woman."

"We both love each other and our children," Larry retorted weakly.

"You can love her as a mistress," Chet said angrily.

"I won't divorce Suzanne!"

Chet thought of his emotionally weak son, who was very dependent on the beautiful and shapely Native American woman. Since Larry was a kid, he was always timid and shy. At times Chet speculated whether he was natural father of Larry since their mental makeup was so different. Larry was now twenty-eight years old. By now, he should have outgrown Suzanne. The birth of Crystal and Stephanie had only made Larry more devoted to Suzanne and to his family. He was beginning to view his son as a silly sentimentalist and at worst a hated liberal. He would never tolerate a liberal running his company, even if it was his son.

It was foolish of Chet to believe that his son could be so easily wooed from Suzanne and his children. If Chet was to save his son, he would have to adopt a new strategy against Suzanne. For certain, Larry greatly loved Suzanne.

Chet now doubted that Larry had ever made love to a White woman of his own class. Remembering when Larry was a teenager, he recalled Larry occasionally dating, especially when it was a double date. But Larry never had a steady girlfriend in high school or college until he met Suzanne. Was his son insecure around White

women? Could he only get sexual satisfaction from a dark-skinned woman? Could his son be that weak?"

"Son. Forgive me" Chet feigned, "for being a foolish old man. I shouldn't be interfering with your marriage."

Larry was worried. Why had Chet changed his mind about Suzanne so quickly? Chet must have decided on a new strategy. He answered, "Father. All is forgiven."

"Son. Let me make a promise. I'll never again to ask you to give up Suzanne," Chet said.

Shocked at Chet's concession, Larry was dubious of any promise made by Chet. But it was a simple declarative sentence with no conditions. The change of heart by his canny father was unnerving. He replied, "I accept your promise."

"Do you have any hard feelings?"

"No, father."

"That's good to hear."

"Chet. You've been a great father to me."

"Thanks," Chet said, "I must be leaving. I need to make a telephone call." Standing up, he marched to the entrance of Larry's office, and he proceeded to his own office. He decided to wait until the end of the day to execute his new plans.

For once, Chet left his office door open, as he wanted to know when Larry left the office. As the clock neared four-thirty, he patiently watched the door of Larry's office. If Larry was going to leave the office early, it would be at four-thirty, as he came to work at eight o'clock in the morning.

Exactly at four-thirty, Larry walked leisurely out of his office with an attache case in his hand. He popped his head into Chet's office. Seeing Chet busy on the telephone, he waved goodbye, and he stepped down the hallway to the main entrance to the office. He caught an elevator to the ground level of the building.

Waiting a few minutes, Chet got to his feet and walked out of his office. He saw Mary Fallworth still at her desk. She generally did not leave office until five, because she arrived at eight-thirty in the morning. He said, "Mary. I need to talk to you."

"Yes. I'll be right in," Mary replied.

Chet returned to his office, and he pulled a cushioned chair closer to his antique wooden desk. Sitting down at his desk, he waited for Mary to enter his office. A few minutes later, Mary came strolling in. She said, "Mr. Bucknell. You wanted to speak to me."

"Mary. I want you to call me- Chet."

"Whatever you want - Chet."

"Come in and sit down on the chair." Chet pointed to the

cushioned chair next to his desk.

"Okay." Walking to the chair, Mary sat down, and she looked at the distinguished and graying Chet Bucknell.

Hesitating, Chet asked, "Mary. How long have been Larry's secretary?"

"I've been his executive secretary for nearly one year."

"Do you like working for Larry?"

"Larry has been a wonderful boss," Mary said cheerfully.

"I've been looking over your resume," Chet said, "You have outstanding credentials." He held up her resume.

"Thank you."

"I know your father, Dr. Carl Fallworth," Chet stated, "We belong to the same country club."

"Yeah. My father helped me to get this job," Mary disclosed.

"You come from a good family."

"Thank you again." Mary pondered what Chet wanted from her. She did instinctively trust Chet. Maybe he was going to give her another job with the company, but she liked working for Larry Bucknell.

"Do you know that I'm one who hired you?"

"Yes. That's what my father told me," Mary replied.

"I hired you, because you come from a good family."

"Thank you. But what do you want?" Mary was growing impatient with the questioning, as discussion was becoming a little personal.

Chet detected that Mary was growing jittery about his questioning. He recognized that he had to get to the point. He said, "It's a personal matter concerning my son, Larry."

"Is there something wrong with Larry?" Mary asked.

"Nothing that can't be remedied."

"I suspect that I have something to do with it."

"Yes."

"I'm not that kind of girl," Mary reacted.

"No. No. Nothing like that," Chet exclaimed, "I want you to marry Larry."

Mary was astounded by Chet's bold remark. Maybe Chet was suffering an emotional breakdown. Larry and Suzanne's marriage seemed quite stable to her. She responded, "Is Larry getting a divorce?"

"Not yet."

"What do you mean?"

"When Larry divorces Suzanne, I want you to marry him," Chet explained.

"Chet. I feel like walking right out of here," Mary said, "What



you're saying is crazy." She started to lift herself from the chair.

"No. Wait," Chet cried out, "I can explain."

Mary stared at Chet, trying to determine whether he had a firm grasp of reality. She finally said, "Well. You're my boss." She sat back down in the chair.

"Thank you," Chet said in a relieved voice, "Do you like Suzanne?"

"Why do you ask?" Mary still was not fully convinced that Chet was not suffering from nervous disorder.

"Well. I never have liked the uppity Native American woman," Chet blurted out, "She's pretty pushy."

"We do agree on something," Mary said, "I always felt that Larry married beneath himself."

"Suzanne married my son without my permission," Chet said heatedly, "She talked him into eloping with her to Reno."

For the first time, Mary had heard the truth about Suzanne and Larry. Apparently, Chet was strongly against the marriage, and he wanted to destroy it. She said, "Suzanne doesn't deserve to be married to Larry."

"Mary. I'm glad that you agree with me."

"You mentioned me marrying Larry," Mary said, "What did you mean?" She realized for the first time that she might be able to marry into the fortune that Chet Bucknell was putting together. Though her father, Dr. Fallworth, made good money, he was not well-to-do. She desired to be married to a wealthy man. Larry Bucknell now appeared to be a good candidate.

"I want you to help me break up their marriage," Chet urged.

"Suzanne and Larry appeared to be very much in love," Mary pointed out.

"I agree. They're in love."

"Then what good would I be?"

"Let me explain," Chet said. He explained that Larry was a timid and shy kid as a youth. He didn't have any steady girlfriends until he met Suzanne. He conjectured that Larry could only relate to minority women with dark skins. Larry felt inferior to Caucasian women, but he felt superior or equal to dark-skinned minority women. Consequently, Larry had no inhibitions when it came to minority women.

"I can't do anything about Larry's inferiority complex," Mary said bluntly.

"Maybe you can," he asserted.

"Please explain."

Chet explained that since his marriage with Suzanne, Larry had matured into a man. He must have gained some security about his

sexuality by being married to Suzanne and fathering two children.

Possibly, he could now relate and love a Caucasian woman.

"Chet. You have an interesting hypothesis," Mary said.

"Are you willing to help?" Chet asked desperately.

"I'm not a vamp."

"I never assumed that you were one."

"Well. I do like Larry," Mary admitted, "He does have possibilities."

"When I die, Larry is going to be a rich man," Chet promised, "but if he stays married to Suzanne, he's not going to get a dime from me."

"You do have strong feelings."

"And I won't make him a partner in my company."

"Larry doesn't have much of a choice," Mary replied.

"But he's stupid enough to keep Suzanne and forget the money and the partnership," Chet asserted, "I don't want that to happen."

"You want me to seduce Larry," Mary said.

"No. I want you to marry Larry," Chet said firmly, "I've already made up on mind about you."

"I'm very flattered," she said, "But aren't you putting the cart before the horse?"

"No. I will help you to have an affair with Larry," he said. He explained that he would raise Mary's salary, and he would create excuses for her to meet Larry outside of the office. He wanted his son to know what it felt to have the company of Caucasian woman with education and good upbringing.

"What if something goes wrong?"

"Don't worry. You will be properly rewarded," he said.

"I'm agreeable," she said.

"That's great to hear," Chet exclaimed, "It's going to be a pleasure to have you as a daughter-in-law. "

"And I can't wait to have you as a father-in-law," Mary said enthusiastically.

"Larry and you are going to have some great kids."

"Yeah. Good old Anglo-Saxon kids. "

"The best kind."

Vivien Renwick was looking at herself in a mirror in the bedroom of her apartment. In the afternoon, she had purchased white lacy gown, which clung to her curvy body. She was satisfied that she looked sexy. She walked into the dining area where Michael was studying on the dining table.

Looking up from his law books, Michael Dodd eyed Vivien and her lacy gown. He said, "What's the new gown about?"

"I just felt like wearing a lacy gown," she said coyly.

"I've never seen it before."

"I just purchased it."

"You look appealing."

For the past six weeks Michael had been studying for the Washington State Bar Examination. Every moment he had was devoted to study for the examination.

"You've been studying hard," she declared.

"The bar examination is difficult," Michael said, "I want to pass it the first time I take it."

"If you pass, then you will be lawyer?" Vivien asked.

"Yes. I can call myself a lawyer."

"When is the bar examination?"

"It starts Monday morning, and it lasts for three days," Michael explained.

"Where?"

"At the Seattle Civic Center."

"Are you nervous about the test?" Vivien asked.

"Yeah. I can't be a member of the Washington State Bar Association until I pass the bar test," he said.

"I'm certain you will pass."

"Well. I've studied hard enough."

"I've never seen you study so hard."

"I have a lot more studying to do before Monday," he said.

Vivien wanted Michael to come to bed. She had something to tell him. She said, "You must be tired tonight."

"Yeah. I feel a little tired."

"Why don't you come to bed?"

The lacy gown was making Michael think of Vivien. He said, "Yes. I've studied enough tonight."

"I'll meet you the bedroom," she said softly. She retreated to her bedroom and lay down on the bed.

Michael closed up his law books and stacked his folders. He thought about Vivien and the lacy gown. She generally slept without a gown. Maybe, she was changing her sleeping habits. Getting up the table, he rambled to the bedroom, and he saw Vivien laying on the bed.

She said, "Well. I'm waiting."

"Sure." After undressing, he crawled onto the bed and lay by Vivien.

"Michael. I love you."

"I love you too," Michael responded.

Michael leaned over Vivien's body, and he kissed her on the lips and stroked her body.

She pushed him away. Vivien said, "I have something to tell you."

"What is it."

"I'm pregnant."

"What?" Michael exclaimed. He immediately leaned over her body and looked into her eyes.

"I said I'm pregnant," she said in elation.

"Are you certain?"

"Yes."

Michael began to stroke her abdomen. He thought that he felt a slight swelling or maybe Vivien was gaining some weight. He said, "I don't know what to say."

"You're going to be a father," Vivien said happily.

"I'm really elated about it," Michael said, "When is the baby due?"

"In about seven and half months."

Michael took Vivien into her arms and kissed her hard. Pulling away, he said, "Now we can get married."

"I don't know about getting married," Vivien announced.

"What?" Michael exclaimed.

"I don't know if I believe in marriage," Vivien said.

"Vivien. It's only right that we get married," Michael said, "I don't want our baby born out of wedlock."

"Michael. You are so passe," she said, "We don't need to be married to have children."

"I'm going to insist on it," Michael said firmly.

"Why?"

"Because I was born out of wedlock," he said, "I want to be married to the mother of my child."

"You're so old-fashioned," she said, "It doesn't matter whether we married."

"It matters to me."

"Okay. If you insist," Vivien conceded. She didn't want to get into an argument over marriage when it was a time for celebrating. She was now carrying Michael's baby. She couldn't wait to tell her loving parents and Suzanne Redwood.

"Then we're getting married!" Michael exclaimed.

"That's what I said."

"Let's get married immediately."

"Michael. I'm not eloping with you."

"I didn't say anything about eloping."

"I want a big marriage ceremony," Vivien said, "at the church of my parents."

"It will take awhile to arrange a big church wedding," he said.

"It should take a few months."

"But soon your pregnancy will be showing," Michael pointed out.

"Michael. Let me put it to you this way," Vivien said, "I'm not going to marry until I'm least six months pregnant."

"Why?"

"Because that's the way I want it."

"Oh."

"Another thing," she said, "I won't be quitting my job with Seattle Native American Voice."

"But I should be able to support you," Michael said.

"No. Lawyers are a dime dozen," she said, "I plan to keep working while I'm pregnant and after the baby comes."

"It's not a good idea."

"I'm not going to be a housewife," she announced.

"Well. Suzanne Redwood likes being a housewife," he said.

"That's Suzanne and not me."

"Vivien. You can do what you want," Michael conceded. He didn't believe in women liberation, but there was nothing he could do about Vivien's decision-making.

## Chapter 12

Carrying a paper bag full of groceries, Trixie Spearman Tupper walked into her modest house, in Coulee Dam, next to the Columbia River on the Colville Indian Reservation. Thirty years old, she had a firm youthful body, and she was an attractive woman. Because of the summer heat of 1974, she was wearing a blue halter and cutoffs. Setting down the groceries on the kitchen table, she sat down at the wooden table and examined her mail.

She heard the back door of the house opening, and she looked up. Her husband, Allen Tupper, came walking into the house. He said, "It must be a hundred degrees outside."

"It's not exactly cool in here," Trixie replied.

"Well. We can't afford anything, except swamp coolers," he replied.

"The swamp coolers are good enough," she remarked.

"What are you reading?"

"It's a letter from Suzanne Redwood."

"What does she have to say?" he asked.

"Well. Larry and she are doing fine," she replied, "Crystal and Stephanie are growing fast."

"It's not earth-shaking news," Allen said.

"It's women news."

Allen thought of Michael Dodd. He hadn't seen his friend for six months. He asked Trixie, "How is Michael Dodd doing?"

"Vivien Renwick is pregnant again."

"How many children does that make?"

"It's her second pregnancy," Trixie disclosed.

"Michael is catching up to me," Allen humored.

"Michael had a long ways to go to catch you. "

Allen recalled the wedding of Michael and Vivien. Six and half months pregnant, she was wearing a simple white maternity dress. Michael was wearing a red ribbon shirt and blue jeans. The dress of the guests varying according to their taste and class. Some were wearing rather formal-looking suits and dresses. Vivien's friends were generally dressed in their everyday clothes. Michael's law school friends were wearing ordinary suit and ties. His Native American friends were wearing their street clothes, though a few were wearing traditional clothing.

Because of Trixie's insistence, Allen was wearing an old dark blue blazer, gray pants, a white shirt, and a red necktie. He felt out of place wearing the blazer and tie.

The large protestant church on Mercer Island was packed with people. He had never seen so many people at a wedding. He remembered the talkative preacher presiding at marriage ceremony. After the ceremony, they traveled to a large hotel conference room where there was drinking and live music. He said, "I remember Michael's wedding. It was a big wedding."

"Yeah. Vivien really looked beautiful," Trixie offered.

"Six and half months pregnant."

"If that's what they wanted, I'm not going to complain," she stated.

"I wasn't judging them," he replied, "They'll make good mates."

Trixie thought about her rocky marriage with Allen. She recalled the drinking, the parties, the tavern hopping, the violent arguments, the marital separations, and the physical violence. She said, "We're not ones to be judging anyone."

Allen thought about Michael's private law practice in Bellevue, Washington, where Vivien and Michael rented an apartment. Michael was mainly a domestic relations lawyer. A struggling lawyer, he had a small but growing law practice. At the moment, he was sole practitioner. He asked, "Why doesn't Michael return to the reservation and be the tribal lawyer for the Colville Tribe?"

"Don't ask me," Trixie said.

"Well. You're the secretary for the tribal council," he said, "and your Uncle Ned is on the tribal council."

"The councilmen don't discuss their business with me."

"Michael would make a good tribal lawyer for the tribe," he declared.

"I agree with you," she said.

"When I get elected to the tribal council," Allen declared, "I'm going to make Michael the tribal attorney."

Trixie recalled Allen's unsuccessful campaign for the tribal council in the last spring's tribal elections. An unprincipled candidate, he ran a smear campaign against the tribal council. He openly courted the radical vote and tavern vote. He spent every weekend in the taverns buying beers for potential voters, spending money that they could not afford. The dirty campaign was an embarrassment to her. The tribal councilmen suspected her of providing inside information to Allen, which was untrue. She couldn't persuade him to clean up his campaign. She was greatly relieved when the general election was held. When the ballots were counted, he had only

received ten votes. Humiliated, Allen stayed out of the taverns for six weeks while he regained his self-respect.

"Allen. I wish you wouldn't run against my Uncle Ned," Trixie said, "It's really embarrassing to me."

"But he's a crook," Allen cried out.

"Uncle Ned is not a crook," she declared.

"But he's a tribal councilman."

"I don't want to arguing with you."

"Okay. Your uncle is not a crook."

"Thanks."

Allen thought about the pregnant Vivien. He asked, "How many kids do Michael and Vivien plan to have?"

"Vivien told me only two," Trixie said.

"Why only two?"

"Well. Vivien believes in no-growth population control."

"What?"

"They plan only to have enough kids to replace themselves," Trixie stated, "Which means only two kids."

"What if their second child is a boy?" Allen asked,

"It makes no difference if the baby is a boy," she explained, "Statistically it averages out."

"You're speaking over my head."

"Sorry."

"I'll make up for Michael's non-production," Allen humored.

"Four boys in enough," Trixie said.

Allen thought about Michael's son, Bradley, who looked like his mother, Vivien. He had dark hair and eyes but a fair complexion. Michael was very proud of his son. Allen pondered whether Michael's next baby would also look like Vivien. He said to Trixie, "Bradley really looks like his mother, Vivien."

"Yeah. Bradley does have a fair skin."

"Suzanne's children, Crystal and Stephanie, look like Native Americans," he pointed out.

"Well. Suzanne has more Native American blood than Michael," Trixie commented.

"Michael's mother was half Native American and half White," he said.

"Yes, I know."

"Who is Michael's father?" Allen asked.

"No one knows."

"How's that?"

"Well. I suppose it's out of respect for Stanley Dodd," she remarked.



"It had to be a full-blooded Native American," he analyzed aloud.

"It's hard to say," Trixie said, "It's obvious that his father had plenty of Native American blood. "

"I heard that Michael's mother made the rounds," Allen said, "Anyone could be his father."

"Why he could be your brother?" Trixie joked.

Allen made a wry face at Trixie. He didn't appreciate suggestion that his father was unfaithful to his mother. He said, "Michael doesn't look like me."

"Michael doesn't have to look like you."

"Well. We will probably never know if you're related"

"You would think that Michael's natural father would come forward and admit it," Trixie said.

"His father is probably someone whom we know quite well."

"I wouldn't be surprised."

"I wonder if Michael knows who is his father," Allen speculated.

"I don't think so."

"Michael has never mentioned it to me," he commented.

"Someday we may be in for a surprise," Trixie suggested.

"Someone is his father."

Allen thought about relative success of Larry Bucknell and Michael Dodd. Michael was a struggling young lawyer, but Larry was a successful businessman with his father, Chet. He thought about the disparity between the two individuals. He pondered why certain people have all the luck in life.

Allen thought Larry was an insecure man, who was very possessive of his wife, Suzanne. He had met Larry for the first time at Michael's wedding. Whenever Suzanne talked to a male friend, Larry was always present, as if he suspected that Suzanne was carrying on some secret love affair. When he talked to Larry at the wedding, Larry was indignant about having to be at the wedding. Larry was not happy about Vivien being six and half months pregnant. The fact that Vivien was a liberal activist probably doubly galled him. He said, "Larry Bucknell is quite a character?"

"Well. Suzanne is devoted to him," Trixie said.

"I don't trust the man."

"Larry is very much in love with Suzanne."

"He's too jealous," he asserted.

"Suzanne loves him," she retorted.

"For his money."

"Larry didn't have any money when Suzanne met him."

"That's hard to believe," Allen blurted out

"Well. It's true," Trixie said.

"What does Suzanne see in Larry?"

"Suzanne had always liked men with education," she replied, "And Larry comes from a well-to-do family."

"Larry is too dependent on his father, Chet," he said.

"If you had a wealthy father like Chet, you'd be dependent on him too," she argued.

"Larry is too much of a sissy for me."

"Let's change the subject."

"Fine with me."

Trixie decided it was time to tell Allen about her plans to attend college. He was bound to vehemently oppose her plans. But she was determined to get her way, even if it meant the end of their marriage. If she was persistent, she was convinced that Allen would acquiesced to her wishes. She said, "Allen. I have something to tell you."

Allen looked at Trixie's stern face. He pondered whether she was pregnant again. He replied fearfully, "What is it?"

"I've decided to go to college?"

"What!"

"I've taken all the college courses that are available at local community college," she explained.

"I don't want you to go to college," he said heatedly, "I like you just the way you are."

"Allen. I've made up my mind," Trixie said, "I'm going to college."

"Where?"

"Portland, Oregon."

"What about the children?" Allen asked.

"We'll taking them with us," she said.

"I'm not going to Portland, Oregon," he said firmly, "I like the Colville Indian Reservation."

"It's up to you. But I'm going to Portland, Oregon."

"What you are going to study?"

"Business administration," she replied, "I estimate it will take me three years to get through college."

"Why three years?" Allen asked skeptically.

"Because I've already earned forty-five credits from the community college," Trixie answered.

"What are you going to do with a business administration degree?" he asked incredulously.

"Run one of the tribal businesses. "

"The tribal council will never hire you."

"Let's wait and see," she challenged.

Allen thought of the snobbish Suzanne Redwood and her affluent husband. He pondered whether it was Suzanne who was turning Trixie against him. Since high school, Suzanne had never liked him. He asked, "Did Suzanne Redwood put you up to this?"

"No. It's my own idea."

"I don't believe you."

"Allen!"

"You want to meet a rich man like Suzanne," he charged.

"I'm already married to you," Trixie said.

"But you can always divorce me." Allen cried out.

"Allen. I happen to love you."

"How are you going pay for your college education?"

"The Coville Tribe has an excellent scholarship program," she said, "and the Bureau of Indian Affairs is giving out educational grants."

"Well. You're not getting any help from me," he stormed.

"I'm not asking for any help from you."

"When do you plan to go to Portland?"

"In January."

"January?"

"Yes."

"I'm not going to Portland, Oregon," Allen announced.

"With you or without you, I'm going to college," Trixie confirmed. They ended their conversation, and they went looking for their children.

## Chapter 13

Mary Fallworth was lying on her queen-size bed in her luxury apartment in Kirkland, Washington, a suburb of Seattle, Washington. Her well-furnished apartment had a magnificent view of Lake Washington.

The last two years had been an incredible adventure for her. As promised, Chet Bucknell had given her a substantial pay raise and a new job with the company. Mary was no longer Larry Bucknell's executive secretary. Chet had made her a planner for the company, and she worked under Larry's supervision. The change in jobs enabled her to travel extensively with Larry. They had traveled all over the country, including some foreign countries.

She had been living in style, and her love affair with Larry Bucknell had progressed well. At first an unwilling partner, Larry had gained confidence in himself, and he had become an ardent lover. As promised and unknown to Larry, Chet had covered for her. Larry's wife, Suzanne Redwood, never suspected. Suzanne had proved more trusting than Mary ever thought possible.

Mary remembered the first time that she had seduced woman-shy Larry. They were on a business trip to San Francisco. After eating dinner with Larry, they had gone to his hotel room to prepare for a presentation that they would be making the next day. She was wearing a clinging dress. She sensed that Larry was excited by her presence in his hotel room. Eventually they kissed after some urging by Mary, which led to passionate love making.

When they finished, she got Larry to admit that he had never made love to a Caucasian woman. They had been secret lovers since then.

However, Mary could not persuade Larry to divorce his wife, Suzanne, and marry her. In spite of her pleas and at times crying, he was still devoted to his wife. She had threatened to expose their affair to Suzanne, but he still would not consider divorcing his wife. Larry was highly dependent on Suzanne. The psychological bond was virtually unbreakable.

She was lying in her bed. Her long blonde hair fell to her gentle shoulders, and her blue eyes sparkled. Larry was stroking her abdomen. His hand was shaking.

"Yes, Larry. I'm pregnant," Mary announced proudly. Becoming pregnant was Chet's idea. He wanted to force Larry to marry her. A scandal in involving the company would enable him to play active role in the intrigue.

"How many months?"

"Two months."

"It must have happened at the meeting in Denver."

"Yes. That's about the right time frame," she said.

"Are you going to get an abortion?" he asked timidly.

"No."

"What I am going to do?"

"You're going to marry me," Mary replied.

"I won't leave my wife and daughters," Larry cried out.

"Do you love me?"

"Of course, I do," he said, "But I still love Suzanne.

"What do you see in that Native American woman?" she asked.

"She's mother of my children."

"In seven months, I'm going to be mother of your child."

"I know. I just don't know what to do. "

"Soon it will be obvious to anyone that I am pregnant and single," she said, "What is your father going to say. "

"You're forcing me to make a decision."

"Yes."

"Why did this have to happen to me?" he cried out gloomily.

"You should have thought of that when you made love to me," she said, "I'm going to have your baby."

"Mary. I do love you."

"Then marry me."

"I can't," he said.

"Well. Then watch my abdomen grow," she said.

Four months later, Mary Fallworth walked into the company office through the large glass doors. She was wearing a blue maternity dress. She headed directly to her office, which was situated between Larry Bucknell's office and Chet Bucknell's office.

Her growing pregnancy was the talk of the office. The company employees had established a betting pool on whom was the putative father. Most of the employees thought that Larry Bucknell was the father, since she had traveled extensively with him. They were shocked that a single woman was having the child of a married man. They conjectured that she would soon be dismissed by Chet Bucknell or at least gotten out of sight. They were astonished that she had stay this long.

Mary's pregnancy had caused Larry much mental anguish. It was almost unbearable for him to see Mary in the office. He knew that there were wild rumors circulating about Mary and him. He knew that the company employees were laughing at him behind his back. The pressure was getting to him. A worried man, he was quickly aging, and he was developing stomach problems.

In spite of the pressure, he still refused to divorce Suzanne and marry Mary. But he loved both women, and he was delighted that Mary was carrying his child. But Suzanne had provided him security, which he had never known before.

Walking out of her office, Mary headed to Chet's office. When she stepped into his office, Chet was sitting behind his large wooden antique desk. Chet directed, "Mary. Take a seat on the chair."

"Sure," Mary said. She proceeded to the cushioned chair and sat down. The chair was situated next to the antique desk. She rested her hands on her round protruding abdomen.

"Well. You took very pregnant," Chet said to Mary.

"Larry is pretty potent," Mary humored.

"I didn't think that Larry had it in him."

"I like having his baby."

"Are you any closer to getting him to marry you?"

"No. He won't divorce Suzanne."

"That Native American woman really a hold on Larry," he asserted.

"Well. Suzanne is lovely," she commented, "and she is his first love."

"There's nothing as strong as a first love."

"We'll have to force him to make a decision," Mary said, "I think that he really wants to marry me."

"Larry always was a moralistic kid," Chet said, "I'm surprised that he had an affair with you."

"We still make love, and he enjoys playing with my bulge."

"Mary. You are a beautiful woman."

"Thanks."

"What should we do next?" he asked.

"You should confront him about my pregnancy," she said.

"Do you think it will do any good?"

"Larry is a decent man," Mary explained, "Once he makes up his mind to marry me, there will be no stopping him."

"And that will be the end of his marriage to Suzanne Redwood."

"Larry married beneath himself," Mary declared, "She has no right to be married to Larry."

"She trapped him," Larry exclaimed, "and I have never forgiven her for that."

"That's the only way Suzanne could have married him."

"It will be good to have you as my daughter-in-law," he said

"I'm dying to be your new daughter-in-law," she replied.

"You're already part of the family."

"Because I'm carrying Larry's baby." Mary again placed her soft hands on her bulging abdomen.

"Yes."

"I want to be married to the father of my child."

"Of course, you will marry Larry," he declared.

"What if Larry doesn't marry me?"

"He will. He has no other choice."

"But what if?"

"You will be taken care of," Lorry announced, "and your child will be recognized as my lawful heir."

"I hope it's a boy," Mary said.

"I hope so too," he said, "What do you plan to name it?"

"After you."

"Chet Bucknell, II. It has a good ring," Chet remarked.

"Yes. I like the name."

"Do you want to confront Lorry this morning?" he asked.

"It's fine with me."

"Let me ring Larry." Chet picked up his telephone and dialed Larry's telephone number.

Larry Bucknell was sitting at his desk when his father telephoned him. Chet told him to come into his office. He dreaded any telephone call from his father. He knew eventually that Mary would speak to Chet about her pregnancy and his responsibility to her. Larry wasn't sure how his father would react to the news.

The resulting scandal might hurt the company and cause Chet to fire him. For sure, Chet would tell Suzanne about his illicit love affair with Mary and her pregnancy. Chet had always disliked Suzanne.

Larry knew that the news could destroy his marriage with Suzanne. Of course, Mary wanted him to divorce Suzanne and marry her. He couldn't choose between them for he loved both. Indecisive, he was uncertain what he would do. It was the worst crisis of his life.

Larry stood up from his desk, and he proceeded to the entrance of his office. Before reaching Chet's office, he came to a stop as he had an awful premonition that Mary was in Chet's office. Inching himself toward the door, he peeped into the office. His body froze, and his mouth dropped open. His worst nightmare had come true.

Mary was sitting on a cushioned chair next to his father's antique

desk. She looked like that she had been crying, because her eyes and nose were red. Chet was fidgeting with his stylish ink pen, and he was growing visibly restless. Suddenly, Chet got to his feet. Seeing Chet rise to his feet, Larry decided it was time to enter the office. Walking into the office, he asked innocently, "Father. What do you want?"

"It's a rather strange question to ask," Chet said angrily, "It's pretty obvious what I want to talk to you about."

"You want to talk about Mary," Larry said with resignation. He looked at Mary's tearful face and pondered whether she was feigning her emotional breakdown. She made him feel like a jerk.

"Yes. What about Mary?" Chet asked.

"Mary and I have been having an affair."

"It's been more just an affair."

"Are talking about Mary's pregnancy?" Larry asked.

"Yes. It's obvious she's pregnant."

"I got her pregnant," Larry confessed.

"Larry. What are you going to do about it?" Chet asked.

Larry sank down into an expensive sofa and put his hands to his face. He cried out with anguish, "I don't know."

"You're going to marry her," Chet ordered sternly.

"But I'm already married to Suzanne."

"You should have thought about your marriage when you made Mary pregnant," Chet replied.

"I just don't know what to do," Larry wailed.

"Larry. Whether you want to or not," Chet said firmly, "you're going to marry Mary."

"What if I don't?" Larry asked emotionally.

"Then I'll force you marry Mary."

"How?"

"First, you're going to lose your job with my company," Chet warned, "I'm not going to let a sex scandal wreck this company. "

"But I'm your son!"

"Second, I'm going disinherit you and make Mary's child my lawful heir," Chet announced.

"I don't have much of a choice," Larry cried out, "Do I?"

"Mary comes from a good family," Chet continued, "I'm not going to let you humiliate her parents."

"But what will I tell Suzanne?" Larry blurted out.

"She took her chances when she married you," Chet said, "I want you to marry a Caucasian woman and have Caucasian kids."

"I just don't know what to do," Larry pleaded.

"Son. I'm not going to waste anymore time with you," Chet said



adamantly, "Marry Mary or else."

"God help me," Larry yelled.

"Now. I'm going to leave you two alone," Chef said, "When I returned, I want all the details of your marriage worked out." He got to his feet and walked to the entrance of his office.

Mary stood up and moved to the sofa where Larry was sitting. She whispered, "Can I sit down next to you?"

Larry looked at Mary's pregnant body. He had to admit that she was a beautiful blue-eyed blonde and that she would make a good wife. He had been forced to choose Mary over Suzanne. But he did love Mary, and he was certain their love would grow as the years passed. Maybe his father was right about marrying a person of his own race and social economic class.

"Go ahead and sit down," he directed.

"Thank you."

Looking into her blue eyes, he said, "I can't marry you until I divorce Suzanne."

"I know," Mary said softly, "Can the divorce be completed before I have my baby."

"It might be possible," Larry revealed, "Suzanne would have to cooperate. My father knows a few judges, and legal proceedings could be sped up."

"At least you could try," she encouraged.

"I'll see what I can do," Larry commented, "But I'm making you no promises."

"I didn't want to force you to marry me," Mary stated.

"Oh. My marriage with Suzanne was doomed to fail from the beginning," he conceded.

"Larry. Suzanne is just a Native American woman who is married to a well-to-do White man," she explained, "Her marriage was bound to be challenged by some White woman of the same class as you."

"Yes. Suzanne is a social climber."

"I'm glad you admit it," Mary said.

"Well. We'd better work out the details," Larry said nervously, "I'll buy you a wedding ring as soon as I can."

"There's really no hurry."

"I'll tell Suzanne today about the divorce today," he said with difficulty, "and I'll move out of the house today."

"Do you think Suzanne will become violent?"

"I don't know. I've never seen her really angry," he said, "It would be out of character for her to be visibly angry."

"Maybe you should take a police officer with you," she suggested

innocently, "Your father could arrange for one."

"It won't be necessary."

"I'm afraid for you."

"Nothing will happen," Larry stressed.

"Are you going to move into my apartment today?" Mary asked.

"I have no other place to live."

"I want the father of my child close to me," she said.

"Mary. Why don't you quit your job today?" he asked.

"Sure. I'll quit immediately," Mary agreed.

"I'm tired of the employees looking at you and gossiping about you," he explained.

"Yeah. It was necessary to force you to make a decision."

"It was an effective strategy."

"I have no regrets," she said. They then started to plan their wedding and other matters.

Larry drove his car into the concrete driveway of his expensive house. It was newly-built house, and it overlooked Lake Washington. Painted yellow, it was a four-bedroom house with a full-light basement. Suzanne had selected it out of the many houses that they had looked at. She was proud of the sumptuous house and its many spacious rooms. Larry thought that it would soon be a house of gloom.

Exiting his car, he walked slowly up to the front door. He dreaded going into the house. Because he had seen Suzanne's car in the garage, he knew that she was home. Opening the front door, he walked into the house, and he did not immediately find her in the house. He yelled out, "Suzanne."

Suzanne was upstairs and storing some old clothes. Hearing Larry calling out her name, she pondered why Larry was home in the early afternoon. Dropping the cardboard box that she was holding, she hurried out of the storage room, and she headed down the stairway. Seeing Larry, she said, "Why are you home so early?"

Larry's face had a look of dejection. He said, "Things went badly at the office this morning."

Suzanne immediately became concerned, because she had little faith in Chet Bucknell. She asked, "Did you lose your job?"

"No. Nothing like that."

"Then what is it?"

"Suzanne could you take a seat on the sofa." Larry sat down on his easy chair.

Obeying, Suzanne crossed the living room and sat down on the sofa. She realized for the first time her marriage to Larry was in jeopardy. Somehow Chet Bucknell had gotten to Larry. The blood

drained from her face. She said, "Larry. I want you to be honest with me."

"Suzanne. I don't want to hurt you."

"You did something stupid," she said, "What is it?"

"I've always been in love with you. "

"Give me an honest answer."

Larry stared into Suzanne's brown eyes. He said with difficulty, "I got Mary Fallworth pregnant. I've been having an affair with her."

Larry's words had eternal echo, which rung in Suzanne's ears. A great fog fell over her. She knew immediately Mary and Chet had conspired against her. She replied within reserved anger, "It sounds like the work of your father."

"No. I got her pregnant. I'm responsible for the affair."

"I'm not talking about that," she said sternly, "Your father is trying to break up our marriage."

"I don't think Chet was involved."

"How do you know?" she replied, "He could have sicced Mary onto you."

"Mary is not that kind of woman," Larry cried out.

"Larry. Are you in love with Mary Fallworth?"

"Yes."

"How could you do this to me?" Suzanne said.

"I never intended to hurt you," he said sorrowfully, "I still love you."

"You have a strange way of showing love."

"My words must seem hollow."

"And you want to divorce me?" she said.

"Chet wants me to marry Mary Fallworth," Larry announced.

"Why? Because she's a White woman?" she asked with difficulty.

For first time in Larry's life, Suzanne looked and talked like a Native American woman. His feeling suppressed feelings of bigotry were unleashed. He lashed out, "Yes. My father never wanted me to marry a Native American woman."

Devastated, Suzanne sank back into the sofa. Her marriage had come to an abrupt and tragic end. She was numb from the brutal reality of the situation. She asked, "Do you want to marry Mary Fallworth?"

"If I don't marry Mary, I will lose my job, and I will disinherited by my father," he explained.

"I'm tired of hearing what your father wants," Suzanne said in a subdued voice, "Do you want to marry Mary Fallworth?"

"I have no choice," Larry blurted out.

"Give me a straight answer."

"Yes. I'm in love her."

"What about Crystal and Stephanie?" she asked.

"They're my children," he replied, "I'll always be their father."

"What's going to happen to me?"

"The divorce settlement will take care of you and the children,"

Larry said, "But my father wants you totally out of my life."

Suzanne was thinking of something mean to say about Chet Bucknell, but she changed her mind. She said, "So one day I'm here the next day I'm gone."

"I need to pick up a few personal items," Larry said.

"I suppose you'll be sleeping with Mary tonight."

"Yes. Mary is going to have my baby. "

"Well. Take what you want," she directed.

"You can have the house in the divorce settlement," Larry said.

"No. I'm leaving Seattle."

"Why?"

"To get away from you and a lot of bad memories," Suzanne said with little emotion.

"Suzanne. You'll survive."

"I'll start a new life," she responded.

"Well. You can now run around with that Native American guy," Larry said without thinking. His feelings of jealousy towards Native American males surfaced.

Suzanne was astonished at Larry's words of indiscretion. She knew that he was insecure, but she didn't realize that he was paranoid about losing her to another man. She asked, "What Native American guy?"

"You know - Michael Dodd."

"Larry. You need help," she said.

"I know that you're attracted to Michael," Larry cried out.

"Michael is married to my best friend, Vivien Renwick."

"It makes no difference."

"Larry. There's no person that I despise more than Michael," Suzanne revealed.

"I know you're attracted to him," he cried, "I could see it in your eyes."

"You should see a doctor," she suggested seriously, "You're a sick man."

Larry shook with rage. He said, "I'll forget what you said to me."

"But I'll never forget what you said about Michael and me," Suzanne warned.

"I need to get my personal things and some clothes," he said. He walked towards their bedroom.

"Go ahead and get them," Suzanne said, "I'm leaving the house."

"For how long?"

"A few hours." Suzanne ran into the play room where Crystal and Stephanie were playing. Stephanie was now two and half years old and Crystal was five years old. Stephanie was wearing an azure jumpsuit, and Crystal was dressed in a brown pants and a white t-shirt. She picked up Stephanie, and she said, "Crystal come with me."

"Mommy. Where are we going?"

"We're going to Aunt Vivien's apartment."

"But what about Daddy?" Crystal muttered. Upset, she had heard her father and mother arguing.

"Daddy is not coming," Suzanne said. She looked at Crystal's tearful face. She must have heard them arguing. Because she was highly shaken herself, she couldn't reassure Crystal

"Why?"

"Because he's not coming."

Suzanne knew that Vivien was in her apartment, because her son, Bradley, was ill. She needed to desperately talk to someone. Exiting the house, she put her daughters into the back seat of her car. Pulling the car out of the driveway, she steered the car wildly down the street and drove directly to Vivien's apartment, which was a few miles away near the downtown area of Bellevue.

While driving to Vivien's apartment, Suzanne thought of her young daughters. It was going to be difficult to tell them about her separation from Larry. She said, "Crystal. I want you to listen to me."

"Mommy. What is it?" Crystal looked at Suzanne with her large brown eyes. She knew instinctively that something bad had happened between her father and her mother.

Suzanne's voice wavered, and she fought back tears. She said with difficulty, "Your Daddy and I won't be living together anymore."

"Why?"

"Because he doesn't love me anymore."

"Why?"

"I don't know why," she muttered, "but he won't be coming home tonight or any other night."

"Will I see Daddy again?" Crystal asked in a concerned voice.

"Yes. He will visit you, and you can visit him."

"I wish that Daddy was with us now."

"Crystal. Someday you will understand," Suzanne said. She thought of her wrecked marriage, trying to understand why it ended in failure. There were no signs that her marriage was in

trouble. Larry had been a loving husband, and she trusted him. His admission of infidelity had destroyed her faith in life. She had nothing but disdain for the conspiring Mary Fallworth and Chet Bucknell. The world was more ruthless and cold than she ever imagined.

Suzanne parked her car in front of Vivien's apartment building. Carrying Stephanie in her arms, she entered the building. Crystal followed her. Riding the elevator to the sixth floor, they exited and slowly walked to the door of Vivien's apartment. She knocked on the door and waited for Vivien Renwick to come to the door.

Hearing knocking on the door, Vivien moved her definitely pregnant body to the door. Wearing a pink cotton smock and green shorts, she was pregnant with her second child. Opening the door, she saw Suzanne and her daughters, and she said, "Suzanne, come in. I'm surprise to see you today."

"Vivien. I'm glad that you're home," Suzanne said emotionally. She entered the modest but simply-furnished two-bedroom apartment.

Vivien observed that Suzanne looked worried and tearful. She speculated what was wrong with Suzanne. It had to be Suzanne's marriage or that Larry Bucknell had lost his job. She had little faith in the predatory Chet Bucknell and his sheepish son, Larry. She asked, "What's wrong?"

"Everything?" Suzanne cried out.

"Is it your marriage?"

"Yes, Larry left me."

"Well. Let me call my neighbor and get a baby-sitter," Vivien said, "We need to be alone."

"Yeah. You're right."

Retreating to the living room, Vivien picked up the telephone receiver and dialed her neighbor who was a retired, elderly lady.

Suzanne eyed the apartment. Vivien had purchased most of the furniture while Michael was in Vietnam. Michael was having a tough time with his fledgling law practice. She examined the photographs of Michael, Vivien, and Bradley displayed on the off-white painted walls and on an old wood bookcase. Bradley was now one and half years old. He had Vivien's hair, eyes, and complexion. She had originally thought that Michael's hair, eyes, and skin color would show up in Bradley. But she was wrong.

Setting down the telephone receiver, Vivien said, "Mrs. Howell can watch the kids. She lives next door."

"I don't want to impose on her."

"No. Mrs. Howell is happy to do it."

"It's fine with me."

Then Vivien walked into a bedroom and picked up Bradley from

his bed, and she returned to the living room. She said, "Let's go next door."

"Lead the way," Suzanne said.

Vivien walked out the apartment, and she knocked on the door of the adjacent apartment. An elderly woman with gray hair opened the door to the apartment. Vivien said, "Thanks Mrs. Howell for being able to watch the kids."

"I love to babysit Bradley," Mrs. Howell exclaimed, "and who do we have here." She looked down at Crystal, who was hiding behind her mother, Suzanne.

"Her name is Crystal," Suzanne replied, "and my baby's name is Stephanie." Handing Stephanie to Mrs. Howell, she grasped Crystal's hand and led her into the apartment.

"They're beautiful children," Mrs. Howell said.

Entering the apartment, Vivien laid Bradley down on a sofa. She said to Mrs. Howell, "I don't know how long we will be gone, but Michael will be home at six o'clock."

"Don't worry about the time," Mrs. Howell replied, "I'm not doing anything today."

"Bradley was ill this morning," Vivien said, "but his temperature has returned to normal."

"I'll keep a careful eye on him," Mrs. Howell said.

Looking down at Crystal, Suzanne said, "Crystal. I want you stay with Mrs. Howell and obey her."

"Yes, mommy."

"Thanks Mrs. Howell," Vivien said. She walked out of the apartment and stopped at the elevator. Suzanne followed. Riding the elevator to the ground floor, they left the apartment building and strolled to a park down the street.

The Pacific Northwest was experiencing an Indian summer. Though it was late September of 1974, the temperature was in the low 70's and the sky clear. The park grass was lush green, and evergreen trees shaded the park grounds. They found an empty park bench and sat down.

Looking at Suzanne's weary face, Vivien said, "It must have been a traumatic day for you."

"Yes. As you probably guessed, my marriage with Larry is in ruins," Suzanne divulged.

"Are you certain?"

"Yes. I'll never go to back to him."

Vivien instinctively speculated that Suzanne's marital problems had something to do Chet Bucknell and his real estate development company. She asked, "What happened?"

"Larry is love with former secretary," Suzanne disclosed painfully, "He got her pregnant."

"He got her pregnant!" Vivien exclaimed. Her intuition proved to be right. Chet Bucknell was involved.

"Yes."

"What's her name?"

"Mary Fallworth."

"Well. I hope it was worth the fall," Vivien tried to humor.

"I'm not feeling humorous today," Suzanne said.

"I'm sorry," Vivien replied, "I think that Mary Fallworth attended high school with my baby sister."

"Terri Mae?"

"Yes. Is Mary a blue eyed beautiful blonde?"

"Yes," Suzanne replied begrudgingly.

"Her father is an oral surgeon on Mercer Island," Vivien disclosed.

"Anyway, Larry got her pregnant," Suzanne divulged.

"Larry is more of a man than I thought," Vivien blurted out unintentionally. She had a hard time believing that the shy and sensitive Larry was bold enough to cheat on his wife.

"Men are capable of doing anything under the influence of a pretty young woman," Suzanne remarked.

"Is Larry in love with Mary," Vivien asked, "That's what usually happens."

"He wants to marry her."

"Which means divorcing you," Vivien stated sadly.

"I just know that Chef Bucknell is involved," Suzanne said gloomily.

"Chet Bucknell is not my favorite person."

"Chet told Larry to marry Mary or Larry would lose his job and be disinherited," Suzanne explained.

"Yeah. Evidence is pretty compelling," Vivien said.

"You sound like Michael."

"It does rub off a little."

"Well. My marriage with Larry is over," Suzanne concluded.

"You must be humiliated," Vivien said, "I would be."

"Of course, it hurts deeply."

"You gave him eight years of your young life, which you can't be given back," Vivien said.

"And I do have to face my friends and family," Suzanne said, "What am I going to say?"

"They will understand," Vivien reassured.

"It's good to have a friend like you."

"Michael and I will always be your friend."



Suzanne laughed, and she said, "Larry actually accused me of having an affair with Michael."

"Larry was very suspicious man," Vivien analyzed.

Suzanne tried to recall other instances where Larry showed indications of jealousy. She couldn't think of any. She remarked, "Maybe I just ignored the signs of his jealousy towards other men."

"Because you were in love with him."

"I did love him."

"What will you do next?" Vivien asked.

"First, I'm getting out of Seattle," Suzanne revealed.

"Do plan to return to the Colville Indian Reservation?"

"No. I want to continue my education." The reservation was the last place where Suzanne wanted to live. She didn't want to face her childhood friends and family, and she disliked the limited life style of the reservation.

"You are an intelligent woman," Vivien remarked, "What do you plan to study."

"I would like to get a Master of Social Work," Suzanne replied.

Vivien remembered that Suzanne had planned to obtain a Master of Social Work before she married Larry. She said bluntly, "I never pictured you as a social worker."

Suzanne's face wrinkled with disapproval. She was little offended at Vivien's comment, but Vivien was her best friend. She conceded, "I know what you mean. I can be calculating and aloft."

"I shouldn't judge you," Vivien said.

"Why?"

"Because I'm not a Native American woman from the Colville Indian Reservation," Vivien explained.

"But you're married to Michael."

"It still gives me no right to judge you."

"You have always been a fair person," Suzanne said. They continued dialogue about the breakup of Suzanne's marriage.

## Chapter 14

Feeling exhilarated, Suzanne Redwood walked strolled into the student union building of the Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. It was a rainy and chilly October day of 1975. Carrying an blue umbrella, she was looking for her childhood girlfriend, Trixie Spearman Tupper.

Entering the cafeteria, she first bought a large cup of hot coffee, and then she searched for her elusive girlfriend among the many students in the dining area. She looked for Trixie on the cafeteria's lower level, but she was not there. She decided to continue her search on the upper level. Eventually, she spotted Trixie sitting alone at a small wooden table near the entrance of the cafeteria.

Studying, Trixie was reading an introductory business management book. The fall quarter had just started. It was her third quarter of college at the university. Her tan cloth coat hung on a wood chair. Still youthful looking, her black hair fell to her shoulders.

Suzanne was delighted to find Trixie. Approaching Trixie's table, she cried out, "Trixie."

Looking up, Trixie saw Suzanne's joyous face and exclaimed, "Suzanne. It's you. Take a seat."

Suzanne sat down at the table and removed her yellow raincoat. She said, "Trixie. We're in school again."

"Yeah. I'm looking forward to it."

"You finally made it to college," Suzanne exclaimed.

"It's still hard to believe," Trixie said.

"You always had the brains to go to college."

"It has been a struggle," Trixie revealed, "My husband didn't want me to go to college."

"Native American men are really threatened by educated wives," Suzanne announced.

"It's just not Native American men but all men," Trixie commented.

"You're probably right," Suzanne conceded, "It's too natural for me to just speak in the terms of Native Americans."

"We are Native Americans," Trixie agreed.

"I'm glad that you understand," Suzanne said, "You're been such a

good friend."

"You need a good friend."

Suzanne thought of Trixie's unambitious husband. Trixie had unquestionably married beneath herself. She asked, "Why does Allen object to you going to college?"

"Allen is just afraid of changing," Vivien analyzed aloud, "He's so used to living on the reservation. Change is a threat to him."

"Where is Allen?" Suzanne asked. In Trixie's letters, she stated that Allen Tupper was threatening to stay on the reservation and not come to Portland, Oregon with her.

"Allen couldn't live without me," Trixie declared. She explained that when Allen and she had previously been separated because of marital problems, he would become depressed. And he would threaten to kill himself if she didn't return immediately. None of their separations had lasted more than a week. She related that Allen refused to leave the Coville Indian Reservation when it was time for her to go to Portland. When he left for the A & B Tavern, she simply packed up the kids and left for Portland. Reluctantly, Allen followed her to Portland a couple of days later.

"Does he have a job yet?" Suzanne asked.

"Yeah. Allen is working at a lumber mill in Portland," Trixie said, "It's hard work, but he makes more money than he did as a logger on the reservation."

"At least he has a job."

"We plan to return to the Colville Indian Reservation," Trixie disclosed, "when I finish college."

"You always have like living on the reservation."

"Well. It's home."

"There are few opportunities for me on the reservation," Suzanne divulged.

"Things are changing," Trixie stated. She explained how the tribe was beginning to invest its timber income into reservation business enterprises. But so far, the tribal enterprises have been largely unsuccessful, because of poor business management.

"Is that why you're going to college?" Suzanne asked.

"Yeah. I am a business administration major."

"Good for you."

"Allen doesn't want me to study business administration," Trixie revealed, "He's afraid that I might become his boss." She explained some of their worst arguments had been over her plans to major in business administration. Allen wanted her to become a school teacher rather than a business woman. He told her that the tribal council would never hire a woman to run any tribal enterprise, so

she was wasting her time majoring in business administration. She told him that there was always a first time.

"Allen is quickly becoming a stone around your neck," Suzanne said.

"He has been dragging his feet," Trixie remarked, "but I still love him."

"Wasn't Allen going to reform the tribe?"

"Yes. The key word is Allen. Allen alone was going to reform the tribal government," Trixie said.

"Didn't he run for tribal council advocating reform?"

"He ran for the tribal council three times."

"How did Allen do in the elections?" Suzanne asked.

"Allen only received fifteen votes in the first election," Trixie revealed, "He was humiliated and rarely left the house for a month. " She further explained that in his second try he received thirty votes, which only encouraged him. In his third and last try, his vote total dropped to ten votes. Mentally shattered, Allen gave up running for tribal council.

"I remember when Allen was a long-haired militant," Suzanne commented.

"Allen hasn't changed except for the long hair."

"Allen has become male chauvinist."

Trixie was surprised that Suzanne used the term - male chauvinist. Suzanne had never used it before. She replied, "He always was a male chauvinist."

Recalling her high school days, Suzanne remembered the trio of Allen Tupper, Michael Dodd and Ralph Cragmont and how they had mocked her. She said, "Allen has been male chauvinist at least since high school."

"Suzanne. You seem to be bitter about men," Trixie said.

"No. I'm not. I'm getting over my divorce."

"It must have been rough on you and the children."

"We've survived," Suzanne revealed, "The divorce settlement was lucrative. I'm not hurting for money."

"Well. You look great -Suzanne," Trixie said, "You could always attract good-looking men."

The topic of dating was threatening to Suzanne, who still needed time to recover from her divorce. She replied, "I first want to obtain my Master of Social Work and get a job before I get involved again."

"It's up to you."

"I'm in no hurry to remarry," Suzanne announced, "I have nothing to prove to anyone or myself."

"Well. It would be a mistake to remarry too quickly," Trixie said.

"You don't have worry about me."

"Whatever happened to Larry?" Originally, Trixie didn't want to mention the subject, but her curiosity got the best of her.

Suzanne first looked with dismay at Trixie, and she then thought about her question. She finally said, "Larry is doing okay."

She explained that Mary Fallworth had a baby boy with blue eyes and blonde hair. Once the divorce was final, Larry had married Mary in a private wedding. Larry had signed the birth of the certificate of the baby boy, who was named Chet Bucknell II.

Since the divorce, Larry has visited Crystal and Stephanie, but he has refused to have them spend a weekend with him. He said that weekend stays would come later when the kids got older. Crystal can't understand why she cannot stay with her father.

"Have you given upon White men?" Trixie asked bluntly. She has learned to speak the unspeakable with Suzanne. Anyway, Suzanne might be disenchanted with Caucasian men. Trixie did have a few Native American male friends whom she wanted to introduce to Suzanne.

"No. I haven't," Suzanne replied wryly. Only Trixie had the tenacity to ask her such a bold question. Trixie always thought in terms of Native American race. It was hard to persuade her that for some women, such as her, race was not an overriding consideration.

"I just thought...."

"I don't blame Larry's race," Suzanne replied, "I'll date and marry whom I like."

"Are you interested in Native American men?"

Suzanne stared in Trixie's excited eyes. Trixie was trying to be a matchmaker. She answered, "I'm not interested in meeting any man right now. His race wouldn't make a difference to me. But he has be attractive, be a professional and make a good income."

"I was just wondering."

"You wouldn't ask the same question of Michael Dodd," Suzanne said, "And he married a White woman."

"Well. He's not divorced," Trixie responded.

"You're always applying a double standard to me."

"Well. I happen to like Vivien Renwick."

"And you didn't like Larry Bucknell."

"No. I didn't"

"It's simple as that."

"Suzanne. You're my best friend," Trixie said, "I'm just concerned about you."

"I'll keep care of myself." They continued their conversation, but they intentionally avoided controversial subjects.

Carrying a black briefcase, Suzanne Redwood plodded through the snow-covered campus of Portland State University. The snow had quit falling, and the cloudy sky was beginning to clear. It was a wintery day in December, 1977. The snowstorm was an unusual occurrence for Portland, Oregon, where snow was seldom a problem. She could hardly see the sidewalk leading to the student union building.

Entering the building, she headed to the cafeteria where she purchased her usual large cup of coffee. After purchasing a newspaper from a vending machine, she found an empty table in the dining area. Removing her coat, she sat down and started to read her newspaper. She was waiting for Trixie Spearman Tupper to appear.

Entering the cafeteria, Trixie looked for Suzanne. She had removed her heavy blue jacket. She sighted Suzanne sitting in a corner of the cafeteria. After purchasing a medium cup of coffee, she walked to where Suzanne was sitting. Nearing the table, she cried out enthusiastically, "Suzanne!"

Suzanne looked up and saw Trixie. She said, "Trixie. Take a seat."

Sitting down at the table, Trixie blurted out, "Well. We made it through college."

"It was a hard grind."

"Suzanne. You hardly studied."

Suzanne remembered the countless nights when she studied until midnight. She said, "It only looked like I didn't study hard."

"Do you plan to attend graduation?" Trixie asked.

"Sure. My parents, Tom and Pauline, are coming down from Coulee Dam," Suzanne answered.

"My parents are coming too."

"It has been a long two years," Suzanne said.

"And three months," Trixie added.

"It's hard to believe that we're done."

"I had my last final test this morning."

"The same with me," Suzanne replied.

"What are you going to do with Master of Social Work degree," Trixie asked Suzanne.

"Well. I got a big surprise for you."

"A surprise!"

"I'm going to Washington. D.C.," Suzanne announced.

"Gosh. That's a big move," Trixie exclaimed, "What will you do in Washington, D.C.?"

"I'm going to work for the Indian Health Service."

"Are you becoming an administrator?"

"No. I will be a trainee with the mental health program."

"Mental Health! I thought that you studied to be a social worker," Trixie said.

"You've forgotten that I have a psychology degree," Suzanne explained, "and anyway I emphasized counseling in getting my M.S.W."

"Why do you want to go to Washington, D.C.?"

"For the adventure and experience."

"I know a few Native Americans who went to Washington, D.C.," Trixie said, "and they didn't like the fast pace and countless people."

"Well. I've been living in Seattle and Portland for fourteen years," Suzanne said, "I'm used to living in urban areas."

"Seattle and Portland are nothing like Washington, D.C."

"Maybe not."

"And the cost-of-living is high," Trixie offered.

"I'm not worried about the cost-of-living," Suzanne said. She explained that Larry pays substantial child support and that she has plenty of money left over from the divorce settlement. She was also certain that she would receive a few fast promotions, because her job had a several grade ratings.

"Why don't you return to the Colville Indian Reservation?" Trixie asked, "The reservation needs people with M.S.W. degrees."

"No. I just don't want to return to the reservation."

"Why?"

"Because I want to meet someone whom I can marry," Suzanne said, "There aren't many eligible men on the reservation."

"Yeah. But if you get married in Washington, D.C., you'll never return to Pacific Northwest," Trixie pointed out.

"Well. I can't do anything about that."

"At least you could stay in Seattle or Portland."

"No. I want to get away from Seattle and Larry."

"It's your decision."

"I just need to get away," Suzanne said.

"Well. I'll miss you."

Wanting to change the subject, Suzanne thought about Trixie's business administration degree. She had worked so hard to get it. She asked, "Trixie. Are you returning to the Colville Indian Reservation?"

"Yes. Allen and I are leaving for the reservation after graduation," Trixie replied.

"Do you have a job lined up?"

"No, not yet."

"Has the tribe offered you a job?" Suzanne asked.

"I haven't heard anything from the Colville Tribe."

"But you have an business administration degree," Suzanne said, "and you graduated with honors."

"I've put my application for in several jobs," Trixie disclosed.

"What's wrong?"

"The tribal council must be afraid of me."

"They're afraid of you, because you're a woman," Suzanne said.

"It's possible."

In her mind Suzanne quickly counted the number of tribal business enterprises with past or present female managers. She could not identify any. She offered, "The tribe has never hired a woman to run any of its enterprises."

Trixie was reluctant to admit to Suzanne that the tribe didn't want to hire her. She said, "The tribe has its problems with sexism."

"I've heard that all of the tribal enterprises are losing money," Suzanne divulged.

"I've heard they are almost bankrupt," Trixie agreed.

"The tribal councilmen are male chauvinists."

"I'm afraid you're right about the tribal council."

Suzanne thought about the tribal council and how it was dominated by men. The same was true of the tribal government. She speculated on how the cycle could be broken. She said, "Trixie. You should run for the tribal council."

Trixie was surprised by the suggestion. She never viewed herself as a possible candidate for tribal council. Few women had been ever elected to the council. She said, "I don't think I could win seat on the tribal council."

"Well. You'll be better candidate than your husband."

"Anyone could do better than Allen," Trixie humored. She recalled her husband's disastrous attempts to win a seat on the tribal council.

"Trixie. You do have a chance to win a tribal council seat," Suzanne encouraged, "You're educated."

"But I would have to run against my Uncle Ned."

"Uncle Ned is probably person who's keeping from getting a job," Suzanne speculated.

Trixie recalled ponderous Uncle Ned, who had been on the council for twenty years. He was a man of few words, who emphasized the traditional role of women. She said, "I must admit that Uncle Ned is a little backward."

"Backward!," Suzanne exclaimed, "He'd feel more comfortable living in the stone age."



"But my parents would be upset with me if I ran for tribal council," Trixie disclosed.

"It's up to you."

"I'm not ready."

"Does Allen have a job?" Suzanne asked.

"No. But he's still trying."

"It sounds like the tribe does not want you back."

"It's looking that way," Trixie conceded.

"Once a tribal member becomes educated, the tribal council does not want them back," Suzanne analyzed.

"I hope that you're wrong about the tribal council."

"Well. Look at all the White people the tribal council has hired," Suzanne pointed out, "I bet you that there is a qualified tribal member for every position that they hold."

Trixie was astonished at Suzanne's militant words. She had never perceived Suzanne as a radical, but she was sounding like one. She replied, "I've never heard you talk this way before."

"Well. I'm still a Native American," Suzanne said, "in spite of once being married to Larry."

"I thought that all the true Native Americans were on the tribal council," Trixie quipped.

"Trixie. You have a chance to change things. "

"I just have my doubts."

"Well. You should do it." They then talked about their families and other matters.

Suzanne Redwood maneuvered her car through the iced covered streets of the town of Coulee Dam. A gentle snow was falling from the January, 1978 sky, and the crystalline air was cold. The surrounding hills and mountains looked like an old Christmas postcard. The Grand Coulee Dam area was covered with twelve inches of snow, but the streets were freshly plowed.

It had been a difficult drive to Coulee Dam from Portland, Oregon. Once she reached the Cascade Mountains, the state highways were icy and snow-covered. At times, she doubted that she would make to Coulee Dam through the ice and snow. In spite of the weather conditions, she was excited about visiting her parents on the Colville Indian Reservation.

Speeding down a back street, Suzanne could see the residential community where her parents lived. A few minutes later, she pulled into the driveway of her parents' house. The area had changed little since she lived there as a youth. Her children, Crystal and Stephanie, were riding in the backseat. She said, "Kids. We're here."

"We get to see grandma and grandpa," Stephanie exclaimed.

"Let's get out and play in the snow," Crystal cried out.

"No, kids. I want you to first say hello to your grandparents," Suzanne directed.

"Okay," Crystal replied.

Exiting her car, Suzanne waited for Crystal and Stephanie to climb out of the car. She donned her red ski jacket. Crystal was wearing a blue ski jacket and pants. Stephanie was attired in a tan coat, a heavy green sweater and black pants. When Crystal and Stephanie crawled out of the car, Suzanne led them up to the front door of the modest house. Turning the door knob, she opened the door and let Crystal and Stephanie into the house. Hurrying into the house, Crystal and Stephanie searched for their grandparents. Suzanne decided to wait in the living room while her children found her parents, Tom and Pauline.

Crystal yelled to Stephanie, "Go into the kitchen and find grandma. I'll search out back for grandpa."

Stephanie quickly found Pauline in the kitchen and cried out, "Grandma. I'm here."

Now an elderly woman with gray hair, Pauline smiled down at a happy Stephanie. She said, "Stephanie! It's good to see you."

"Mom is here."

"Where is your mother?"

"She's in the living room."

"Let's go into the living room," Pauline directed.

Stephanie hurried into the living room, because she wanted to get Suzanne's permission to play in the soft snow outside. The December snow in Portland had only lasted a couple of days, and the snow was wet. It was nothing like the dry snow of Coulee Dam.

Walking into the living room, Pauline saw Suzanne sitting on the couch. She said, "Suzanne. I was worried all morning about you and the kids."

"We ran into ice and snow once we reached the mountains," Suzanne disclosed, "But it wasn't that bad of a drive."

"I'm glad you made it safely."

Tom and Crystal came walking into the living room. Crystal has found Tom in his workshop working on his snow blower. Rapidly graying, Tom was wearing a blue work shirt and blue bib overalls.

Seeing Suzanne and Stephanie, Tom exclaimed, "How's my daughter and Stephanie."

"I'm fine," Suzanne said.

"I'm fine," Stephanie parroted. She kept looking out the large window in living room at the snow covered hills and mountains.

"We have an echo in the living room," Tom laughed loudly.

"How's Crystal," Pauline asked Crystal, who like her sister was anxious to get outside into the snow.

"Fine," Crystal answered.

"What grade is Crystal in?" Tom asked.

"Crystal is in the third grade," Suzanne replied, "and Stephanie is kindergarten."

"They're beautiful children," Tom said. He eyed their dark hair and eyes and olive complexion. When he first saw them, he was surprised that they looked so much like Suzanne and not their father, Larry Bucknell. Their hair and complexion was lighter than Suzanne's.

"Crystal and Stephanie want to play in the snow," Suzanne revealed, "They've been talking about it all morning."

"I want to build a snowman," Crystal said.

"So do I," Stephanie cried out.

"Let them go outside," Pauline suggested, "We got plenty of time to talk to them."

Looking at Crystal and Stephanie, Suzanne said, "You can go outside but stay off the road. "

"We will," Crystal said.

The two girls immediately headed to the front door and exited the house. They were soon busy building a snowman in the front yard.

"Many days are you staying?" Tom asked.

"For a week," Suzanne replied.

"Where's your luggage?" Pauline asked.

"Its in the trunk of the car," Suzanne answered, "We can get it later."

Tom sat down on his easy chair, and Pauline sat down on the couch with Suzanne. The living room was simply furnished, because Tom and Pauline didn't believe in being extravagant. Their extra money went to their children or the local protestant charismatic church.

Suzanne said, "I've got some big news to tell you."

"You're getting married again," Pauline exclaimed.

"No. I don't have a steady boyfriend."

"Then what?" Tom asked.

"I'm going to Washington, D.C."

"What!" Pauline yelled out. She couldn't believe what she heard.

"Yes. I'm moving to Washington, D.C.," Suzanne disclosed, "I got a job with the Indian Health Service."

"Doing what?" Tom asked. He was displeased that his daughter was moving across the country.

"At first I will be a trainee in the mental counseling program."

"Can't you find a job on the reservation or in Portland?" Tom asked.

"I don't want to work on the reservation."

"Why?" Pauline asked, "Your family is here."

"I do love you," Suzanne said, "but I need to get away."

"Well. Washington, D.C. is quite a move," Tom remarked.

"I know. But I want to work in Native American affairs," Suzanne declared, "and to begin meeting men again."

"Suzanne. I wish you would change your mind," Tom pleaded, "Washington, D.C. is a rough place."

"Father. It isn't that bad."

"But you've never been to Washington, D.C.," Tom said.

"I've got friends who told what to expect."

"What if you married an Easterner," Pauline said, "We'll hardly ever see you and the kids."

"I don't plan to stay permanently in Washington, D.C."

"Well. It's a big decision," Tom commented.

"I've already made up my mind," Suzanne said firmly.

"What does your ex-husband say about the move?" Pauline asked. She thought of Larry's visitation rights under the divorce decree. It was possible that Larry could stop Suzanne's move.

"Larry is against the move," Suzanne revealed, "He has threatened to take me to court over Crystal and Stephanie."

"Larry does a right to visit his children," Tom stated.

Suzanne was annoyed by her parents apparent support of Larry. "Well. My attorney is working on it," she disclosed, "He doesn't see any problems with Larry's visitation rights."

"Is Michael Dodd your lawyer," Tom asked innocently.

Suzanne couldn't imagine the husband of her best friend handling the divorce. Anyway, she still felt uncomfortable around Michael. She said, "No. Michael is too much of a friend."

"Michael is a Native American."

"Yeah."

"Michael is a good lawyer," Tom declared.

"I didn't say he wasn't a good lawyer."

Pauline could see her daughter was becoming upset, and she saw the need to change the subject. She said. "When are you leaving for Washington, D.C.?"

"I have to be there by March 15th," Suzanne replied. She explained that a moving company would move her furniture and personal items to Washington, D.C. With the children, she planned to drive across the country.

"It will be a long drive," Tom said.

"I'll be okay," Suzanne said. She explained that she planned to drive south to stay free of snow and head across the Southwest to the South then up the Eastern seaboard to Washington, D.C. She planned to give herself plenty of time to get there.

"Well. You have a good travel plans," Tom said.

"Will we see you and kids before you go back East?" Pauline asked.

"Yes. I plan to stop here before driving south. "

"It's a little out of your way," Tom commented.

"It won't be a problem," Suzanne said, "The snow should be gone by then, and roads should be manageable."

"At least in this part of the country," Tom said, "the snow should be gone."

"The kids and I will be okay." Suzanne further explained that she planned to live in Maryland. The Indian Health Service was located in Rockville, Maryland. So she would not experience the hazards of commuting to downtown Washington, D.C. on a daily basis.

"Well. We're going to miss you," Pauline said.

"Mother. I'll be visiting you at least twice a year," Suzanne said.

"That's good to hear," Pauline replied.

"I plan to have a good time in Washington, D.C." They then talked about the latest news on the Colville Indian Reservation.

Michael Dodd drove his car into the town of Coulee Dam. The early May day of 1978 was pleasant and sunny. The temperature was hovering in the seventies. The business district was full of shoppers. Many of town residents were busy cutting their lawns or working on their homes.

Vivien Renwick Dodd was in the front seat, and their two children, Bradley and Sarah, were riding in the back seat. Four years old, Bradley was wearing a blue sweat shirt and yellow pants. Two and half years, Sarah was dress in a red outfit.

Michael steered his car through town and headed to the residential area where his father, Stanley, lived. He planned to visit his father and stepmother, Kay. Parking in front of his father's house, they exited car. With Michael carrying Sarah in his arms, they walked up to the house.

Nearing retirement age, Stanley Dodd heard a car pulled up in front of the house. Kay and he were in the backyard relaxing on some lounge chairs, which were situated on a concrete patio. A redwood fence surrounded the large backyard, and the lawn had been recently cut.

Getting to his feet, Stanley walked to the gate of the fence and opened the wood gate. He sighted Michael and his family moving towards the house. He yelled out, "Michael. We're back here."

Hearing Stanley's voice, Michael looked toward the wood gate. Seeing his father, he said loudly, "Father. We made it."

"Come in backyard," Stanley directed.

Michael walked toward the gate. Holding Bradley's hand, Vivien followed. Stanley waited at the gate.

"You're looking good," Michael said to Stanley.

"Yeah. I'm feeling good." Stanley led to the party to the patio where Kay was lying on a lounge chair.

Observing Michael and Vivien, Kay said, "Michael and Vivien. How are you doing?"

"We're fine," Vivien replied.

"Let me get you a couple chairs," Stanley said.

"I'll help you," Michael said.

"Michael. Let me hold - Sarah," Kay requested. Michael handed Sarah to Kay, who sat up on the lounge chair.

Michael and Stanley ambled to a yellow metal storage shed and got three lawn chairs. They set up the lawn chairs on the patio, and Michael and Vivien sat down.

Returning to his lounge chair, Stanley eyed his grandchildren, Bradley and Sarah. He said, "Bradley and Sarah have sure grown."

"Yeah. They're growing like weeds," Michael commented.

"Bradley. Come here," Stanley directed.

"Bradley. Go to your grandfather," Vivien directed.

Bradley walked over to his grandfather who lifted him into his arms. Stanley exclaimed, "He is a strong boy."

"Bradley takes after his father," Vivien said.

"And Sarah is such a pretty little girl," Kay said, "She looks exactly like Vivien."

"Michael. How did you arrange that?" Stanley asked.

"I don't know," Michael, "Vivien must have strong genes."

"How is your law practice going?" Stanley asked.

"It's beginning to pick up."

"Are still doing a lot of domestic relations work," Kay asked.

"I'm still mainly a divorce lawyer."

"Michael is thinking of joining another attorney," Vivien revealed.

"It makes a lot of sense," Michael said, "We could share office space, a secretary, office machinery, and some office expenses."

"It's a good idea," Stanley said, though he knew little about the practice of law.

"Have you move into your new house," Kay asked Vivien.

"Yes. You'll have to see it in person," Vivien said proudly, "We have all the room we need, and it's a beautiful house."

"We should be in Seattle in June," Kay replied.

"I'm looking forward to seeing your new house," Stanley said.

"I like the location," Michael stated, "It's close to where I have my office."

"At least I know where to look," Stanley said, "Seattle is such a big city."

"No. I live in Bellevue," Michael corrected.

"What's the difference?" Stanley asked.

"None," Vivien commented, "The weather is all the same."

"Vivien. Are you still working?" Kay asked.

"Yes. But I no longer work for the Seattle Native American Voice," Vivien revealed, "I'm working for an advertising company."

"You're moving up in the world," Stanley said.

"Vivien has a talent for calligraphy," Michael divulged.

"Well. It pays more than being an editor of a small newspaper," Vivien said, "And I'm learning the advertising business."

"Vivien and I need to go the A & B Tavern tonight," Michael disclosed, "We need someone to watch Bradley and Sarah."

"We would be pleased to watch your children," Kay said.

"We plan to meet Trixie and Alien Tupper there," Michael said.

"I heard that they were back in the area," Stanley responded.

"Trixie has been going to college in Portland," Michael said, "She received a business administration degree."

"Is Trixie going to work for the tribe," Stanley asked.

"Trixie has been trying to get a job with the tribe," Michael explained, "But they haven't hired her yet."

"The tribe could use some good management," Stanley said.

"Yes. It could."

"Trixie is the person to do it," Vivien added.

About seven o'clock in the evening, Michael and Vivien entered the notorious and rowdy A & B Tavern in business district of the town of Grand Coulee. They immediately sighted Trixie and Allen Tupper sitting alone at a weathered wooden table towards the back of the tavern. A large cold pitcher of beer sat on their table and with two beer glasses half full of beer.

Short and brunette, the bartender was a woman in her fifties. Her name was Kathy Cole, and she was part Native American, but she was not enrolled with the Colville Tribe. She had a loud voice which could be heard clear across the tavern. Going from table to table, she was busy serving the patrons of the tavern, who were mainly members of the Colville Tribe. Wearing motley t-shirts and jeans, ten customers were sitting on bar stools at the bar counter. Cans, bottles, glasses, and pitchers

of beer were in front of the customers. Playing country and western music, the jukebox music was glaring, and the three pool tables were occupied by games of eight ball. The sound of ricocheting pool balls could heard throughout the tavern.

Observing Michael and Vivien at the door, Allen frantically waved at them to come to the table. He said to Trixie, "Michael and Vivien are here."

Trixie glanced at the door. Looking out of place in the tavern, Michael and Vivien were moving towards their table. Her face turn to joy, and she uttered, "Michael and Vivien. You made it."

"Hi Trixie and Allen," Vivien said.

"You're looking beautiful as usual," Trixie remarked to Vivien. She only could smile at Trixie, who was pretty herself.

"Take a seat," Allen instructed.

"Sure." Michael responded tersely. Vivien and he sat down at the table. Allen still looked youthful, though he was thirty-three years. His work as a logger had kept him lean and muscular. Michael wished that he could get more physical exercise, but his law practice kept him constantly occupied from early morning to early evening.

"Let me get two more beer glasses from Kathy," Allen said. He waved to Kathy at the bar counter, who immediately came over to the table to take Allen's order.

"What do you want?" Kathy asked.

"We need two more beer glasses," Allen said.

Kathy retreated to the bar counter and returned with two beer glasses. Setting them in front of Vivien and Michael, she walked back to the bar.

Michael grasped the pitcher and filled the two beer glasses with cold beer. Taking a swallow from his glass, he declared, "There's nothing like cold beer."

"Vivien. How are Bradley and Sarah doing?" Trixie asked. She adored their children. She also liked the democratic Vivien Renwick who was so committed to liberal causes.

"They are fine, " Vivien said, "And your four boys?"

Trixie's four boys were reaching their teens and were good looking Native American boys. They were more devoted to their mother than father.

"They're doing well in school," Trixie said proudly. They studied hard and received good grades, and their teachers like them.

"They're really four smart kids," Allen agreed eagerly.

"Are you glad to be back on the reservation?" Vivien asked Trixie. She knew that Trixie and Allen had just return from Portland, Oregon where Trixie attended Portland State University.



Michael and Vivien had received an formal invitation to attend her graduation. They managed to make it to the graduation, and they watched Trixie and Suzanne Redwood graduate.

"It's where I want to be."

"Allen. Have you found a job yet? Michael asked.

"Yeah. I'm working for a logger."

"Is Trixie working?" Michael asked.

"I just went to work for the tribal post and pole plant," Trixie announced, "I'm the manager."

"You made a smart decision to major in business administration," Michael said.

"She doesn't know a thing about trees," Allen grumbled. He didn't like the idea of Trixie working in a managerial job, especially in the forest product industry. He considered himself an authority on the subject, but he had few listeners.

"I'll learn."

"You got to work with trees," Allen asserted.

"You can't learn anything about post and poles," Trixie humored, "by just stacking them."

"I've never stacked post and poles."

"Trixie. It's good to hear you got a job as a manager," Vivien said.

"I'm really busy trying to line up new customers," Trixie explained. "It's a highly competitive business." She explained that there are many post and pole plants in the Pacific Northwest.

Allen remarked smugly, "The tribe shouldn't have bought that old broken-down plant. They should have built a new one."

"Allen is right," Trixie agreed, "Our post and pole plant is too antiquated. It's constantly closed, because it needs to be repaired."

"The tribe should quit being cheap and build a new plant," Allen declared. He said that the tribe owned many acres of timber land containing lodge pole pine. Thus, the tribe didn't need to purchase the lodge pole pine.

Michael was surprised that the tribe owned so much lodge pole pine. He asked, "Does the tribe have money to build a new post and pole plant?"

"The tribes has plenty of money," Allen blurted out.

"The tribe couldn't lose by building a new plant," Trixie opined, "We could increase our output."

"Is there a market for the additional production?" Vivien asked.

"We can't meet the demand now," Trixie disclosed.

"Are you planning to expand your market?" Vivien asked.

"We're thinking of selling our post and poles in the Seattle area," Trixie stated.

"There's a lot of people over there," Allen offered. He was beginning to feel insignificant as his wife, Trixie, was clearly knowledgeable about marketing. He had a hard time trying to think of something to say. And he was impressed with the intelligence of Vivien.

"I've already contacted a number of hardware outlets," Trixie divulged, "They have expressed interest in out posts and poles."

"It's a good potential market," Vivien said, "I've done a number of market studies for our advertising clients." She named her clients and explained what she had done for them.

"Someday we should talk a little business," Trixie said.

"Any time," Vivien replied.

"How is the tribal council treating you as a manager?" Michael asked. Because Trixie was a woman manager in an industry dominated by men, he thought she might be having problems with the tribal council.

"Well. They hired me."

"The post and pole plant was about to go bankrupt when the tribal council hired her," Allen said eagerly.

"It was poorly managed," Trixie revealed, "I suppose the tribal council had nothing to lose by making me the manager."

"You're being too hard on yourself," Michael replied, "You're qualified to be the manager."

"You do have a business administration degree," Vivien said.

"Well. I think it's true," Trixie said, "But I'm going to prove them wrong."

"You'll be a political threat to the tribal council," Allen announced, "and they'll fire you."

"I don't plan to run for the tribal council," Trixie asserted.

"You couldn't possibly win a seat on the tribal council," Allen asserted. He remembered painfully his three abortive attempts to win a seat. His tavern friends had deserted him and voted for Trixie's Uncle Ned. The losses were devastating to him.

Trixie didn't like the tone of Allen's voice. He was always trying to hold her back. She knew by mentioning Suzanne Redwood's name it would make him angry. He blamed Suzanne for getting her to go to college. She said, "Suzanne Redwood thinks that I should run for the tribal council."

"Suzanne hasn't lived on this reservation for fifteen years," Allen barked, "She doesn't know a thing about tribal politics." He had never liked the pretentious and snobbish Suzanne Redwood. She was always giving Trixie ideas about improving herself. He dreaded when Trixie received a letter or telephone call from Suzanne. He

wanted to be the only person in the house to make decisions.

"Well. Suzanne thinks that I can win," Trixie announced.

"You'll only receive two votes," Alien snarled, "Suzanne's and your own vote."

"Three vote," Michael said.

"Thank you Michael," Trixie said.

Allen looked fiercely at Michael. He didn't appreciate anyone encouraging Trixie, even if it was one of his best friends. But he needed the friendship of the well-educated and professional Michael Dodd. He said in exasperation, "Let's drop the subject."

"Good idea," Trixie agreed, smiling at Allen.

"Michael. How is your law practice going?" Allen asked. He wanted to persuade Michael to return to the Colville Reservation. But Michael had been reluctant to leave Seattle and live on the reservation. He cited the lack of job opportunities for Vivien, and he pointed out that Grand Coulee Dam area already had two attorneys.

"I'm still primarily a divorce lawyer," Michael answered, "But my law practice is building up."

"Michael is thinking of joining another lawyer," Vivien commented.

"You should become the lawyer for the tribe," Allen said.

"Michael. That's a good idea," Vivien urged. She didn't want Michael to stay a domestic relations lawyer the rest of legal career. She had already told him that she was willing to relocate to the Colville Indian Reservation whenever he wished. If they relocated, she planned to buy the Coulee Dam News or to open up a clothing store.

"It's not that easy," Michael said, "The law firm of Fuller & Fuller already has the attorney contract with the tribe to provide legal services."

"But they are a Seattle law firm," Allen pointed out, "I'm talking about a tribal lawyer stationed on the reservation."

"Fuller & Fuller may be excellent attorneys," Trixie said, "But the tribe pays a lot of money to them."

"Too much money," Allen cried out.

"It's an interesting idea," Michael said, "But the tribal council has never approached me about working for them."

"If Trixie is a political threat to the council," Vivien analyzed, "then Michael would be a double threat."

"Vivien has a point," Trixie said.

"The tribal council does not want anyone returning to the reservation who could change things," Allen said, "including my wife."

"The tribal council is pretty backward," Trixie said.

"The tribal council isn't going to hire me as the tribal attorney," Michael said, "There's no reason to talk about it further."

"Things could change," Allen said.

"Yeah. Trixie could get elected to the tribal council," Vivien remarked, "and change things."

Allen made a wry face at Vivien. Maybe Vivien was another Suzanne Redwood. He cried out, "She'll never get elected."

"I have no plans to run for the tribal council," Trixie asserted.

Michael thought of Suzanne Redwood. Since their high school days, she had matured into a beautiful woman, but she was still annoyingly pretentious. Because of Suzanne's friendship with his wife, Vivien, he had become over years better acquainted with her. He felt deep sympathy for her when Larry Bucknell divorced her. He perceived that wimpish Larry was highly dependent on her, and like Vivien, he suspected Larry's father, Chet, had wrecked the seemingly-stable marriage. He asked Trixie, "Have heard from Suzanne Redwood in Washington, D.C.?"

"Yes, I have. She's doing great," Trixie answered, "Suzanne lives near Rockville, Maryland." She said that Suzanne liked her job with the mental health program of the Indian Health Service. She has rented a two bedroom apartment, and her children. Crystal and Stephanie, were doing well in school. She was beginning to date men.

"It won't take long for Suzanne to get married again," Vivien predicted.

"I hope that she finds a better man than Larry Bucknell," Michael said.

"Suzanne was just unlucky with Larry," Vivien responded, "There are plenty of good men out there."

"She has always been a social climber," Michael blurted out. He remembered when Suzanne and he were in high school. Few of her classmates - Native American or Caucasian - would ask her for dates because of her condescending attitude. She made them feel unwanted and inferior. When she did date, she dated young men who were at least two years older than her and who were clearly college bound.

"Suzanne has beauty and style to attract young men," Trixie asked, "She managed to attract Larry Bucknell."

"It was a good marriage when it lasted," Michael said.

"Suzanne will find an affluent and respectable man," Vivien smiled. She knew that her comment was bound to annoy Michael. Suzanne's social climbing had always irked him. When they first met, he had accused Suzanne of being too good for Native American men. He eventually dropped the charge when he discovered that Suzanne and she were good friends and roommates.

"She'll find a man," Michael predicted. The group continued to talk and drink until 11:00 p.m. when they decided to leave the tavern.

## Chapter 15

Suzanne Redwood was admiring herself in a large mirror above her dresser in her bedroom. She was wearing an expensive black dress with white polka dots. She had spent the past two hours preparing for a date with an attractive man, named Grayson Casewell.

At thirty-five years old, she was worried that her lovely face was showing signs of aging. Though she was a mature woman, she liked what she saw in the mirror. She was confident that she was beautiful as ever in spite of her thirty-five years. Her figure was shapely, and her abdomen was flat. In the morning she had her soft black hair cut, and she adored the work of the hair stylist. Her makeup had softened the brown complexion of her facial skin and accented her pretty brown eyes. She was satisfied with the results of her toil.

She thought about the men in her life. She was beginning to fear that she won't be able to find a man who was acceptable to her. At times, she wished that she wasn't so picky about men. But at a minimum, she wanted a professional man with money and good taste. She feared that her age and her race was beginning to work against her. She was anxious about, finding a man.

Three months ago, Suzanne had met the handsome and articulate Grayson Casewell at a reception in Washington, D.C. Forty-one years old, Grayson was six-foot tall, a lean man with dark hair and gray eyes. He had a light complexion. He told her that he had been a lawyer with a prestigious law firm in Washington, D.C. But two years ago, he had decided to quit the law firm and set up his own law office: Grayson Casewell & Associates, Attorneys At Law. He explained to her that he had set up a lucrative law practice in international commerce. Trusting him, she had believed every one of his golden words.

Four weeks later he had telephoned Suzanne for a date. He told her that he had remembered her from the reception. She was surprised that he had called her. After one glorious date, she was immediately impressed and excited with smooth-talking Grayson. He was urbane and charming. She couldn't believe her good fortune, and she quickly decided to continue dating him. They had dated two more times. He liked the children, and he had even brought them gifts. She discovered that Grayson had been married twice before. He

was incapable of fathering children, because of a low sperm count. He had grown up in New Jersey, and his grandparents had come to America from England.

Hearing knocking at the door of her apartment, she left her roomy bedroom and walked to the door. Opening the door, she saw that it was the next door neighbor, Lindsey Williams. Fifty-five old, Lindsey was five and half feet tall and plump. Her red hair was beginning to turn gray, and she had hazel eyes.

Suzanne said, "Hello Lindsey. Come in."

Obediently, Lindsey entered the two-bedroom apartment. This was the third time that she babysat for Suzanne. Lindsey liked babysitting for Suzanne, as she did pay her well. She was also fond of Suzanne's children, of Crystal and Stephanie. The two children affectionately call her auntie. Crystal and Stephanie were watching television in the living room. She said, "Suzanne. I hope that I'm not too early."

"No. You're on time."

"It's pretty warm outside," Lindsey remarked.

"Summers are always hot and humid in Washington, D.C."

"How long have you been in Washington, D.C.?"

"Since March of 1978," Suzanne answered.

"You've been here only two years," Lindsey stated.

"So far."

Lindsey had never asked Suzanne about her race. There were many dark-skinned women in Washington, D.C. Because of her facial features and straight black hair, she surmised that Suzanne had to be a Native American. She asked, "Are you a Native American?"

"Yes. I'm from the Colville Indian Reservation."

"Where that?"

"In the Pacific Northwest," Suzanne answered.

"I've never met a Native American before," Lindsey said.

"Well. There aren't many Native American in Washington, D.C. area."

"Your children have a lighter complexion than you."

"Their father was Caucasian."

"They are beautiful children."

"Thank you."

"Will you be home tonight?" Lindsey asked. She had babysat for other single women with children, who would invariably spend the night with their boyfriends.

"Yes. I should be home by midnight," Suzanne replied. She annoyed at Lindsey's inquiry.

"If you're going to be late, give me a ring. "

"I shouldn't be late," Suzanne said. She mentioned that Crystal and Stephanie had already eaten dinner and that if anyone got hungry, there was cooked food in the refrigerator.

"I'm always on a diet," Lindsey disclosed.

"Well. You're welcome to eat anything you want."

Suzanne walked to the living room where Crystal and Stephanie were watching television. She said loudly, "Crystal and Stephanie."

The two girls looked at their well-dressed mother. They knew that she was going on a date with Grayson Casewell. They liked the witty man, because he brought them small gifts. He was fun to be around, and he adored them.

"Mother. What is it?" Crystal asked.

"I want you to obey Lindsey while I'm gone," Suzanne said, "I should be home around midnight."

"Can I stay up late?" Crystal asked.

"She shouldn't be a problem," Lindsey remarked, "And I would like to have her company."

"Well. I'll leave it up to Lindsey," Suzanne declared. Hearing a knock at the door, she knew that it had to be Grayson Casewell. Walking to the door, she opened it. Standing in the doorway was her date for this Saturday evening in Washington, D.C. Looking handsome, Grayson was attired in a dark blue suit and red necktie. His hair had been recently cut and styled. She loved the smell of his cologne. He was everything that she wanted her former husband, Larry Bucknell, to be. He was assertive and decisive.

"Suzanne, I'm here," Grayson announced. In the past month, Suzanne had brought some cheer to his crisis-filled life. In the last two years, his life had experienced one crisis after another. First, though he was a bright lawyer, his law firm had terminated his partnership. They charged that he had a drinking and drug problem and that he was unwilling to undergo treatment for his problems. Secondly, his second marriage had ended abruptly, as his second wife had found a more loving man who was alcohol and drug free. Over the years, he had grown cold towards his high-bred wife, who was only interested in her socialite life. She found an agreeable man of high class who was willing to do her bidding. Thirdly, his law practice was struggling, and it lacked the prestige of his former law firm. He didn't want to be a small-time lawyer. Life was becoming intolerably stressful for him.

For Grayson, meeting Suzanne Redwood was a godsend. An obvious social climber, she was pretty and well-educated. He thought that in many ways, she was still a simple Native American woman who erroneously believed that she was high born. He was excited by her primitive ways and



exaggerated expectations, but she had the right poise and sophistication that he desired in a woman. He only hoped that her expectations were lower than his first two wives. He desired a woman who was dependent on him and who satisfied with his lifestyle. He sensed that Suzanne needed a man, and he hoped to be that man.

"I'm ready to leave," Suzanne said excitedly, "Let me get my purse." Going into the living room, she told the babysitter and her children that she was leaving on her date. Crabbing her leather purse, she headed to the apartment door where Grayson was waiting for her.

"You look beautiful tonight," Grayson beamed.

"Thank you," Suzanne replied, smiling. A compliment from a handsome man was what she needed most.

"We're going to a French restaurant in Georgetown," he revealed.

"I like going to French restaurants."

"After we eat, let's head to a night club," he suggested.

"Yes. I'd like to do some dancing," she responded.

Exiting the apartment building, they climbed into his luxury sports car and sped down the freeway to Washington, D.C. It was early evening, and the June, 1980 day was still hot and humid. The sky was hazy, and sun still hovered in the sky. The freeway was light with vehicular traffic as they drove towards Washington, D.C.

Reaching the Georgetown area, Grayson parked his sports car in an underground garage. Exiting the car, he opened the door for Suzanne. They walked up to the street level and down a block. Grayson pointed to a brightly-lit restaurant. He said, "There's the restaurant."

Suzanne stared at the elegantly decorated restaurant. She had not eaten at a French restaurant since she was married to Larry Bucknell. For whatever reason, her past dates had not taken to a French restaurant. Deciding to be honest, she admitted, "I haven't dined at a French restaurant in a long time."

"Well. I'm pleased to take you to one," he said. He appreciated her honesty.

"How's the food?" she asked.

"You're going to like this restaurant," Grayson said, "They serve well-prepared and delicious food."

Entering the restaurant, they waited for a waiter to sit them at a table. Dressed in a black uniform and a fluffy white shirt, a young tall waiter directed them to a table, which had a window view of the Georgetown area. They ordered drinks from the waiter. Grayson ordered a whiskey and water, and Suzanne ordered a fancy liquor drink. Returning with the alcoholic beverages, the waiter took their order for dinner and left the table.

"Do you come here often?" Suzanne asked Grayson.

"Yes. I entertain clients here," he answered.

"It must be expensive."

"It's tax deductible."

"It still costs money."

"I billed my clients as part of my expenses," he explained, "Most of my clients are foreign corporations."

"Foreign?"

"I speak three foreign languages fluently."

"Your foreign language skills must come in handy," Suzanne remarked.

"Well. I wouldn't be able to represent my clients," Grayson said, "unless I spoke their language."

"You must be an intelligent man to speak four languages."

"Both of parents were into foreign languages," he explained, "They made us kids learn them."

"Where do your parents live?" Suzanne asked.

"New York City." Grayson explained that his parents had moved to New York City and that he had two brothers and one sister, who were equally as talented as he was. He mentioned that his parents were university professors, and his mother had inherited a substantial sum of money from her mother who died young. He had no problems attending the best schools in the Northeast.

"You have a talented family."

It was first time that Grayson talked to Suzanne about himself and his family. Generally he was a tight-lipped man. She must be having some effect on him.

"What about your family?"

"My parents live on the Colville Indian Reservation," Suzanne disclosed, "in the Pacific Northwest." She explained that her parents worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and that she had two brothers, Sidney and Russell, and one sister, Vicky. That she had attended the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington and possessed a M.S.W. degree from Portland State University.

"Was the father of your children Caucasian?" Grayson asked, fearing that she might resent his prying question.

"Yes. Larry Bucknell is Caucasian."

"What does he do for a living?"

"Larry is a successful businessman in Bellevue, Washington," Suzanne responded, "He's going to inherit a lot of money someday."

"You must have gotten a sizeable divorce settlement," Grayson declared.

Suzanne was annoyed by his remark. She said, "Yes. I did."

Grayson sensed that Suzanne didn't like the implication of his remark: that she was a gold digger. He said, "Forgive me Suzanne. It's the lawyer in me talking."

"You're forgiven."

"May ask what happened to your marriage?"

It was a personal question. By now she had recovered fully from her divorce, and she was ready to begin a new life. That's why she had come to Washington, D.C. Deciding to tell him, she said, "Larry had an affair his secretary, and he got her pregnant."

"Didn't his secretary believe in birth control?"

"Apparently not."

"I suppose that he was in love his secretary."

"Yes. He divorced me and married her."

"I've been married twice," Grayson volunteered, "But I have no children."

"You mentioned that before," Suzanne said.

"What exactly do you for the Indian Health Service?"

"I work for the mental health program as administrator."

Suzanne explained that she answered congressional inquiries, worked on program contracts and developed budgets for tribal mental health programs.

"You like working with Native Americans," Grayson said.

"Yes."

"Of course, you are a Native American."

"Native Americans have a lot of social problems, such as alcoholism and chronic unemployment," she said.

"Does racism contribute to most of their problems?" he asked.

"Racism is major part of it," Suzanne replied, "But tribes are also are not responsive to their social problems, because of their lack of long-term exposure to the vices of modern civilization."

"Such as?"

"Alcohol for one," she stated, "and their inability to cope with a highly competitive individuals."

"Well. It's the survival of the fittest," Grayson commented.

"If you don't know how to compete," she explained, "It's pretty difficult to compete."

"You do make sense," he said, "I'm impressed with analytical abilities."

"Thank you."

The waiter brought their sumptuous meals and set the meals on the table. Grayson ordered another round of drinks. Suzanne slowly ate her meal while Grayson talked about his law practice. He explained that at times he worked twelve hours a day and that he spent much time

entertaining his clients. His law practice was centered around obtaining financing for business ventures in Third World countries. Most of his clients were from South America and Central America. He tremendously enjoyed wheeling and dealing with motley foreign governments, international banks, and international corporations.

Finishing her meal, Suzanne said, "I find your law practice to be really fascinating."

"I really enjoy it," he said.

"Are you making very much money?"

"It varies from month to month," he revealed, "It depends on whether I can get financing for my clients."

"You must have a good income," she said.

"I'm not starving."

"I just was wondering."

"Well. I plan to have another drink," Grayson declared, "Do you want one?"

Suzanne gazed into his gray eyes. She really enjoyed being with Grayson. Gaining confidence, she was feeling like a beautiful woman. She said, "Why not?"

Grayson waved to the waiter who immediately came over to the table. After paying for the meals, he ordered two more drinks. The waiter retreated to the bar and shortly returned with the two drinks. While he drank his whiskey and water, Grayson chatted about a business deal that he was arranging for a corporation in a Central America country. He could hardly hold back his glee at being able to consummate a business deal worth over hundred million dollars.

She was highly impressed with his business acumen. His enthusiasm lifted her spirits as she was beginning to feel the effects of her strong fancy drinks.

After they finished their last drink, they headed to the nearest disco where they spent an hour dancing to music. She was really enjoying the company of a virile man.

"Do you want to head to my townhouse?" Grayson asked.

The alcohol in her blood was beginning to lower her inhibitions and fears. She decided that she had nothing to fear from Grayson, and she wanted desperately to have more fun with him. She replied, "Sure. Let's go."

Leaving the disco, they walked back to the underground garage where Grayson had parked his sports car. They drove to back to Maryland where his luxury townhouse was located. He lived a short distance from Rockville, Maryland. Once her date was over, Suzanne

would not have a difficult time getting home.

Exiting his car, they strolled into his townhouse. Suzanne said, "You have a beautiful place. It's so spacious."

"My second wife was wanted a spacious townhouse," Grayson said.

"She has good taste."

"Do want another drink?"

Suzanne wanted to please Grayson. She hadn't drank this much alcohol in years. Though she already had too much to drink, she couldn't resist Grayson. She said, "Yes. Make me a screwdriver."

"One screwdriver coming up."

"Where's your stereo?"

"Over in the corner. Next to the window." Grayson pointed to his expensive stereo, which had two large black speakers.

Moving to the stereo, she selected an album of popular rock music and put it on the turntable. She turned on the stereo, and the speakers started to play pop tunes.

Grayson returned from the kitchen and handed her a drink. Sipping on her drink, she gazed at her boyfriend. When her favorite slow dance tune started to play, she whispered, "Let's dance."

Putting down her drink on the coffee table, she wrapped her arms around Grayson's shoulders and pulled him against her shapely body. He guided her around the living room while the slow romantic music played. When they finally pulled apart, he attempted to fondle her body. She said instinctively, "No, Grayson. I don't know you well enough."

Smiling at her, he said light-heartedly, "You can't blame a man for trying." Puzzled by Suzanne's prudish response, he reluctantly withdrew with his hands.

Sitting down on the sofa, Suzanne thought about her modesty. By coming to his townhouse, she had intended to have more fun with the likeable Grayson. Which to her meant listening to music, chatting and sipping on a drink. She also wanted to look over his stylish townhouse and furnishings. She intended that any fondling would come at later time, but only when she started trusting mysterious Grayson. She concluded that her close dancing gave the roguish and amorous Grayson the wrong idea.

Challenged by her seductiveness, Grayson was determined to explore further the coy Suzanne. He now had something to prove to himself about his manliness. He liked the beautiful Native American woman, and he desired to make her a trophy. Recalling their previous uneventful dates, he was unsure whether that Suzanne had any vices. He decided to offer her some marijuana that he had hidden in the kitchen. He walked towards the kitchen.

"Where are you going?" Suzanne asked.

"The kitchen."

"What for?"

"To get some marijuana."

"I'm not into drugs," she announced. She remembered her college days. Vivien Renwick had offered her a marijuana cigarette in a their dormitory room. Vivien had just returned from a party of the Native American Student Association. Citing religious reasons at the time, she had quickly refused Vivien's offer. Vivien couldn't understand why she had refused her offer to smoke marijuana. Vivien mentioned that a few of the Native American students smoked marijuana at the party. She asked Vivien to name the students. Vivien responded it was private information. Then Suzanne pondered whether Vivien's husband, Michael Dodd, smoked marijuana. She thought that Michael did since Vivien smoked marijuana.

"At least you can try it once," Grayson pleaded. He had anticipated her negative response.

"I just don't like drugs."

"But you've been drinking alcohol all evening."

"Drinking alcohol is not illegal," Suzanne replied.

"Do you mind if I smoke some marijuana?"

"No. Go head." Suzanne recalled when her high school boyfriend, Clayton Shaw, had drugged her and raped her. Since then, she was suspicious of any man offering her mind-altering drugs.

Going into the kitchen, Grayson removed a bag of high grade marijuana from his secret hiding place behind a drawer. He quickly fashioned a portion of the marijuana into two cigarettes. Walking back into the living room, he sat down on the sofa, and he placed the two cigarettes on the oak coffee table. He lighted one of his marijuana cigarettes and put it into his mouth. He puffed on his cigarette and inhaled the potent marijuana smoke. He held his breath to receive the full benefit of the smoke. The living room quickly filled with the distinct odor and smoke of marijuana.

Suzanne watched him smoked the marijuana while she sipped on her screwdriver. She asked, "Why do you smoke marijuana?"

"Because it makes me feel good and alive." Grayson still was determined to get Suzanne to try the marijuana.

"Aren't you happy?"

"There is a lot of stress in my life," he disclosed, "The marijuana gives me some relieve from the stress."

"It must be only temporary relieve," Suzanne stated.

"Yeah. But I feel a lot better the next day," Grayson said, "Why don't you try some."

"I just don't know," she said weakly. In spite of her preaching against the use of drugs, Suzanne still was curious about the effects of marijuana. She again thought of her best friend, Vivien Renwick. Vivien didn't appear to be adversely affected by her occasional use of marijuana.

"I want you to try the marijuana," he urged.

"It won't black me out," she said, "Will it?"

"No. It won't hurt you."

"Okay then," she said reluctantly. Her drinking had made her intoxicated and less inhibited. She wanted to please her handsome and articulate boyfriend, and she could see no harm in trying marijuana once.

Grayson handed Suzanne his marijuana cigarette. She grasped it with her soft hand. He directed, "Put the marijuana cigarette into your mouth."

"Like this?" she asked.

"Yes. Now puff on it and inhale the smoke."

Obedying, Suzanne inhaled the marijuana smoke and tried to hold herself breath like Grayson has done.

"No. Like this," Grayson said. He lighted the second marijuana cigarette and demonstrated to her how to smoke marijuana.

"Yes. I think I understand," Suzanne said. She again put the marijuana cigarette in her mouth and inhaled the smoke. She held her breath like Grayson had done.

"That's right."

Exhaling the smoke, she said. "I'm not feeling anything."

"You need to do it again," he directed.

Suzanne again put the marijuana cigarette into her mouth and smoked the marijuana. She was beginning to feel clumsy, and she felt under influence of something more powerful than alcohol. She said, "I feel funny."

"Yeah. It's starting to take affect," Grayson commented, "You're feeling both the alcohol and marijuana."

"Yes. I'm feeling more dreamy and unworried," she remarked.

"Well. Take another drag."

"Sure." She again tried the potent marijuana. Afterwards, she told Grayson about her friend, Vivien, and her marijuana smoking. Still listening to the stereo music, Suzanne heard one of her favorite tunes playing. Like the first tune, it was a slow romantic dance. Desiring to feel Grayson's firm body against her shapely body, she exclaimed, "That's my favorite dance tune. I want to dance again."

"Okay. I'll dance with you," Grayson replied. Climbing to his

feet, he grasped her hands and pulled her to her feet.

Feeling euphoric, she again wrapped her arms around his firm shoulders and pushed her body against his body. They danced slowly until the music ended. Then he kissed her deeply. When they pulled apart, she allowed him to fondle her body. Regaining control, she blurted out, "Let's sit down and talk."

Sitting down on the sofa, Grayson asked, "How is the marijuana affecting you?"

"I feel high and animated," she said. She sat down next to him.

"So this is the first time you smoked marijuana?" he asked, "It's hard to believe."

"Yes."

"Well. I hope that you're enjoying the marijuana."

"I don't know if I am," Suzanne replied. In spite of the effects of the marijuana, she still had mixed feelings about its use.

"Maybe you're not a marijuana person," Grayson suggested. He was thinking of offering her a more potent drug. In her euphoric condition, she might try the drug.. He wanted her to share his experiences with drugs with her.

"I've never tried marijuana before," she reiterated.

"Have you tried uppers?"

"No, I haven't." Suzanne was now feeling bold, since her inhibitions were quickly fading, and she wanted to please Grayson. The offer of uppers interested her. It's illegality was a challenge to her.

Even if Suzanne refused the uppers, Grayson decided to sniff some cocaine. He cursed the day that he started using cocaine, for he had become addicted to it. It had ruined his career with the law firm. He wasn't sure where his addiction would take him. He managed to get the cocaine as compensation for his legal services from a few Central American clients. So he had a good cheap supply, but the cocaine was making him crazier by the day. His fantasies were becoming reality. He was beginning to have difficulty distinguishing between right and wrong.

"Do you want to try taking uppers?" Grayson asked. Looking into her lovely eyes, he realized that in a little more time she would be a willingly and uninhibited lover. The uppers would make certain of it.

Suzanne hesitated, as she was unsure what to do. She had heard about the evils of drugs, including uppers throughout her life. She had majored in psychology and had a M.S.W. degree. She worked for the mental health program of the Indian Health Service, so she was fully acquainted with the adversities of illegal drug use. Some people had mentioned that drug was not always addictive.

She responded, "First. Let me watch you."

"Well. I'm going to try some cocaine instead."



“Go ahead.”

Grayson was encouraged by Suzanne's reply. He got to his feet and again walked into the kitchen. He returned with a clear plastic bag containing some white powdery substance, and he sat down on the sofa next to Suzanne.

Staring at the white substance, she asked, "Is that cocaine?"

"Yes."

"That's a lot of cocaine," she said, "Are you a dealer?"

"No. Sometimes I get cocaine as compensation for my legal services," Grayson replied. "I'm too smart to sell any of it."

"You just sniff it."

"Yes." Using a teaspoon, Grayson put some cocaine on a small mirror. He then used a razor blade to carefully constrict the cocaine into two narrow rows. Using a straw, he drew the powerful cocaine into his nose. He immediately began to feel the effects of the cocaine. A spasm surged through his body, and he quickly became euphoric.

"Are you okay?" Suzanne asked.

"Sure. Do you want to try an upper?" He again started to fashion some cocaine into a couple of narrow rows on the mirror.

Weakened by the alcohol and marijuana, she wasn't sure what to do. By the minute, she was growing infatuated with Grayson, and she did not want to lose him. She said weakly, "I don't know."

Grayson again gazed into Suzanne's liquid and dilated eyes. He surmised that Suzanne was susceptible to suggestion. He decided to order her to try an upper. He first pulled an upper pill from his shirt pocket, and he said firmly, "Suzanne. I want you to try an upper."

"Is it going to hurt me?" she cried out.

"No. It won't," he reassured.

"Okay." Grasping the pill from his hand, Suzanne put the pill in her mouth and swallowed it. Waiting a few minutes, she said, "I don't feel anything."

"You will. Just wait."

The next morning, Suzanne Redwood opened her bleary eyes, and she quickly discerned that she was lying in a strange bed. She moved her hands over her body. Moving her knee, it rubbed against another body. Grayson Casewell was lying next to her.

She suddenly panicked. She tried to remember whether she telephoned the babysitter. Then she recalled vaguely telephoning Lindsey Williams. The knowledge of the telephone call calmed her anxiety about the welfare of her children, Crystal and Stephanie. She could trust Lindsey to take care of them until she returned home.

Suzanne then tried to remember the previous night with Grayson. Her mind experienced pain and anxiety as she recalled the events of the night. She had drunk too much alcohol at the French restaurant and at the disco. Grayson and she then traveled to his townhouse in Maryland. Her body shook as she remembered the marijuana and uppers. At least she had not blacked out. Before last night, she had never smoked marijuana or taken uppers. She hated herself for being so naive and stupid, especially for giving in to the demands of a man, who was obviously a drug addict.

With pain, she remembered that Grayson and she had engaged in sex. Suzanne was determined to leave Grayson's townhouse as quickly as possible. Slipping out of bed, she dressed, and she left the bedroom. She searched the living room for her leather purse. She could not remember where she had placed it.

Waking up, Grayson put his hand where Suzanne should have been lying. Finding an empty space, he leaped out of bed, and he donned a robe. Hurrying out of the bedroom, he saw a fully-dressed Suzanne in the living room searching for something. He had similar experiences with other women. He cried out, "Suzanne. What are you looking for?"

Suzanne looked up at Grayson. Her opinion of Grayson had turned to disgust. She said angrily, "I'm looking for my purse. I want to leave."

"But you told me that you loved me."

"Last night I was drunk and drugged," she retorted, "I don't ever want to see you again."

"You moralistic bitch," he yelled angrily, "Last night you were really hot for me." Moving to where she was standing, he grabbed her by the arm and pushed her to the sofa. He stood over her.

Suzanne was afraid that he was going to assault her. She said, "Leave me alone."

"I'm not done with you," he cried out.

Grayson reached out to grab her dress, but she managed to avoid his lunge. She jumped to her feet and ran into the kitchen. Chasing her into the kitchen, he trapped against her the electric stove with his arms. He roughly grabbed her arms, causing her to yell out in pain. He screamed, "You stupid little squaw."

"How dare you," she said. Then she grabbed his forearm and bit into it with all of her might.

Grayson yelled out in pain, and he fell against the kitchen wall. She tried to escape, but he pushed her against the kitchen sink and blocked her path.

After he examined his wound, he cried out, "Suzanne. You're going to spit blood for this." He came at her with closed fists.

Suzanne saw a butcher knife lying in the sink and grabbed it. At the last moment he saw the knife but it was too late to stop his right fist. It hit the knife. Crying out in pain, he grabbed his right hand which was bleeding profusely.

Suzanne wasted no time in coming at him with the knife. She jumped at him with the butcher knife, and he moved his left hand to block the knife. She had stabbed him in the left hand. He let out another animal scream, as his left hand was badly cut.

Suzanne yelled out, "Get out of my way. "

"You god-damned crazy woman," he yelled out, "You're to pay for this."

"Just get out of my way."

Grayson finally realized that Suzanne was ready to kill him. He backed slowly out of the kitchen into the living room, and he retreated towards his bedroom.

Moving toward the door of the townhouse, she demanded, "Where's my purse?"

"It's under the table where you left it," he cried out. He wanted the savage Native American woman out of his townhouse as quickly as possible. He needed to get to a hospital before he bled to death.

Finding her purse, Suzanne stooped down and grabbed it. Examining her dress, she was amazed that none of Grayson's blood on it. She then placed the bloody knife in her purse.

Moving to the door of the townhouse, she opened it and exited the townhouse. Seeing a bus stop in the distance, she headed directly to it. She sat down on a bus stop bench, and she waited for a metrobus to come. Within seven minutes, a metrobus pulled into the bus stop.

Climbing aboard, she rode it into Rockville, Maryland. After leaving the metrobus, she caught a taxi home.

When taxi dropped off her at her apartment building, Suzanne decided to go for a walk to regain her composure. Her eyes were tearful, and her pretty face was distraught. The last twenty-four hours had been a nightmare for her. She wasn't uncertain what to tell her babysitter or her children. But she would think of something, which was very innocent. After she had walked a mile, she decided to walk back to her apartment. Feeling better, she believed that she was back in control of her life. She had learned a cruel lesson.

Opening the door to her apartment, she walked in, and she saw her babysitter, Lindsey, and her two girls watching television. She exclaimed, "I'm home."

Crystal and Stephanie ran towards her. Recognizing Suzanne's dress from the previous day, Crystal asked, "Where did you stay last night?"

"I stayed with Aunt Janet," Suzanne replied. Janet was her boss at the Indian Health Service.

"Why?"

"Because I needed to talk to about Aunt Janet about an important decision that I was making," Suzanne answered.

"What decision?" Crystal persisted.

"We're returning home to Seattle," Suzanne revealed. She knew her terse statement about returning to Seattle would stop anymore questioning. Because of her traumatic experience with Grayson Casewell, she realized that she had to leave Washington, D.C. She had no other choice.

"We get to see daddy," Crystal cried out happily at the news. She still loved her father, Larry Bucknell, and she had missed him. Stephanie and she had only visited their father twice in two years.

Their stepmother, Mary, did treat them well, and she did make them feel welcome. But she had three kids of her own to care of.

"Yes. You'll be seeing your father shortly," Suzanne remarked.

"That was a quick decision," Lindsey commented. She thought of Suzanne and her date, Grayson. Her suspicions were that Grayson was jerk and tried to force his will on Suzanne.

"I'm a decisive person," Suzanne declared, "and I just don't like Washington, D.C."

"Well. Good luck to you - Suzanne," Lindsey said.

"It's best that my children and I return to Seattle."

## Chapter 16

Suzanne Redwood was eating dinner with her second husband, Dr. Seaton Edwald, at a small but elegant restaurant in the University District in Seattle, Washington. They were celebrating their first wedding anniversary. They have been married on the second day of July, 1981.

Dr. Edwald was a college professor at the Seattle Community College, and he taught anthropology. Thirty- nine years old, he was a tall man with brown hair and blue eyes. A virile-looking man, he was well-built and had a whitish complexion. He was born in Massachusetts, and his father was a prominent lawyer. His one goal in life was to become a professor at a major university. He had only gained his Doctor of Philosophy in anthropology two years ago. He had specialized in Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska

Now thirty-seven years old, Suzanne had kept herself in good shape. Her straight black hair was beginning to turn gray. But she occasionally dyed her hair. Her lovely face showed subtle signs of aging. Her facial muscles were beginning to slightly sag, and her eyes had telltale wrinkles around them. She tried to cover her wrinkles with makeup. But she was still a beautiful woman with firm body.

After returning from Washington, D.C., she went to work as a mental health counselor with the local office of the Indian Health Service. She met her second husband at a Native American conference for Bureau of Indian Affairs social workers.

Dr. Edwald made a presentation on the cultural history of the tribes located in the Puget Sound area. Impressed with his presentation, she liked his looks and intelligence. She always had a weakness for men who were tall and had blue eyes. And for the first time in her life, she realized that she needed a man. Her divorce from Larry Bucknell and her bad experiences with Clayton Shaw and Grayson Casewell had left her ravaged and distrustful of men.

Dr. Edwald and she had a whirlwind romance, and six months later they were married at a small wedding in Seattle, Washington.

Suzanne's best friend, Vivien Renwick Dodd, was against the marriage. Vivien didn't like Dr. Edwald, because he was a Caucasian

anthropologist studying Native Americans. Suzanne pointed out that she was a Native American woman and that she found nothing wrong with Dr. Edwald. Her parents, Tom and Pauline, were cool towards the marriage. They believed that she should try to marry a Native American. She protested that there were few Native American professional men available. Her parents eventually agreed with her.

Her children, Crystal and Stephanie, were less charitable about Dr. Edwald. They thought that he was too boorish and studious and that he intentionally spoke over their heads. He chatted incessantly about Native Americans and their culture, and he called Crystal and Stephanie, his little Native American girls. They also were used of men who had money.

Dr. Edwald was a poor college professor and a penny pincher, though he talked about inheriting a fortune from his father once he died. He liked to brag about his prominent lawyer father and his prominent New England ancestors.

They decided their mother was desperate to marry any man when she had married Dr. Edwald. Though he was a good looking man, they believed their mother had married beneath herself. He was not the same caliber of man as their father, Larry Bucknell. There was something lacking in the man or something very sinister.

"We got the whole weekend to ourselves," Seaton said cheerfully.

"It was great that Larry could watch the children," Suzanne said.

"Well. Don't get me wrong," Seaton said defensively, "I love Crystal and Stephanie. There are my little Native American girls."

"I wasn't implying anything," she said.

"Well. I took your words wrong," he said.

"I know you love my children."

Dressed in a white outfit, a waitress approached their table which was located in the middle of the restaurant. She was a young blonde woman of medium height. She asked, "Are ready to order?"

"Yes," Suzanne replied.

"Who's going to pay for the meal?" Seaton muttered.

"Seaton!"

"Oh. I was just teasing."

"I'll pay for the meal and the drinks," Suzanne said, "You can pay the tip."

"Okay. You got more money than me." Seaton knew that Suzanne had received a substantial divorce settlement from Larry Bucknell. She also received child support from Larry. Plus she made a substantial income working for the Indian Health Service.

"What do you want to order?" Suzanne asked Seaton.

Since Suzanne was going pay for their anniversary dinner, he

quickly reexamined the menu for most expensive meal. He blurted out, "Streak and lobster."

Suzanne said smiling, "I'll take the same."

"Do want any drinks?" the waitress asked politely.

"I'll take a screwdriver," Suzanne said.

"Give me a double shot of whiskey and seven," Seaton directed, "I want to celebrate tonight."

The waitress retreated to the bar, and in a few minutes, she returned with drinks and placed them on the table. Suzanne picked up her drink and took a sip. Seaton grabbed his drink and took a swallow.

"Do you plan to do some drinking tonight?" Suzanne said innocently. It wasn't often that Seaton heavily drank. He liked to call himself a social drinker. She had never really seen him drunk. But she traveled a lot, and she suspected that Seaton drank when she was out of town. At his request, when she left town, she took her children to a babysitter or to their father's home. When she returned home, she could never find evidence of heavy drinking.

"Yeah. It's our wedding anniversary," he declared, "unless you object."

"No. I have no objections," she replied, "I plan to have a few screwdrivers myself."

"I rarely drink. "

"I know."

They discussed the rainy weather. It had been raining hard in Seattle for past few days. They both were tired of the dreary rain, and they wanted the sun to come out. The rainy mist did keep grass green and trees growing. Finishing his double drink, Seaton waved to the waitress, and he ordered another double whiskey and seven. Suzanne was still sipping on her screwdriver.

Finishing half of his second double, he asked boldly, "How much money did you get in your divorce settlement?"

Suzanne was surprised at his forward question. He had never asked that question before. She considered her divorce settlement money hers, and she had invested it into the stock market. After she returned from Washington, D.C., she sold a part of her stock to buy a house in Laurelhurst, near the University of Washington. She hoped to retire early on the money, and possibly leave some money to her children upon her death. But if she had a choice, she rather had kept former husband, Larry, than have the settlement money. She said, "I invested it in the stock market."

"You're not going to tell me the sum?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because it's my money," Suzanne replied, "It is safe, and I have it invested in blue chip stock."

"Well. I got some ideas for the money," Seaton declared.

"Forget it. You're not touching the money."

Seaton scrutinized Suzanne's frowning face and decided to drop the subject. He apologized, "Suzanne. I'm sorry. I'll never mention the subject again."

"Thank you," she said.

Suzanne thought of the book that Seaton was working on. It was about Native American slavery during aboriginal times. Seaton was obsessed with the subject. He had spent the past couple of years gathering information on Native American slavery. He was convinced that once his book was published, he would receive all kinds of teaching offers from prestigious universities and colleges from throughout the nation. He imagined himself becoming a great anthropologist at a great university.

Though she didn't like the subject of Native American slavery, she encouraged him to finish the book. She had married him, because she believed in his intellectual abilities. She wanted him to succeed. She said, "Are you going to finish your book this summer?"

"Well. I have to teach summer school courses," he replied, "But I plan to keep working on it at night."

"When do you plan to start writing it?"

"Oh. Any day now," he said defensively, "I found some good material about Native American slavery."

"I'll be excited to see the finished product."

"The book will get written," he exclaimed, "You'll see. And it will make me a famous anthropologist."

Seaton finished his double drink and ordered another double whiskey and seven. Suzanne decided that she had better keep pace with her husband, and she ordered another screwdriver. The waitress returned with their meals of steak and lobster and the drinks, and she set them on the table. They quietly ate their meals.

After Seaton finished his meal, he looked at his lovely wife. He watched her finish eating her meal. He thought of Vivien and Michael Dodd. They had not been over to visit in a couple of months. He liked arguing with Vivien about Native Americans. She would get red in the face at him. He asked, "Why hasn't Vivien been over?"

"Because you make her angry."

"Well. I'm just teasing her."

"Vivien takes Native American affairs very seriously," Suzanne disclosed.



"I promise not to tease her," Seaton said.

"Well. I'll tell her."

"How's her Native American husband doing with his law practice?"

"Do you mean Michael Dodd?"

"Yes. That's his name."

"His law practice is building up," Suzanne replied.

"He's a divorce lawyer - isn't he?" Seaton asked in a self-righteous tone. He had never liked Michael Dodd, and he even suspected Michael of desiring his wife.

"Yes. He's mainly a domestic relations lawyer."

"Why isn't he working for some big Seattle law firm?" Seaton grumbled.

"I don't know," Suzanne responded, "Maybe it has something to do with Vivien."

"Vivien nothing," Seaton cried, "They just don't want the big Native American."

Suzanne thought of Michael Dodd and his law practice. She considered Seaton question. But she knew little about the practice of law and less about downtown Seattle law firms. She said, "Michael has just set up a partnership with three other lawyers. He seems quite happy where he's at."

"Well. If I was a lawyer, I would be working with a downtown Seattle law firm," Seaton thundered.

"The money is all the same," she declared.

"There are lawyers and there are lawyers," he growled.

Suzanne pondered what he meant by his statement. Then she thought about Seaton's job applications to the major universities throughout the nation. He had not said a word about them in a month. He was obviously avoiding the subject with her. She asked, "What happened to your job applications?"

Embarrassed, Seaton flushed, and he denied, "What job applications."

"The job applications that you sent out two months ago."

Her words hurt his ears. He could not stonewall her any further about his job applications. He decided to reveal the truth. There was nothing now that he could do about them. He said, "The universities were not interested in hiring me at this time. But they want me to apply again."

"Why weren't they interested?" she asked. Seaton had bragged about his chances of securing a new teaching position all Spring. According to him, he had several jobs lined up.

"They're only considering job applications from minority applicants," he revealed.

"That's strange."

"The universities are just hiring minority professors right now," Seaton said defensively, "They have to meet their quota."

Suzanne quickly decided that Seaton was inventing excuses to cover his failure to get considered for a professorship. It wasn't the first time that he covered his tracks. She reassured, "Seaton. I have confidence in you. You will succeed."

"Only if they quit giving special consideration to those minority applicants," he declared. He was beginning to believe that he was a failure in life. In the past few years, his only true success was marrying his pretty Native American wife. But she was more than he could handle. He had wanted to marry a more passive woman who would ask few questions. He surmised that her marriage to Larry Bucknell had spoiled her. It had made her high-class and demanding. Unfortunately, he had no money with which he could equal Larry Bucknell. She had all the money.

"Do you plan to make any more job applications?" Suzanne asked.

"Not until I finish my book," he responded.

Suzanne thought about her childhood friend, Trixie Spearman Tupper. Trixie had just sent her a letter in which she said that she was doing well. She said, "Today I received a letter from Trixie."

"What did she say?" Seaton asked excitedly. He was always interested in the modern lifestyle of Native Americans who lived on Indian reservations. He thought that there was something spiritual and mysterious about them. His students were highly enthralled when he gave lectures on the esoteric lifestyle of reservation Native Americans. He never missed a chance to visit the Colville Indian Reservation. He had gotten Suzanne to introduce him to every Native American that she knew. He would faithfully attend every religious and cultural ceremony on the reservation.

"Trixie and Allen are doing okay," Suzanne answered.

"Is tribal council still interfering with her job?" he asked.

"No. The post and pole plant is doing quite well," she said, "She got another pay raise."

"I bet you that the tribal councilmen will begin to hire their relatives and placing them in the post and pole plant," he asserted. It was his favorite pastime, other another watching pro football, to bash the tribal council.

"I hope not," Suzanne responded. She conceded that her husband had a point about nepotism in the tribal business enterprises. He might be right. Few tribal members wanted to work for a tribal enterprise which was about to fail. Since the post and pole plant was now on the road to success, it might become a haven for the jobless relatives of the tribal councilmen.

"You just wait and see," Seaton blurted out, "There'll be scores of councilmen's relatives working in the Trixie's office."

"Trixie won't put up with nepotism."

"I'm surprised that Trixie hasn't already found her husband a job in the post and pole plant," he cried out.

"Trixie would never hire her husband," she replied.

"You just wait!"

Suzanne wanted to change the subject. She said, "Are you done eating?"

"Yes."

"What do you want to do next?" she asked.

"Let's go into the bar and do some drinking," Seaton said.

"Okay." Suzanne didn't want to spoil the fun of her husband. Even she liked the taste of alcohol. The bar did have a small dance floor for dancing and a juke box featuring pop music. It would be fitting way to celebrate their first wedding anniversary.

"I'll wait for you in the bar," he said. Seaton got up from chair and headed into the barroom.

Suzanne paid for meals and drinks and left a sizeable tip for the waitress. Then she followed Seaton into the barroom. The barroom was dimly lighted, and it had a medieval motif. Here and there were armor of medieval knights. Shields with codes of honor were hanging from the walls.

She sighted Seaton sitting on a barstool at the long bar counter. He was talking to the bartender, who was pretty woman in her thirties. With a creamy complexion, she was small and had dark hair and light brown eyes. They both were laughing at some joke that Seaton had just told her. She walked up to Seaton, and she said, "Where do you want to sit?"

"Let's sit here at the bar?" he responded. There were was an empty barstool by Seaton.

"It's fine with me," she declared. She climbed into a barstool.

"Sue. Get my wife a screwdriver," he told the bartender.

"Is that what you?" the bartender asked Suzanne.

"Yes," she replied, "Seaton. What are drinking?"

"A whiskey and seven."

"Do you know the bartender?" Suzanne asked. She suspected that Seaton had been here before.

"No. This is the first time I've been here," Seaton answered, "I just met Sue, the bartender."

They drank quietly at the bar until ten o'clock at night. Both Suzanne and Seaton consumed several more drinks, but they were having a good time.

"We'd better head home," Suzanne suggested. She perceived that she had too much to drink, and she wanted to go home and sleep.

"Let's have another round," Seaton urged in a drunken voice.

"I'm tired, and I'm not used to drinking."

"Well. Maybe we can have a drink or two at home," he suggested. The alcohol had not made him sleepy. He was fully awake.

"Did you buy a bottle of whiskey at the liquor store?" she asked.

"Yeah. I sure did."

"Well. "I don't care whether you drink at home."

"Then I'll leave with you," Seaton asserted. He gulped down his drink and climbed off his barstool.

"We'd better get a taxi," she suggested.

"No. I can drive home," Seaton cried out.

Suzanne waved to the bartender, and Sue came to where Suzanne was sitting. She asked the bartender, "Can you order us a taxi?"

"There's usually a taxi cab waiting outside the restaurant," the bartender said.

"Well. We'll look."

"If you don't find a taxi, then come back in the barroom, and I'll order you one."

"Thank you," Suzanne said. Climbing off her barstool, she proceeded out of the barroom and exited the restaurant. Seaton followed her out of restaurant.

A green taxi was parked by the curve of the street. Suzanne walked up to the taxi, and she opened passenger door. She asked, "Is the taxi available?"

"Yeah. Where do you want to go?" Taxi cab driver asked. A homely man, he had long gray hair and appeared to be in his fifties. He was wearing brown work clothing.

"We want to go to Laurelhurst," Suzanne stated.

"Okay. Get in."

Seaton had opened the door to the back seat and crawled in the taxi cab. Suzanne followed him in the back seat. The taxi cab pulled into street and drove to 45th street. Heading east on 45th street, the driver steered the taxi to Laurelhurst. Suzanne gave the driver her address. He took them to the front of the house. After paying the driver, they exited the taxi and walked towards the large white painted house.

Suzanne had purchased the house from an elderly couple who had lived in the four-bedroom house for years. It had a magnificent view of Lake Washington. The front yard was small, but the fenced backyard was spacious. It had a basement and a two-car garage.

Opening the front door, they entered the house and stepped into the living room. Seaton headed directly to the stereo phonograph and put a record of traditional Native American dancing on the turntable. The stereo started to emit the sounds of drumming and traditional singing.

"I like to listen to war dance music," Seaton announced.

Suzanne watched her husband trying to mimicked the Native American traditional singers. Feeling tired and intoxicated, she said, "Well. I'm going to bed." She hardly could keep her eyes opened.

"I plan to stay up and listen to the music," he replied.

She walked into her bedroom. Without undressing, she lay on her bed and immediately went to sleep.

When Suzanne left the living room, Seaton hurried to a closet and pulled out a bottle of 151 proof rum. From the immaculate kitchen refrigerator, he got a quart of cola and ice cubes. Returning to the living room, he made himself a rum and coke. He was generous with the rum.

While Seaton drank his icy rum and coke, he listened to the traditional singers and at times tried to hum along with the singing. He imagined himself a Native American in aboriginal times preparing to go to war. He visualized himself in a traditional dance costume wildly dancing to the war drums of an unidentified tribe.

After he finished his first rum and coke, he quickly made another generous drink. Still listening to the music, he fantasized that he was on a Native American slave hunt on the panhandle of Alaska. He was invading a village trying to find Native American maidens to enslave. Then his mind blacked out.

Suzanne was still sleeping when she felt herself being pulled out of her bed. Still intoxicated, she immediately thought that she was being raped, and she opened bleary eyes. She felt herself being hoist over someone's shoulder. She cried out, "What are you doing?"

"Native American maiden! You are my slave," Seaton cried out.

"Put me down."

"You're my slave."

"Have you gone crazy?" Suzanne shrieked. She finally understood that her assailant was her husband, Seaton. He must be drunk or drugged.

"You be obedient - slave," he cried out.

"Seaton. Put me down."

"Shut up. Slave!" Seaton carried her through the bedroom door and into the living room.

Suzanne was helpless riding on his shoulder and being held by his strong arms. Her intoxication was quickly dissipating as panic swept her shapely body. She was now fully awake.

"Slave. Don't resist," he ordered. Placing her feet on the floor, he held on to her white dress. When she tried to pull away, he jerked on her dress forcing to her knees.

"Seaton. Cut this out," she yelled.

Ignoring her protests, he started to disrobe her.

"Seaton. This has gone too far. "

"Slaves must not speak until spoken to," he said.

Getting to her knees again, she tried to crawl away, he immobilized

her by holding her firm, and then he tore her dress.

"Why are you doing this to me?" she cried out. She could see that her husband was blind drunk. He had never been rough with her before. She feared for her life.

"Shut up slave," he cried out, "I'm your master."

"I'm not your slave," Suzanne screamed.

"Yes. You are a slave," Seaton reiterated, "I'm going to make you my slave tonight." He grabbed her arm and dragged her towards the fireplace. He had made a blazing fire in the hearth.

Suzanne desperately wanted to escape, and she struggled to break his grip. She was terrorized of what Seaton was planning to do to her. But she knew that it had something to do with the fire. She began thrashing about on the floor.

"Quit that - Slave," he ordered, "or you're going to get whipped. "

"Please let me go," she pleaded.

Pulling her to the fireplace, he let go of her arm. She was laying on her back. Looking at her body, he said, "You are a beautiful Native American slave. I'm going to put my brand on you."

"Seaton. You've gone mad."

"Shut up slave," he cried out, "Slaves don't talk to their masters."

When he turned to pick up a red hot poker from the burning hearth, she tried to scrambled out of his reach. As she got to her knees, he seized her by the arm. She struck out at him, but he balled his fist and hit her hard in the jaw. Semi-unconscious, she fell hard to the floor and lay still. Though she desperately wanted to get up, she couldn't move her numb limbs.

"Slave. I told you not to resist," Seaton yelled out, "Now I'm going to put my brand on you." Turning to the hearth, he picked up a red-hot branding iron. Its branding face was shaped into the letter "S".

Suzanne saw the red-hot branding iron and let out a scream of horror. She begged, "Please don't brand me."

"I must," Seaton replied, "You must have the letter "S" burned into your shoulder."

"Seaton. I love you."

"I can't love a slave," he replied, "I can't wait any longer. The branding iron is getting cold. " He straddled her body with his legs. Crouching over her, he moved the branding iron towards Suzanne's bare left shoulder.

Suzanne looked into Seaton's crazed eyes. She had just one small chance to escape Seaton. With all of her last strength, she propelled her legs upward. Her legs hit him in the rear knocking him forward and off-balanced. He fell headlong to the floor. She heard him let out a terrible scream as he had fallen on the red-hot branding iron. She

slowly climbed to feet and looked at Seaton who was lying on his back.

Seaton had rolled off the branding ironing and was crying out in excruciating pain. He had severely burned his right arm, and he was holding it. Seeing that Suzanne had gotten to her feet, he cried out, "Slave. You're going to pay for this."

Grabbing the still hot branding iron by the handle, he started to get to his feet.

Searching the fireplace for a weapon, Suzanne saw another red hot branding iron in the hearth. She seized the handle of the branding iron, and she pulled it out of the hearth. Quickly turning around, she lunged at Seaton with the branding iron and caught him in the stomach with the fiery branding iron.

He immediately dropped his branding iron, and he fell to the floor unconscious. He had fainted. Still fearing reprisals from Seaton, she stood over his inert body and pressed her branding iron into left shoulder. His body twitched and then went still. There was a clear "S" burned through his shirt into his shoulder. She could smell his burning flesh and shirt.

Dropping the branding iron to the carpeted floor, Suzanne stumbled to the sofa where she began to cry uncontrollably. A half hour later, she staggered into her bedroom. Going to her closet, she grasped her 30-30 caliber rifle and loaded it with bullets.

Going back into the living room, she poked the barrel into Seaton's motionless body. He was still breathing, and he responded to the touching of the barrel. She was greatly relieved that she had not killed him. Sitting down on the sofa, she waited for him to regain consciousness.

A couple of hours later, Suzanne glanced out the picture window of the living room. The sky was beginning to become light. Going to the picture window, she watched the enduring sun come over the Cascade Mountains. The rain had quit, and there were only a few clouds in the sky.

She reflected on the horrifying events of the previous night. Her life and reality were now completely shattered. She had been living with a psycho all this time, and she didn't realize it. She didn't know what to do with her life. She didn't know if she could trust another man of any race.

She went into the master bedroom and packed a couple of suitcases. She packed them with Seaton's clothes and personal items. Then she carried the suitcases to the front door of the house. Returning to the sofa, she waited for Seaton to stir. When the clock reached noon, she heard Seaton moaning. Looking at him, he

was touching his burned left shoulder and stomach. Unaware of Suzanne's presence, he rolled onto his stomach and got to his knees. Looking up, he saw Suzanne aiming a rifle at him.

"Seaton. Freeze if you want to live," Suzanne ordered.

"Suzanne! I'm hurt," he cried out, "I need to go to the hospital."

"Seaton. I want you to leave this house and never return."

"What happened last night? I can't remember."

"Seaton. You're a psycho," she said, "I've packed two suitcases for you. They're at the door. I want you to get up slowly and move towards the front door."

"Suzanne. Don't shoot me," he screamed, "I'll do any thing you want." Seaton climbed to his feet and slowly moved to the front door. He opened the door and picked up the two suitcases. Exiting the house, he carried the suitcases to his used car and put them in the trunk.

Suzanne watched Seaton's car drive slowly off into the distance. She knew immediately that she had to call Vivien Renwick Dodd. Scurrying to the telephone, she dialed Vivien's telephone number. She heard the telephone ring twice and then someone picked up the telephone.

"Hello. You've reached the Dodd Residence," Ralph Cragmont said.

"Is that you Michael?"

"No. This is Ralph Cragmont. Is this Suzanne?" He recognized the voice of Suzanne Redwood.

"Is Vivien home?"

"No. Vivien and Michael Dodd are out of town with the kids, " Ralph explained, "They won't be back until Monday afternoon."

"I don't know what to do." Suzanne started to cry on the telephone.

"Suzanne! What is wrong?"

"I need to talk to someone," she cried emotionally.

"Well. I can come over," Ralph offered. He wasn't sure whether Suzanne would accept his offer since he had little contact her since high school. At that time he was a secret admirer of her, and he was afraid to even talk to her about his feelings about her. He never attempted to ask her for a date. He was still in the Air Force, and he had been in Seattle visiting his old high school classmate, Michael Dodd.

"Yes, Ralph. I desperately need to talk to you," Suzanne cried out emotionally. She remember Ralph from her childhood. She had little contact with him since they graduated from high school. But she knew his mother and father. Ralph came from a hard working and honest family. She recalled his thick glasses and nerd lifestyle. But she



immediately welcome his offer of help.

"I'll be right over."

"Ralph. Do you have a pistol?"

"Yes," he answered. Ralph owned his own pistol, and he was trained to use. Ralph was a military police officer in the Air Force.

"Then it bring it."

"Suzanne. Are you safe?"

"Yes," she replied. She gave him directions on how to locate her house.

"I'll be at your house in forty minutes," he said.

"Please hurry." Suzanne put down the telephone receiver. Going throughout the house, she locked every door and window. Then she waited in the living room for Ralph Cragmont to arrive. She kept her rifle by her side.

Ralph was unnerved by Suzanne's telephone call. She sounded like she was having a nervous breakdown. As a MP, he was used of dealing with people who were under stress or suffering emotional problems.

Ralph walked into a bedroom, and he unlocked a suitcase containing his 357 magnum pistol and bullets. After loading the pistol, he put it in his attache case. Before he left the house, he put a message on the telephone answering machine telling Vivien and Michael Dodd to telephone him at Suzanne's home.

Exiting the house, he climbed into his rented car and drove to Suzanne's house. He walked up to the front door, and he knocked on the front door. Looking towards picture window of the living room, he saw someone peer out of the window. Then he heard someone unlocking the front door. The door threw open, and a tearful Suzanne Redwood was standing in the doorway.

"Suzanne. I'm here," Ralph announced.

"Ralph. Come in."

"Sure."

Ralph entered the house, and Suzanne quickly shut the door and locked it.

"I'm glad you're here," Suzanne said emotionally. She instinctively wrapped her arms about his stocky body.

"What's the problem," he asked. He could see a blackish bruise developing on her jaw.

"Seaton has gone crazy. He hit me with his fist," she blurted out, "Then he tried to brand me with a branding iron."

"What?" Ralph exclaimed in disbelief.

Suzanne explained to Ralph the sordid events of the previous night. How Seaton and she had dinner and drinks at an elegant

restaurant in the University District. That they went home, and she went to sleep. That while she was sleeping, Seaton seized her and carried her into the living room. There he tore her dress and with his fist knocked her to the floor. Then Seaton tried to brand her with a branding iron, but she had managed to escape. And in turn she had branded him. That Seaton didn't wake up until noon. At which time, at the point of a rifle, she ordered Seaton to leave the house, and she told him never to come back.

Suzanne took Ralph to the fireplace, and she showed him the two branding irons, the bottle of 151 proof rum, and still warm coals in the hearth. She showed him her bruised jaw. She explained that Seaton was obsessed with Native American slavery.

"Seaton is a weirdo," Ralph finally said.

"I'm afraid that Seaton may back," Suzanne stated.

"Seaton is barbaric."

"I didn't expect him to be abusive."

"Where's your kids," he asked.

"They're with their father for the Fourth of July weekend," she disclosed. She was glad that Larry Bucknell had taken them for the weekend. At least they wouldn't know what had happened to her.

"Why didn't you call the police?" Ralph asked.

"I didn't want to be arrested," Suzanne cried out.

"It sounds like self-defense to me."

"The police would never understand."

Ralph imagined how the police would investigate the incident. He had little faith in the civilian police. He said, "Suzanne. You're probably right about not involving the police."

"Where's Vivien and Michael?" she asked, "I really need to talk to Vivien."

"Vivien and Michael took Bradley and Sarah to her parent's summer home in Eastern Washington," Ralph disclosed, "They won't be back until tomorrow."

"Will they be calling you?" Suzanne asked.

"I left a message for them to call me."

"When will they be calling?"

"Later tonight."

Looking distressed, she blurted out, "I wish Vivien was here."

"I wish they were both here," he said.

"Vivien will be back tomorrow?"

"That's what they told me."

"I need someone to spend the night with me," Suzanne whispered to herself.

"Don't you have other girlfriends?" he asked cautiously.

"No. I don't have any other close girlfriends," she replied.

"Why?" Ralph was surprised at her remark.

"Because we don't get along," Suzanne answered testily.

"Well. I could spend the night here," Ralph said without thinking. He didn't know how Suzanne would react to his suggestion.

"I don't want to impose on you," she replied.

"Well. Someone should spend the night with you," Ralph said, "Seaton might try to get even with you."

"He's a deranged man."

"Well. I'll protect you," he offered.

"I'll accept your offer."

Suzanne spent the remainder of the day cleaning her spacious house. Ralph was content with watching television. After preparing dinner, Suzanne joined him in the living room. She decided to read a novel. When eight o'clock came, the telephone rang. Picking up the telephone, she said, "Suzanne speaking."

"Hello. This is Vivien."

"Vivien! I'm glad that you called," Suzanne cried out, "Something terrible has happened to me." She explained to Vivien that Seaton had assaulted her, hit her in the jaw and tried to brand with a branding iron. But she had managed to escape, and she had managed to brand Seaton. And at gun point, she had ordered him out of the house, but she was now fearful for her life.

"Seaton is horrible man," Vivien said excitedly, "You must be devastated." She had never liked Seaton, but she would never have suspected him of being crazy and sadistic.

"I'm really hurt inside."

"Do you have internal injuries?"

"No. It's just mental anguish."

"Well. I'll be home tomorrow," Vivien said, "Is Ralph Cragmont there?"

"Yes. He has agreed to spend the night with me," Suzanne said, I'm afraid that Seaton might try to break into my house."

"Where's Crystal and Stephanie?"

"They're with their father, Larry, for the weekend."

"Michael wants to talk to you."

"Okay."

Michael picked the telephone receiver, and he asked, "Is Ralph Cragmont there?"

"Ralph is here. He already told me he could spend the night with me," Suzanne responded.

"That's a good idea. Put him on the telephone. "

Suzanne handed the telephone to Ralph, and she said, "Michael wants to talk to you."

Ralph grasped the telephone receiver and put it to his ear. He said, "Hello Michael."

"What's this about you spending the night with Suzanne," Michael humored.

Ralph didn't appreciate her humor. He replied, "I'm sure that we'll sleep in separate bedrooms."

"Suzanne has gone through a traumatic experience," Michael commented, "She sounds down in the dumps."

"She doesn't look well."

"She could become suicidal," Michael remarked.

"I'll keep an eye on her."

"Can we trust you?" Michael joked. He recalled that Ralph had always been intimidated by the beauty of Suzanne Redwood.

"Well. I'll try to keep my hands off of her," he replied humorously.

"We'll be home tomorrow," Michael said to Ralph, "Then Vivien can spend a few days with Suzanne."

"Good."

"Put Suzanne back on the telephone. Vivien wants to talk to her."

Turning to Suzanne, Ralph said. "Vivien wants to talk to you." He handed the telephone receiver back to her.

Suzanne took the telephone, and she started to talk to Vivien. Sitting on the sofa, Ralph resumed watching television. Suzanne talked to Vivien for over an hour. When she finished her conversation, she returned to reading her novel, sitting on an easy chair.

When eleven-thirty came, Ralph looked at his wrist watch. He said, "It's time for me to go to bed."

"Let me show you the guest room." Suzanne said. Getting up from her easy chair, she led Ralph down the hall to the guest room. A small bathroom was next to the room. She showed him the room and got him a couple of towels.

"You have a roomy house," Ralph remarked.

"I bought house, because it had the space that I wanted."

"It's a good looking house."

"Thank you for spending night," Suzanne said, "I'm feeling much safer."

"I'll leave the bedroom door open," he said, "Just in case Seaton returns."

"Well. Good night," Suzanne said. She headed down the hallway to her bedroom.

Ralph removed his clothes. Just wearing a pair of white shorts, he crawled into the full-size bed, and he turned off the lamp on the night stand. He closed his eyes and went to sleep.

Suzanne donned a light blue nightgown, and she climbed into bed. She

was trying to go to sleep, but she was still traumatized from the events of the previous night. She lay in her bed with her eyes open. She tossed and twisted in bed for forty minutes. Then she heard some noise coming from the basement. She feared that it was Seaton. Growing fearful, she didn't know what to do. She thought about running to Ralph's room. But she didn't want to disturb Ralph over a little noise.

Then Suzanne heard a noise in the hallway. At first she imagined it was Ralph. But no light came on. Suddenly the door to her bedroom flew opened, and the overhead light came on. It was Seaton.

In the early afternoon, Seaton Edwald had rented a motel room on Aurora Avenue. He had decided against seeking medical attention. He didn't want to explain to the medical staff how he got two "S" brands burned into his body. After changing his clothes, he elected to spend the rest of the afternoon and evening drinking beer at a local tavern. The beer dulled the pain of his burns but not his humiliation. For the rest of his life, he would have to explain to his women friends how he got the two burn marks. He was insane with revenge; and as he drank more beer, he became more bold. He avowed revenge against his treacherous wife. He desperately wanted to inflict humiliation and physical pain on her.

About eleven o'clock at night, he left the tavern and drove back to Suzanne's house. When he saw a strange car in the driveway, he became incensed as he imagined that Suzanne had already moved in a secret lover.

Seaton waited for the lights of the house to go off. Then he crept up to the house. He hoped to catch Suzanne in bed with her lover. He imagined her lover to be a Native American man. He quietly forced open a window in the basement, and he crawled into the basement. There he found a small ax to use as a weapon. Then he silently stepped up the basement stairs to the main floor. He inched himself down the hallway until he reached the master bedroom where he had slept with Suzanne. He thought about the rifle that Suzanne had pointed at him. He figured if he rushed her he could seize the rifle before she could use it. Turning the door knob, he gave the bedroom door a hard shove. Switching the lights on, he rushed into the bedroom with the ax in his hands.

Suzanne was terrified at the sight of her ax-wielding husband, who looked smashed from alcohol consumption. Seaton dashed towards her bed.

She cried out, "Seaton! I get out of here. "

Seaton saw Suzanne's 30-30 caliber rifle lying against the wall by her bed. Before she could move, he swung the ax at the rifle to

keep her from trying to grab it. The ax struck the bedroom wall putting a hole into the wall. With his right hand he grasped the rifle and threw it to the floor. With ax in his hand, he stood over her. He shouted, "Don't make a move."

"Seaton. You've gone mad."

"Where's your boyfriend?" he yelled.

"I don't have a boyfriend."

"I don't believe you," Seaton said, "There's a strange car in the driveway." He was shaking with anger.

Suzanne thought about Ralph Cragmont, spending the night in the guest room. She pondered why Ralph had not come into her bedroom. Her only hope for escape was Ralph She said, "The car belongs to Ralph Cragmont."

"I knew it. You do have a boyfriend!"

"I've always been faithful to you." Suzanne retorted.

"No. You haven't," Seaton cried out, "I know that you've been running around with someone."

"Seaton. You're crazy."

Seaton shook the ax at her, and his eyes were enraged. He threatened, "I'm going to cut you with this ax. No man will ever want to make love to you again."

Ralph was wakened by ominous sound of an object hitting a house wall. Then he heard the angry exchange of male and female voices. He immediately surmised that Seaton had somehow gotten back in the house, and he was threatening Suzanne. Jumping to his feet, he hastily put on his clothes and grabbed his 357 magnum pistol. Moving his body through the open bedroom door, he crept on the hallway to Suzanne's bedroom. Stopping at the doorway, he peered into the bedroom, and he saw Seaton standing over Suzanne with a small ax in his hands. Seaton started to rise the ax over his head, He had to act now to save Suzanne from serious injury. Pointing his pistol at Seaton, he yelled out, "Seaton. Drop the ax."

Seaton's body froze, and he turned his head towards the doorway where Ralph was standing. Dropping the ax, he cried out, "Your lover has come to your rescue."

"Ralph is not my lover."

"Suzanne moved off the bed," Ralph directed, "And Seaton if you make one move, I'll open fire."

Suzanne scrambled off and bed, and she ran towards the door where she stood behind Ralph. She said, "My rifle is on the floor by my bed."

"Seaton. I want you to slowly move towards the door," Ralph

ordered. "Don't make any stupid moves."

"I'm going to kill you two," Seaton hollered. He stepped slowly to the door.

"You're not going to kill anyone," Ralph declared.

"Suzanne scarred me for life," Seaton cried out, "She's going to pay for it."

"You're nuts," Ralph said.

"You talk big with a gun in your hand," Seaton muttered.

"Keep moving into the living room," Ralph directed.

Seaton moved out of the bedroom into the hallway. Suzanne stayed huddled behind Ralph. She was shaking with fear and anger.

"Suzanne. Are you okay?" Ralph asked.

"Yes. I'm just a little shaken."

"You look devastated," Ralph replied.

"I'll be all right."

"Should we call the police?"

"No. The police can't help us," Suzanne said, "He's still my husband and it's my word against his word."

"Well. You should file divorce papers and get an injunction against him," Ralph suggested.

"I have a good divorce lawyer," she responded.

"I would contact your lawyer as soon as possible."

Suzanne didn't like the prospects of obtaining a second divorce. But it would be a simple divorce as Seaton Edwald had no property. She said, "I'll call her tomorrow."

When they reached the living room, Ralph said, "Seaton. Unlock the front door and leave the house."

"I'm going to sue you for alienation of affections," Seaton cried out, "You stole my wife from me."

"Just do as I say," Ralph said.

Seaton unlocked the front door, and he stepped out of the house. He walked directly to his car and climbed in. He drove his car down the street. Suzanne and Ralph watched him disappear out of sight.

Shutting and locking the door, Ralph sighed, "I don't need many days like this."

"Ralph. Thank you for coming to my rescue," Suzanne said.

"I don't think Seaton will be back tonight," he said, "He looked pretty frightened."

"I'm so afraid."

"You'll be safe," Ralph reassured.

"I hope so."

"Well. I'm going back to bed."

"I don't know if I could sleep," Suzanne said.

"Good night," Ralph said. Leaving the living room, he headed down the hallway to the guest room. Stripping off his clothes, except his shorts, he crawled into bed and dozed off.

Returning to her bedroom, Suzanne climbed into bed, and she tried to go to sleep. In spite of her lack of sleep, she was fully awake. She kept blaming herself for her failed marriages and love affairs. She pondered whether any decent man could ever again love her. She remembered Clayton Shaw, Larry Bucknell, Grayson Casewell and Seaton Edwald. She pondered what she did wrong in her two marriages. She figured that she had to be the guilty party. Maybe she unknowingly chose men with character flaws.

Suzanne thought of the upright Ralph Cragmont who had come to her rescue. She needed the strong arms of a man. She pondered how it would feel in Ralph's strong arms. Tonight he had protected her against her ax-swinging husband, who was intent on disfiguring her. She was tempted to go to Ralph's room. Maybe she was just being foolish and desperate for comfort. Ralph could always turn her down and order her out of his room.

Climbing out of bed, she was still wearing her light-blue nightgown. She looked into a mirror, and she was satisfied with what she saw. She exited her bedroom, and she quietly moved down the hallway to Ralph's room. Entering his room, she silently watched his sleeping form. Stepping to his bed, she lifted the covers and crawled into the bed. She detected that Ralph was only sleeping in his shorts.

Aware of another body in bed, he was confused by his sleep. But he realized suddenly that he was sleeping in a strange bedroom. He could smell the elegant perfume of a woman. Moving his hand, he touched her soft flesh. He cried out, "Suzanne! What are you doing in my bed?"

"I'm too afraid to sleep in my bed?" Suzanne replied.

Ralph blurted out, "We're going to have to stop this."

"Ralph!" she said, "I only want to sleep with you. Nothing else."

He cried out, "I can't believe this is happening to me."

"Nothing going to happen."

"Yes. But you're a beautiful woman."

"Just go to sleep," she directed.

"Well. Sleeping in the same bed with you won't do any harm," he admitted.

Suzanne began to stir from her deep restful sleep. She was lying face down on the bed. Seeing Ralph, she said, "Good morning."

"Well. You're finally awake," Ralph replied.

"I really needed the sleep."



"I slept well too."

"Ralph. You have to quit being afraid of me. I won't bite you."

Ralph Cragmont reflected on her comment. He remembered when they attended high school together. Then Suzanne was pretentious and snobbish, and he was intimidated by her beauty and intelligence.

"Well. We'd better get dressed," Ralph said.

Suzanne went back to her bedroom, and she dressed. Then she cooked Ralph breakfast. They ate breakfast at the kitchen table.

"Suzanne. Do you want to have an affair with me," Ralph asked. He was unsure what to do, as he had few experiences with women, especially attractive women.

"You're still in the Air Force," she pointed out.

"I'm ready to retire from the Air Force and do something else."

"What?"

"I haven't made up my mind," he said, "I might return to the Colville Indian Reservation."

"Ralph. Don't get any ideas about me."

"Why?"

"I'm not ready for you, but I will keep you in mind."

"That's all I'm asking." They finished breakfast, and Ralph left to return to Vivien and Michael Dodd's house.

## Chapter 17

Suzanne Redwood parked her four-door sedan in the large parking lot of the Wild Weed Restaurant. Housed in a large brick building, it was the best restaurant in the town of Grand Coulee. The summer heat of August, 1983 had been insufferable the past few days. Suzanne was glad that she would be having lunch in an air-conditioned restaurant. Exiting her car, she strolled towards the entrance of the restaurant. Wearing a blue dress, she planned to meet Trixie Spearman Tupper at the restaurant for lunch.

After her quick divorce from Dr. Seaton Edwald, she had decided to leave the Seattle area and to return to the Colville Indian Reservation. She wanted to get away from bad memories of her two failed marriages. By returning to the reservation, she could be close to her family and friends. Her parents, Tom and Pauline, had given her a lot of emotional support, and she had no better friend than Trixie Spearman Tupper. In time, she knew that she would find another man who would love her.

Suzanne managed to find a job with the local agency of the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a social worker. She was involved with enforcing the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. Her job enabled her to travel throughout the Pacific Northwest. She liked attending professional meetings and training sessions where she was able to meet other professionals - men and women.

After selling her house in Seattle, she purchased a new home in Coulee overlooking the Columbia River. Her children, Crystal and Stephanie, didn't want to leave Seattle, but they had no other choice but to come with their mother. Once her children got acquainted with area, Crystal and Stephanie found that they liked the Colville Indian Reservation. They liked attending school with other Native American children.

Entering the restaurant, Suzanne immediately sighted Trixie sitting with a Native American man in a booth. She didn't recognize the man, but he was wearing a brown tribal policeman's uniform.

She surmised that the man was a new tribal police officer. She wanted to meet him, because the Tribal Police investigated child abuse cases. The results of such investigations were usually sent to her office. Approaching the table, she said, "Well, Trixie. I'm

here."

"Sit down," Trixie directed. At thirty-nine years old, Trixie was showing signs of aging, and she had gained a few pounds. But her body was still mostly firm, and she looked in good shape.

Suzanne sat down next to Trixie in the booth. She eyed the man sitting across from her. He looked vaguely familiar.

"Suzanne. Do you remember me?" the man asked. He fondly remembered attending the same schools as Suzanne from grade school to high school. Though she was thirty-nine years old, Suzanne was a pretty woman.

"Ralph. It's you," Suzanne exclaimed.

"Yes. It's me." He recollected the last time that he saw Suzanne. He had spent the night protecting her, and they even slept in the same bed together for one night. He was too shy to call her for date after that night, and he left Seattle to return to his duty station in California.

He also remembered observing her walking down a back street in the town of Grand Coulee. Stopping his truck, he had picked her up and brought her to her parents' home. It was a Saturday morning in May of 1962 around Memorial Day weekend. He remembered that she was sweaty and hot, and she was wearing a sexy black silk dress. He always wanted to know what happened to her the previous night. He greatly admired Suzanne as she was the prettiest girl in the senior class.

"Ralph. It has been over year since I saw you last," Suzanne exclaimed. She remembered the dreadful night of Dr. Seaton Edwald attack on her, and Ralph's rescue of her. She also recalled painfully that Ralph had given her a ride home after she had spent the night with Clayton Shaw. Ralph had matured into a distinguished looking man. Stocky, he was heavier, but he was not overweight. He wasn't wearing those awful black rimmed glasses, but he was apparently wearing contact lens. He had lost his shyness, and he would look directing in her eyes when he talked.

"I just retired from the Air Force," he revealed.

"From the military police?" Suzanne asked.

"Yes. I was a sergeant in the military police."

"And that's why you're with the tribal police?" Suzanne asked.

"Yes. I'm the new Chief of Police of the Colville Tribal Police," he announced proudly.

"The Chief of Police!" Suzanne exclaimed, "You're moving up in the world."

"Ralph. We're very proud of you, " Trixie commented.

"I always planned to return to the reservation," Ralph said, "Becoming the Chief of Police gave me a chance to return." He explained that he had found out about the Chief of Police job in the tribal newspaper.

"We're happy that you're back," Trixie said, "Are you still single?"

"I've never gotten married," he answered.

"No live in girlfriends?" Suzanne asked. Ralph always has moral qualms about living in sin.

Ralph was surprised to find Suzanne Redwood on the Colville Indian Reservation. He imagined her living in Seattle, Washington or Portland, Oregon. He asked, "Suzanne. What are you doing now?"

"Oh. I'm a social worker for the Bureau of Indian Affairs."

"The local Indian agency?" he asked.

"Yes. I work up at the BIA Agency Campus, Nespelem, Washington."

"Then we'll be working together on child abuse cases," Ralph said. He surprised that Suzanne had ended up a social worker, after being married to a socialite.

"Yes. I work quite often with the Colville Tribal Police," Suzanne responded.

"How do you like your job?" he asked.

"It's okay."

Wearing red outfit and a white apron, a young waitress walked over to their booth. With brown hair and green eyes, she was small and slim, and she had a creamy complexion. She asked, "Do you want to order now?"

"I'm only having coffee," Ralph replied, "I must shortly return to the Tribal Police headquarters." Earlier the young waitress had brought coffee to Ralph and Trixie.

"Ralph. I wish you could stay for lunch," Trixie urged, "We have a lot to reminisce about."

"No. I must get back to the office," he said, "I can eat lunch with you some other time."

"Okay. If you must leave," Trixie said.

Grabbing a menu, Suzanne quickly looked it over. Looking up at the waitress, she said, "I'll take a cold beef sandwich and a potato salad."

"Nothing to drink?" the waitress asked.

"No. A glass of water will do." Suzanne had developed a nervous stomach, and she couldn't tolerate coffee. Also, coffee made her nervous and kept her awake at night.

"I'll take a cheeseburger and fries," Trixie said. The waitress left the booth and walked towards the kitchen.

"Trixie. I wish that I could eat like you," Suzanne said, "I have to watch every calorie."

"Suzanne. You still have a shapely body," Ralph remarked.

"Thank you," Suzanne said, "I try to keep fit."

"I'd better leave and return to the office," Ralph said. He wanted

to stay, but he had a meeting with the county sheriff about an undercover drug investigation.

"We'll have to get together later," Trixie said, "Allen is excited about seeing you again."

"Any time," Ralph said, "I can be reached at my office."

"Do you have a home telephone yet?" Trixie asked.

"No. Not yet," he said, "Where can I reach Allen?"

"We're listed in the telephone book," Trixie said.

"I'll give him a call tonight," Ralph said. He got up from the table and headed to the entrance of the restaurant.

"So Ralph Cragmont is back on the reservation," Suzanne said, "He has changed so much."

"Allen and Ralph are old buddies," Trixie said, "Allen will be very happy that Ralph is back."

"You left out Michael Dodd."

"Michael is not living on the reservation."

"I remember when they gave us such a bad time in high school," Suzanne said. She now fondly recalled the mocking of Michael Dodd. She was no longer angry at Michael for teasing her. Maybe she was just overacting.

"Michael, Allen and Ralph were pretty mean at times," Trixie said, "But they were boys then."

"Boys do change into men."

Trixie thought of Suzanne's second husband, Dr. Seaton Edwald. Trixie had never liked the White anthropologist who made a nuisance of himself whenever he came to the Colville Indian Reservation. She pondered what he had done to Suzanne to cause her to divorce him. They were only married a year before they were in divorce court.

At the time, they seemed compatible, and Seaton was devoted to Suzanne and her two children. She determined that it had to be something terrible, because Suzanne was very proud of her marriage to Dr. Edwald.

Except for her first marriage to Larry Bucknell, Suzanne was secretive about her personal life. Trixie recalled the time when Suzanne had dated the now deceased Clayton Shaw. She had maintained that nothing had happened on her date. Trixie perceived that Suzanne was not telling her the truth about Dr. Seaton Edwald or Clayton Shaw. There had to be some dark secrets, and she resolved to know these secrets. She said to Suzanne, "Why did you divorce Dr. Edwald?"

"That's a personal matter."

"But we're good friends."

"Because I didn't love him anymore," Suzanne replied.

"What did he do to you?" Trixie persisted.

"Nothing."

"I would like an honest answer," Trixie said sternly.

"There's nothing to reveal," Suzanne stonewalled.

"Then what happened between you and Clayton Shaw?"

"Trixie!"

"Well. I'd like to know."

"Nothing happened between Clayton and me," Suzanne replied,  
"And that's the truth."

"I thought...."

"I'm not going to talk you further about Clayton and Seaton."

"I was just curious," Trixie said.

"You're nosy."

"I'll admit that."

Suzanne glanced up and saw the young waitress bringing their food. Placing their orders on the table, the waiter said, "Is there anything else that I can bring you?"

"No. We're fine," Trixie answered.

When the waitress left, Suzanne said, "How's the post and pole plant doing?"

"We can't keep up with the orders."

"Then everything is fine?"

"No. The tribal council is a constant problem," Trixie replied.  
She had somber look on her face.

"A problem?" Suzanne inquired.

"The councilmen are interfering with the plant's operations," she disclosed, "But not enough to affect the profitability of the plant."

"That's too bad."

"They want us to hire this person, contract with this person, sell this equipment and buy this product," Trixie explained.

"I know what you mean," Suzanne said.

"I've been thinking of changing jobs."

"Trixie! You should run for the tribal council," Suzanne urged.

"I'm not ready yet."

"Is your husband, Allen, stopping you?"

"Well. Allen is totally against me trying to get elected to the tribal council," Trixie replied.

"That's because he has an inferiority complex," Suzanne analyzed aloud, "He should have gone to college like you."

"Suzanne! Allen is still my husband," Trixie exclaimed, "I've never criticized your husbands."

"But Allen has no right to hold you back."

"I agree," Trixie said, "And I've been trying to persuade Allen to go

to college." Allen and Trixie had argued incessantly over her management of post and pole plant. He was jealous of her success, and he could not accept the fact that her business opinions were highly valued. The other Native Americans of the reservation thought that he was a malcontent. If their marriage was to survive, Allen would have to better himself somehow. That's why she had urged him to go to college.

"Is he smart enough?" Suzanne asked. She recalled that while in high school, Allen had never made the honor roll.

"I've lived with Allen for nineteen years," Trixie said, "He has the brains."

"If Allen goes to college, will you be leaving the reservation?"

"No. I plan to stay on the reservation."

"He'll never leave the reservation without you," Suzanne said.

"I'm not giving him a choice," Trixie said, "If Allen doesn't attend college, I plan to divorce him."

"Those are strong words."

"Our marriage is not working," Trixie disclosed, "And if he wants to save it, he'd better go to college."

"But you know the male ego," Suzanne blurted out.

"Then Allen can find a more submissive woman for a wife."

"You sound serious."

"I am serious," Trixie said adamantly. They quickly finished their lunch and left the restaurant.

A week later, Ralph Cragmont drove his tribal police car up to the house of Allen Tupper. He was wearing his tribal police uniform. It was his first opportunity to visit his childhood friend, Allen. Along with Michael Dodd, they had been buddies in high school. He was greatly excited about renewing their old friendship. He pondered how Allen would look after all these years.

Shortly after Ralph graduated from high school, his parents moved to Seattle. Thus, he had little reason to visit the Colville Indian Reservation. When he was on leave from the Air Force, he did pay several visits to the reservation, but he could never find Allen at home, except one time. However, he was able to visit Allen's wife, Trixie, several times during his brief stays on the reservation. She was always sorry that Allen was not around to visit Ralph.

Allen's modest house was located in an old subdivision of the town of Coulee Dam. Painted white, it had three bedrooms and a small garage. Both the front and back yards were large, and the unfenced front yard had been freshly cut. An old upbeat blue truck was parked in the concrete driveway.

While walking up to the front door, Ralph noticed a person peering out of the picture window of the living room. Then someone quickly closed the living room drapes as if they had something to hide. He surmised that the appearance of his tribal police car had caused a commotion in the house. Reaching the front door, he knocked on the door, and he waited for someone to open the door. After waiting five minutes, he knocked again and hollered, "Allen. Let me in. I'm Ralph Cragmont."

"I don't know any tribal police officer by the name of Ralph Cragmont," a muffled voice cried out.

"Open the door."

"We don't want what you're selling," the faint voice said.

"It's Ralph Cragmont!"

"I don't care who is it," the voice cried out, "You're still a cop."

"I'm your buddy from high school," Ralph yelled.

"How do I know that?" the voice asked from behind the door.

Ralph was about to give up, but he decided to try one more time. He said, "Do you remember when Michael, you and I raided the girls gym?"

The door slowly opened, and Allen eyed the tribal police officer standing in the doorway. His name plate on his shirt read "Ralph Cragmont, Chief of Police. His mind was now able to recall his high school pal: Ralph Cragmont. Ralph had changed so much physically that he failed to recognize him. He said cautiously, "Is that you Ralph."

"Yes. It's me."

"Then come into the house," Allen exclaimed. Allen was wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans.

When Ralph walked into the house, he heard the truck fire up and pulled out of the driveway. Returning around, he saw that the truck was filled with seven teenage boys. The truck sped down the street until it was out of sight.

Turning back to Allen, he said, "Were those your boys?"

"Three of them were my boys," Allen said proudly, "They don't like cops."

Ralph could only grin at the serious-looking Allen. Allen's hair was graying, and he had a beer belly, but he was recognizable. He asked jokingly, "Like their father?"

"I suppose so," Allen laughed, "Ralph. It good to see you. Come into the living room and take a seat on the couch."

Obediently, Ralph stepped into the living room, which was modestly furnished. He sat down on a blue couch. Recalling his meeting with Trixie at the Wild Weed Restaurant, he said, "I thought that Trixie



would have told you that I was the new Chief of Police."

"When did you talk to Trixie?"

"A week ago."

"That explains it," Allen replied, "Trixie and I have been separated for a week. "

"Separated?"

"She's staying with that home wrecker -Suzanne Redwood," Allen cried out, "She's always filling Trixie's head with foolish ideas."

"You're being a little hard on Suzanne." Ralph surmised that Allen's negative opinion of Suzanne had not changed over the years.

"Suzanne couldn't even keep her two marriages together."

"Michael Dodd thinks differently," Ralph declared. When Ralph had visited Michael Dodd a month ago, he discovered that Michael had changed his view of Suzanne. He no longer considered her an affront to the male Native American race. He actually expressed sympathy and support for her. He had maintained that Suzanne was not the culpable party in her failed marriages. Both Michael and his wife, Vivien, agreed that Suzanne's marriage to Larry Bucknell was doomed from the beginning and that Dr. Seaton Edwald was not a suitable husband for Suzanne.

Ralph's own opinion of Suzanne had not changed since he was a senior in high school. He saw through her air of superiority, and he concluded that she was simply a naive high school girl. She might be a social climber, but she wasn't a snob. And what she sought in life was not extraordinary in light of her beauty and intelligence. Her beauty and air of superiority did make her an easy target for those who disagreed with her goals. Ever since then he had a favorable opinion of the shapely woman. He also recalled the night that he spent with her in Seattle. It was a lost opportunity for him.

"Vivien doesn't listen to Suzanne," Allen cried out, "My wife does everything that Suzanne says."

"I don't know Trixie or Vivien well enough to know whether you are right," Ralph commented.

"You're no help."

Ralph had never seen Allen so agitated before. Maybe Allen and Trixie's marriage was at an end. He asked judiciously, "What happened between you and Trixie?"

Initially Allen didn't want to tell Ralph about his marital problems. He rarely revealed his personal problems to anyone. But the fabric of his world was being torn apart. He divulged woefully, "Trixie has threatened to divorce me if I don't attend college."

"College!"

"I'm too old to go to college."

"It seems an odd demand," Ralph replied. Of course, he knew nothing about the marital problems of Allen and Trixie. But he was impressed with Trixie's assertiveness and intelligence. She was totally different person than when she was a scatterbrained student in high school. She might have become too much of a woman for Allen to handle.

"Well. I'm not going to college."

"Allen. I wouldn't be too hasty," Ralph said, "Trixie may be serious about divorcing you."

"Do you think that Trixie is serious about divorcing me?" Allen asked emotionally.

"Well. Trixie is a successful business woman," Ralph replied, "She seems to know what she's doing."

"It was Suzanne who talked Trixie into going to college in the first place," Allen charged.

"You're beating a dead horse."

"Yeah. You're right," Allen admitted. He could see the futility of resisting Trixie's demands.

"Trixie isn't going to quit being a college graduate," Ralph pointed out.

"Things have been different between us since Trixie graduated from college," Allen conceded.

Ralph perceived that Allen had already made up his mind to attend college. Allen was only trying to get a last minute reprieve. Ralph didn't want to continue the charade. He asked, "What college do you plan to attend?"

"Well. I plan to enroll in a community college in Portland, Oregon," he said. "If I do well, then I plan to transfer to a four-year college."

"What do you plan to study?" Ralph asked.

"I haven't made up my mind."

"When do you plan to tell Trixie about your decision?"

"Next week," Allen said.

"Why next week?"

"Because I wanted to get another weekend of beer drinking in," Allen divulged gleefully, "before Trixie makes me quit."

"That makes sense." They renewed their friendship, and they continued talking about life on the Colville Indian Reservation.

## Chapter 18

Suzanne Redwood steered her car through the streets of Spokane, Washington, a medium-size city located in Eastern Washington near the Idaho border. She liked Spokane, because it offered the amenities of a major city, and it had good hotels, restaurants, and nightclubs. It was a pleasant and beautiful city. People were likeable, and the scenery of the surrounding mountains and evergreen trees was magnificent.

She was in Spokane to attend a conference on Native American child abuse at a major hotel in the downtown area. She was ecstatic that she could spend entire week away from the Colville Indian Reservation, which offered little nightlife. She wanted to do some dancing after hours. While she drove through city, she recalled the good times that she had experienced at other conferences. To maintain her privacy, she had elected to stay at a five-story hotel on the outskirts of Spokane, planning to commute between the two hotels.

After checking into her hotel, she headed to the conference hotel, which fifteen minutes away. After driving into the hotel parking lot, she rambled towards the twenty-story modern luxury hotel. The May day of 1984 was sunny but not too warm, and the air was dry, and it was eight-thirty in the morning.

Entering the hotel, she decided to find Ralph Cragmont, the Tribal Chief of Police. He also planned to attend the conference on child abuse. Heading down a long corridor, she arrived at the hotel coffee shop. She searched the coffee shop for Ralph, and she sighted him sitting alone at a table. She walked up to the table and said, "Ralph. Good morning."

"Suzanne. Take a seat," Ralph said, "Have you eaten breakfast?" He had decided to wear a dark blue suit rather than his tribal police uniform. He felt more comfortable wearing a suit where most of the conference participants would be wearing office clothing.

"I ate a small breakfast at my hotel."

"Aren't you staying here?"

"No. I like my privacy," she said, "I'm staying at the River House Hotel."

"I've never stayed at the River House Hotel."

"It's an excellent small hotel," she said. She explained that it had

a grand view of Spokane, sumptuous food and live dance music at night.

"Well. You're be missing the fun at this hotel," Ralph remarked. He speculated whether Suzanne was meeting a boyfriend in Spokane. Of course, it was none of his business as she was a single woman. He was pleased that she was interested in men again. Since moving to the reservation, she rarely dated, and she had no steady boyfriends.

"I'll be here," Suzanne said, "I don't plan to miss any of the fun."

"Who's taking care of your children?"

"Crystal and Stephanie are staying with Trixie," Suzanne indicated, "while I'm in Spokane."

"How old are your kids?" Ralph asked.

"Crystal is nearly fourteen years old, and Stephanie is eleven and half years old," she disclosed.

"They're teenagers."

"Yeah. They have all the demands of teenage girls. "

"They are beautiful girls," he said.

"Thank you."

Ralph thought of his good friend, Allen Tupper. Allen had left the reservation to attend college in Portland, Oregon. He pondered how he was doing in college, but he was reluctant to ask Suzanne. Allen still blamed Suzanne for his marital problems. Then deciding it wouldn't do any harm, he asked, "How is Allen Tupper doing in College?"

Suzanne made a indignant face of disapproval at Ralph. She recalled that verbal confrontation that she had with Allen over her alleged undue influence over Trixie. Allen accused her of turning Trixie against him and of breaking up his marriage. Trixie had come to her defense, saying that Allen was all wrong. She answered, "According to Trixie, Allen is doing okay. But he spends too much time in the taverns."

"He'll do okay."

"Well. If he fails, that's the end of their marriage." She related that Allen was about to transfer to Portland State University. That he planned to be a pre-law major.

"Does Allen plan to become a lawyer?"

"No. He interested in becoming a lay public defender in tribal court," she said.

"Well. The tribal court needs a public defender system," Ralph said, "Of course, it will make my job harder."

"How are you doing as Chief of Police?"

"Well. I got the tribal police reorganized," he disclosed, "and I'm trying to hire more competent police officers."

"I wish you luck." Suzanne had little confident in the tribal

police. They had done poorly in investigating child abuse cases assigned to them. She also couldn't get them to investigate certain child abuse cases, because the cases involved their relatives or the relatives of the tribal councilmen.

"It takes time to obtain a competent and well-trained police force," he said, "It doesn't happen overnight."

"Well. I know you're trying hard."

"Suzanne. Have you seen the agenda for the conference?"

"No. I haven't registered yet," she replied.

"Well. Here's my copy of the agenda," Ralph said. He handed Suzanne a three-page agenda.

"Thank you." Suzanne started to scan the agenda.

"Do you see who's on the agenda?" Ralph chew slowly on his breakfast of ham and eggs.

"I'm still reading it." To her surprise, she found the name of Michael Dodd on the agenda. She hadn't known that Michael would be Spokane for the conference. She hadn't seen Vivien and Michael Dodd in over a year, though she talked to Vivien by telephone.

"Michael Dodd is on the agenda," he finally said.

"Yes. I see his name," she replied.

"You don't sound excited."

Suzanne resented the implication of Ralph's comment. "Well. I have no grudges against Michael," she said, "He's the husband of one of my best friends."

"Weren't you roommates?"

"Yeah. Vivien and I were roommate at the University of Washington," she revealed, "We've been best friends ever since then."

"I thought that you would excited about seeing an old high school classmate again," Ralph divulged.

"Michael and I also attended the University of Washington."

"I know."

"Sure. I'll be glad to see Michael," she said, "He can tell me the latest news about Vivien."

"According to the agenda, Michael will be giving a presentation on the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978," Ralph said, "It should an excellent lecture."

"I hope so."

Ralph thought of Suzanne's hostility to Michael. The passage of twenty-one years should have eased her antipathy, especially in light of Michael's marriage to Vivien. He asked, "Are Michael and you still antagonists?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Michael used to mock you in high school."

"I remember it vividly," she said, "I've forgiven him. I have no ill will towards Michael."

"Well. Last December I visited Michael and Vivien. He had a lot of good things to say about you," Ralph said.

"Michael was talking about me."

"Yes."

"I hope it wasn't anything bad," she said.

"I was just asking Michael and Vivien how you were doing," he replied.

"Well. It's good to hear that Michael has outgrown his problem with me," she replied.

Ralph surmised it was futile to continue talking about Michael Dodd with Suzanne. It was obvious that she wanted to steer clear of Michael. He looked at his wrist watch, and he saw it was time to head to the conference. He said, "We'd better be leaving."

"I still have to register for the conference," Suzanne replied.

"Then I'll see in the conference room."

Standing on her feet, Suzanne left the coffee shop, and she walked down a long corridor until she reached a registration table for the conference. The line at the registration table was lengthy, and she estimated that it would take at least forty minutes to register.

While she waited, she watched Ralph move past her. Ralph was talking to the Law and Order Committee Chairman of the Colville Tribe. She was beginning to appreciate the talents of Ralph Cragmont. The aging process had made him more attractive over the years.

After she registered, Suzanne hurried to the conference room and entered. There were approximately hundred people in the large room, evenly split between men and women. They were dressed mostly in office clothing, and most of them were Native Americans. She recognized some of the participants as social workers and others as mental health workers. She found Ralph Cragmont sitting next to an empty chair. Sitting down next to him, she looked towards the speakers' platform.

Suzanne observed Michael Dodd sitting at the long speakers' table. Now thirty- nine years old and with his black hair graying, he looked distinguished and handsome. She was excited about Michael's presentation on Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. She said to Ralph, "Have I missed anything?"

"No. The first speaker has just started to give his presentation on child sexual abuse," Ralph replied.

"When is Michael scheduled to speak?"

"He's next on the agenda."

"I hope Michael does well," she commented.

"He will do okay."

The first speaker was a young Native American doctor from the Indian Health Service. He spoke on the prevalence of child sexual abuse on reservations and on how child sexual abuse can be recognized. Suzanne knew the doctor from the time she had worked for the Indian Health Service in Seattle. He gave an excellent presentation, and he was given a loud applause.

The next speaker was Michael Dodd. He stood up at the portable rostrum, and he gave a presentation on the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 and child abuse and neglect. Being a lawyer, he focused on the legal aspects of the child abuse and neglect. He cited federal laws, state laws, and tribal laws. He summarized the case law on child abuse. When he finished, he received an enthusiastic applause. After answering few questions from the audience, he sat back down at the table on the speakers' platform.

The morning session broke for a short coffee break. Michael stayed on the speakers' platform talking to conference participants. After getting a glass of ice water, Suzanne talked to some social workers from another tribe. After coffee break, the elderly chairman of the morning session called the meeting back into order. Hearing the call of chairman, Suzanne returned to her seat next to Ralph Cragmont. Another speaker gave a presentation on the child abuse program of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The speaker was a pretty Native American woman from Washington, D.C. When Suzanne had worked for the Indian Health Service in Washington, D.C., she had met the woman several times. Her presentation was lengthy but impressive.

A final speaker for the morning session took the rostrum. He was a tribal social worker for a tribe in Western Washington. He started to give a presentation on the status of tribal social services programs in Western Washington.

Sitting quietly at the speakers' table, Michael Dodd was becoming bored with the unimaginative presentation with last speaker. The speaker talked in monotone, and he was largely uncritical of the social services programs of the Indian tribes. Michael disliked the speaker's defensive style. Michael began to pan for the audience for familiar faces. He observed the presence of tribal leaders, social workers, and mental health workers from Western Washington. Then his searching eyes focused on two familiar faces. He quickly recognized them as Suzanne Redwood and Ralph Cragmont. He was glad to see both of them. He hadn't talked to Suzanne in months. He pondered whether there was a romantic interest between Ralph and Suzanne. She deserved a good man who could provide her sincere love. He recalled the traumatic night that Ralph had spent night with Suzanne. He speculated whether they

were dating.

When the last Speaker ended his presentation, the chairman of the morning session recessed the conference for lunch. Michael gathered up his papers and walked towards Suzanne and Ralph, who were talking to two other conference participants. When he neared them, he saw that Suzanne was still talking to a woman social worker. Ralph was gathering up his papers and putting them in his tan briefcase. Michael said, Ralph. How are you doing?"

"Michael. It's good to see you at the conference."

"I don't attend many conferences," Michael said, "I'm too busy with my private law practice."

"You should become the tribal attorney," Ralph declared, "then you might have more time."

"The Tribe hasn't offered me a lawyer job."

"Only because the tribal council likes to play politics."

"Things aren't going to change," Michael remarked.

"Especially if you're a political threat to the tribal council."

Suzanne finished her conversation, and she turned towards Michael and Ralph. She said, "Michael. It's been a long time."

"It's good to see you again," he said, "I don't attend many Native American conferences."

"Do you two want to eat lunch?" Ralph asked.

"I'm gamed," Suzanne blurted out. She wanted to find out what Vivien Renwick Dodd was doing.

"I have to decline," Michael replied, "I've already set up a lunch date with a law school classmate."

"Maybe we can meet at the lounge after the afternoon session," Ralph said.

"I can meet you two there," Michael declared, "It will be good to talk about old times."

She said, "Michael. It's too bad that we can't lunch together."

"I'm sorry too," Michael said.

"How long do you plan to be at the conference?" she asked. She was hopeful that Michael would spend a few days in Spokane.

"I'm returning to Seattle tomorrow morning."

"That's too bad," Suzanne reacted, "I wanted to get the latest news about Vivien and your children."

"Well. Maybe tonight in the lounge," Michael said abruptly, "I must be leaving now." He said goodbye and walked leisurely towards the entrance of the spacious conference room.

After Suzanne gathered up her things, Ralph and she headed to the hotel coffee shop where ate a simple lunch. After eating lunch, they did some hurried shopping at a shopping mall. Traveling back to



the hotel, they both returned to the conference room, and they waited for the afternoon session to begin.

"What did you think of the morning session," Ralph asked Suzanne.

"The speakers did a good job," she replied.

"What about Michael?"

"He was excellent," Suzanne responded.

"He was up on the law and court opinions," Ralph remarked.

"Well. He kept on citing statutes and legal cases," she commented, "His presentation was hard to follow."

"Michael is a lawyer."

"But he still could have kept it simple."

"It was educational," Ralph said.

"Michael did provide useful information."

"Then we agree."

"But he could have made his presentation more interesting."

"I don't know about that," Ralph finally said jokingly. He knew that Suzanne liked to get the last word in any conversation.

Suzanne sensed that Ralph was flirting with her. He pondered whether he had a romantic interest in her. She never thought of Ralph Cragmont as a potential lover, but she had little contact with him since high school, except for the episode with her ex-husband, Dr. Seaton Edwald.

The chairman of the afternoon session called the conference back into session. He was a well-dressed man in thirties, who had a booming voice. He spoke elegantly of tribal sovereignty and the treaty rights of the tribes. Then he introduced the next speaker, who was a woman lawyer from the local Office of United States Attorney. She gave an excellent presentation on the prosecutorial policies of the U.S. Attorney Office.

As the afternoon passed, Suzanne was quickly losing interest in the presentations of the session speakers. She had heard the similar presentations at other conferences. When the final speaker completed his presentation, she was delighted. Reappearing at the rostrum, the chairman of the afternoon session recessed the conference until the next day.

Getting to his feet, Ralph said to Suzanne, "Are you coming to the lounge with me to meet Michael?"

"No. It's too early to be in the bar?" she replied coyly.

"What do you plan to do?"

"I'm returning to my hotel," she replied, "I might see you in the lounge later."

"You are welcome to drink with Michael and me," Ralph offered

again.

"Thank you," she replied, "But I should be returning to my hotel." She appreciated the invitation. They both ambled to the entrance of the conference room and exited the room.

Walking out of the hotel, Suzanne climbed into her car, and she drove directly to the River House Hotel. It was fifteen minutes away. Arriving at her hotel, she went to her room where she took a quick shower and re-applied her makeup.

She thought of changing outfit, but she decided to stay with her navy blue blazer and white skirt. Growing anxious about missing Michael at the lounge, she quickly exited her room and the hotel. Maneuvering her car through the streets of Spokane, she returned to the hotel where the conference was being held.

After parking her car in the hotel parking lot, Suzanne stepped quickly toward the hotel and entered. She proceeded directly to the lounge, which was located next to the coffee shop.

Entering the lounge, Suzanne looked for Michael and Ralph. She was afraid that she might have missed them. Dimly lit, lounge was a huge room with a large dance floor and stage. She estimated that it could hold over six hundred customers. Its bar counter was made out of antique wood. It was Happy Hour, and the lounge was serving delicious appetizers. There were about hundred boisterous patrons in the lounge. Here and there she could see Native Americans drinking in groups of four around the many tables. Most of the Native American drinkers were participants from the conference on Native American child abuse. But the hotel was also holding a conference of Northwest tribes. She recognized several tribal leaders in the lounge.

Surveying the lounge, Suzanne spotted Michael and Ralph sitting at a table situated near the bar counter. They had some Happy Hour appetizers on their table. Hurrying to their table, she stopped at the table, and she said, "I'm here."

Ralph looked up at Suzanne, and he was surprised to see her. He said, "Suzanne. You changed your mind. Take a seat."

Grateful for the invitation, Suzanne sat down and replied, "Thank you Ralph."

Startled at Suzanne's presence, Michael didn't anticipate her coming to the lounge. He knew that she drank little alcohol. He said politely, "Suzanne. I'm glad you're here."

"Michael. I haven't seen you in months," she said cheerfully, "How are Vivien and the kids?"

"They're fine," Michael replied.

"I have a thousand questions," she said.

"Well. I'll leave you two alone," Ralph said, "I have an meeting with the Chairman of the Law and Order Committee."

"In the bar next door," Suzanne smiled.

"A lot of business is conducted in bars," Ralph laughed. He gulped down the remaining beer in his glass and left the table.

Suzanne carefully watched Ralph leave the lounge. She then said, "Michael. Are you going to order me a drink?"

"Sure, " Michael said. He waved to a comely cocktail waitress who was attired in a black outfit.

The cocktail waitress hurried to their table, and she said, "Would like to order?"

"Yes. Bring me a screwdriver." Suzanne said. She started to pick at the appetizers sitting on the table, as she didn't like to drink on an empty stomach. The appetizers mainly consisted of meatballs, chicken wings, and small wieners.

"Give me another glass of beer," Michael said. He was surprised that Suzanne had decided to socialize with him and Ralph.

When the cocktail waitress left, Suzanne said, "I loved your presentation on the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978."

"At least someone like it."

"You were quite good."

"I don't practice law very much in the tribal courts," he said defensively, "I'm not very up on Indian law."

"Well. I didn't notice," she remarked.

The cocktail waitress returned with their drinks, and she set them on the table. Michael paid for the drinks, and the cocktail waitress left. While they consumed their drinks, they talked about their families and the Colville Indian Reservation.

Returning from his meeting, Ralph reappeared, and he said, "Well. That was an interesting meeting with the Law and Order Chairman."

"Did everything go well?" Suzanne asked.

"The chairman can be unreasonable," he said, "He was complaining about Sergeant Sharpton."

"He's always complaining something, she said, "Before you came he treated the Tribal Police as his private police force."

"Well. I put an end to that," Ralph said.

"I think you made an enemy."

"It comes with the territory."

Feeling hungry, Suzanne said, "Let's go get something to eat."

"Suzanne. I must meet a client tonight," Michael replied.

"I won't bite you."

"I wish I could, but I can't," he said.

Suzanne looked at Ralph Cragmont, and she said, "What about you?"

"I never say no to a beautiful woman," Ralph responded.

"I know a restaurant that overlooks Spokane," she suggested, "It has a lovely view of downtown Spokane."

"I don't know Spokane very well," Ralph admitted, "I've only been to Spokane a few times in the last twenty years."

"Since I moved back to the reservation, I come to Spokane quite often," she disclosed.

"It's an exquisite little city," Ralph said.

"Well. I must be leaving," Michael said. They said their goodbyes, and Michael left the barroom.

"Do you want to take my car?"

"Since you know Spokane, I'll accept your offer," Ralph said.

After they finished their drinks, they left the lounge. Climbing into Suzanne's car, they drove through the streets of Spokane then up a long grade. Suzanne steered her car into the hotel parking lot. An electric sign read: River House Hotel. Exiting the car, they ambulated into the hotel lobby.

Suzanne said to Ralph, "The restaurant is down the corridor."

"I've driven past this hotel a number of times, but I never been inside," he said.

"Well. It does have an elegant restaurant."

"Didn't know you were a gourmet?" he said teasingly.

"Well. While I was married to Larry Bucknell, he took me to lots of fancy restaurants, Suzanne smiled back.

"He was your first husband?"

"Yes."

Walking down the corridor, they came to the restaurant. Dressed in a white uniform, a waiter guided them to a window table. They had a magnificent view of Spokane. After they sat down, the waiter took their orders. Suzanne ordered a New York steak and a bottle of exquisite French wine. Michael ordered a steak and lobster. The waiter retreated to the kitchen, and several minutes later he returned with the bottle of wine and two wine glasses. After setting the wine glasses on the table, he opened the bottle, and he poured some of the wine into Ralph's glass. Ralph tasted the wine and pronounced the wine fit to drink. Satisfied, the waiter returned to his station.

"So you know exquisite French wines," Ralph said.

"Larry introduced me to drinking premium wines," Suzanne revealed.

"I rarely touched the stuff."

"Why?"

"I don't want people to think that I'm a wino," Ralph said.

"You got to be kidding," she exclaimed.

"Yes," Ralph admitted.

"You haven't changed any since high school. "

"Yes, I have. I'm eating dinner with you."

Ralph picked up the wine bottle and filled Suzanne's glass with wine. They tasted their wine. He said, "You have a good taste in wines."

"Larry's father, Chet Bucknell, used to drink this brand of wine all the time," she related, "It has a full body."

Ralph thought of Suzanne's ex-husband, Larry Bucknell. Since she mentioned Larry's name, he asked, "How is Larry doing?"

"He is doing fine," she replied, "Larry and his father are making tons of money in their real estate development company. Larry and his wife, Mary, have three beautiful children."

The waiter brought their food and set it on the table. They began to eat their food, and they drank more wine. They talked about the beautiful view that they had of Spokane.

Then Suzanne asked him, "Why did you ask me about Larry?"

"Because you brought up his name."

"Ralph. I have completely recovered from my marriage with Larry," she said, "and I discovered that I never loved my second husband, Dr. Seaton Edwald."

"I didn't mean to get personal," Ralph said.

"Larry never had to make it on his own, and he had me and his father," she said.

"Do have done quite well for yourself."

"Maybe."

"I find you attractive," Ralph said.

"Ralph. You have changed."

"How?"

"You're a considerate and a fine man."

"Only that?"

"Maybe romantic."

Ralph then thought of what Michael Dodd had told him earlier. Michael's wife, Vivien, was pregnant. He said, "Suzanne. Michael had some interesting news."

"What?"

"His wife, Vivien, is pregnant with their third child."

"At her age!" she exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Why didn't Michael or Vivien tell me?"

"I have no idea, but Michael only found out today."

"Maybe Vivien wanted to surprise me."

Suzanne thought about the pregnant Vivien. Vivien must be very happy. She said, "I'm happy for both of them."

"Well. They should be happy."

"Let's celebrate Vivien's pregnancy," she urged.

"How?"

"Let's dance."

"I don't dance often."

"It won't hurt you to dance with me," she said.

Ralph recalled the night that they had spent together back in August of 1982. He remembered her shapely body. Her red lips and pretty face were so sincere. He said, "I suppose it won't hurt to dance and to have a few drinks with you."

"We should have a little fun," Suzanne said cheerfully. She waved to the waiter who rushed over to the table.

The waiter asked, "Is something wrong?"

"No. We need our bill," she replied.

"I'll get your dinner bill and return immediately." The waiter walked to his station and returned with the bill. He placed the bill on the table.

Suzanne grasped the bill before Ralph could grab it. He muttered, "I'll pay for the dinners and wine."

"No. The treat is on me." Suzanne opened her purse and pulled out a hundred bill and handed to the waiter. He walked to the cash register with the dinner bill and the money.

"I could have paid for the dinner."

"No. I got money," she said.

The waiter returned with the Suzanne's change, and he left it on the table. The waiter asked, "Is there anything else?"

"Can we take the wine bottle with us to the bar," Suzanne asked. The wine bottle was still half full

"No problem. I just take it with you," the waiter directed.

"Thank you," she said politely.

Ralph pulled out his wallet and left a hefty tip for the waiter, and he said, "Are you ready to go into the barroom?"

"Yes." Suzanne got to her feet and walked towards the barroom, which located next to the restaurant. Ralph followed her and lay his hand on her back.

When they entered the roomy barroom, Ralph pointed to an empty table. He said, "There's an empty table."

Suzanne glanced at the table, and she said, "No. I want to be closer to the music."

"It's okay with me," he replied.

Suzanne led the way through a cluster of tables until she found an empty table near the dance floor. She said, "This will do."

Carrying the wine bottle, Ralph set it on the table and sat down. Suzanne sat down next to him. Waving to the cocktail waitress, he said, "I'm going to stick with bourbon and seven."

The blonde cocktail waitress was young, and she was attired white top and black skirt. She took Ralph's order, and she shortly returned with his drink. The barroom could hold two hundred and fifty customers, and it was colorfully decorated. The band members were beginning set up their musical instruments and other equipment. It was a four-piece band, which specialized in playing top forty pop hits. The band members were dressed in bluish outfits.

"Have you heard this band play before?" Ralph inquired.

Grasping the wine bottle, he filled Suzanne's glass with more wine.

"Yes. They play good dance music," she replied, "I like them." Since returning to the Colville Indian Reservation, she had stayed at the hotel numerous times.

Ralph pondered whether Suzanne was dating any men. Even at thirty-nine years, she was a strikingly beautiful, and she would have no problems attracting the eligible men in the area. He asked, "Have you been dating any men lately?"

"A few men," she answered, "But there aren't many eligible men on the Colville Indian Reservation."

"You must meet men at the Native American conferences."

"Yes. Few men," Suzanne said.

"Are you serious about any of them?" Ralph asked.

"No."

"Why?"

"Because they just don't turn me on," she said, "I like dating professional men."

"You must meet professional men at the conferences," he said.

"Some."

"Well. You shouldn't be too picky," he said.

"You mean at my age?" she humored.

"No. I didn't mean that."

"I get all kinds of marriage proposals from good-looking men," Suzanne said, "But they don't have any money."

"Well. Money isn't everything", he asserted.

"A man should have money."

"Well. I don't have much money."

"You got your military retirement and a good job."

"You won't have any problems attracting the man that you

want," Ralph said.

Suzanne thought about Ralph's comment. It was an obvious backhanded compliment about her good- looks. She asked, "What do you mean?"

Ralph said, "You're sexy woman."

"Sexuality isn't everything."

"For a lot of men it is everything."

"Well. I'm not attracted to men who just view women as sexual objects," Suzanne said.

"You're probably right," Ralph responded, feeling guilty about his growing desires for Suzanne.

"I should know. I am a woman," she said.

"I don't know much about such things."

Hearing some noise, they looked up and saw the band climbing up on the bandstand. The band started to play music. They played a couple of contemporary tunes and then a slow dance.

When Suzanne heard the slow dance, she exclaimed, "Let's dance to that tune."

"I don't know."

"Chicken. It won't hurt you," she challenged.

"Okay. I'll dance with you," Ralph said.

Rising to their feet, they headed to the dance floor. There were a four other couples dancing on the dance floor. Ralph did not want to have close body contact with Suzanne. Without hesitating, he grabbed Suzanne's soft hands and danced slowly to the music. He led Suzanne around the dance floor. Annoyed by his prudish dance style, Suzanne decided not to criticize his dancing method. He apparently wanted to avoid physical contact with her. When the slow dance ended, the band struck up with a fast dance tune.

Suzanne said, "Let's stay and dance to the music."

"Okay." Ralph said. He could see no harm in dancing to fast dance music. The band played a series of fast tunes, and Suzanne insisted on dancing to each one.

When the last tune ended, Ralph exclaimed, "You're quite a dancer."

"I like to dance," she replied, "especially to slow music."

When the band played another slow dance tune, Ralph said, "Let's sit down. I'm tired."

"Okay," she said disappointedly. But she was also tired from dancing to the fast tunes, and she needed to rest. They walked back to their table, and they returned to consuming their drinks.

Ralph ordered another bourbon and seven for himself. For the rest of the evening, they were content to watch the dancing and each



other. They only danced to a few more fast tunes. Ralph was becoming intoxicated, and the liquor was quickly lowering his inhibitions. But he was not growing tired, as the presence of Suzanne kept him fully awake. She became more appealing as the night worn on. He had no desire to return to his hotel room. He was enjoying being in the presence of a beautiful woman. He began to remember in detail the night that Suzanne and he had spent together in August, 1982.

Suzanne gazed at Ralph, and she saw that he was fully alert. After all the bourbon and sevens, he should have looked more intoxicated. She surmised that her presence was keeping him alert and attentive. He also had made no move to return to the hotel, thought it was getting late. He seemed to be enjoying himself. When the band played another slow dance tune, she urged "Let's dance. "

"Sure," he replied with no hesitation. He got to his feet and walked unsteadily to the dance floor.

"Let's dance close," she whispered. Reaching out, she wrapped her arms around his stocky body.

No longer inhibited, Ralph put his arms around her shapely body and pulled her close to his body. Entwined, they danced slowly to the music, as Ralph led her around the dance floor. When the music ended, she placed her hands momentarily on his chest. While they walked off the dance floor, he placed his hand on her back. They returned to their table and sat down.

Aroused by sensual dance with Ralph, Suzanne was at a lost for words. She said softly, "I like slow dancing."

Ralph remembered the softness of Suzanne's shapely body. She was truly an attractive woman. He replied, " Yeah. I enjoy slow dancing myself."

"Slow dancing can be so meaningful."

"Suzanne. You're a beautiful woman."

"Ralph. I need you tonight." Suzanne placed her hand on his thigh.

Ralph immediately knew what she wanted from him. He said, "I don't know how to love you."

"You didn't need to say that. "

"But it is true."

"Loving me won't hurt you," she said.

"I think I've always loved you since high school."

"You're a changed man."

Finding Suzanne to be irresistible, his emotions were out of control. Ralph urged, "Let's wait until the band quits playing."

"I can wait," Suzanne responded.

The band finished their final set at midnight and thanked the crowd for coming to the barroom. They started to break down their musical instruments and other equipment.

"The band is sure quitting early," Ralph remarked.

"On weekdays the band starts playing at eight o'clock and stops playing at midnight," Suzanne explained.

Ralph gazed into Suzanne's enthusiastic eyes, and he could only see excitement and desire. He said nervously, "Well. What should we do next?"

"Let me show you my hotel room," she suggested. She smiled at Ralph, who looked like an unwilling partner.

"Can you drive back to the hotel?" he asked.

"I'm staying at this hotel."

"What?"

"I'm in room 411," Suzanne revealed.

Suzanne rose to her feet and plodded towards the entrance of the barroom. Ralph followed close behind, still pondering whether he was doing the right thing. But he quickly gave into his desire for Suzanne.

When they reached the end of the corridor, they rode the elevator to the fourth floor. Exiting the elevator, they walked to Room 411.

Suzanne opened the door and turned on the light. There was a queen-size bed in the room. After closing the door, Ralph followed her into the room.

Walking to the bed, she turned around and said, "Kiss me."

Without hesitating, Ralph took her into his arms and kissed her. "Suzanne. You're a beautiful woman."

"Thank you." She held him tight.

"I can't believe I'm with you," he said.

"Well. Don't wake up."

"I don't plan to," he replied.

"Ralph. I could love you."

"Please love me," he pleaded.

Gazing at Ralph's face, she pulled away, and she removed her navy blue blazer. She started to undress, and Ralph followed her example. They made love.

Suzanne woke up first and glanced at a clock on the night stand. It was seven thirty a.m. in the morning. She was slightly hung over from the previous night's drinking, but she decided it was worth the pain. A little late in getting up, she would need to hurry if she was going to make it to the conference on time.

Ralph was still sleeping, and she shook his shoulder. He opened his eyes, and he said, "What time is it."

"It's seven thirty a.m."

"I'd better get back to my hotel," Ralph stated.

"Not before we have breakfast," Suzanne protested.

Ralph looked at the clock, and he saw it was seven thirty-five.

He said, "We got time for breakfast."

"Do you want me to take a shower first?" Suzanne asked.

"No. I won't take long. " Gathering up his clothes, he headed to the bathroom and took a quick shower. He borrowed a razor from Suzanne and shaved.

Suzanne was busy looking at her outfits and dresses. She decided to wear a red blazer and navy blue skirt. When Ralph left the bathroom, she asked, "Are you done?"

"Yes."

"Good. We're little late," she said, "But I won't take long."

Carrying her clothes, she entered the bathroom and took a quick shower. She donned her clothes and applied her makeup.

Ralph saw Suzanne leave the bathroom. He said, "Are you ready to go?"

"Yes. " Suzanne grabbed her leather briefcase and purse and walked towards the door of the hotel room. Ralph followed her out of the room, and they proceeded down the hallway to the elevator. Riding the elevator to the hotel lobby, they proceeded to the restaurant.

The hotel restaurant looked entirely different in the morning. It had lost some of its charm from the previous night as the sunlight did it an injustice. But the restaurant's panoramic view of Spokane was still magnificent.

Dressed in a black uniform, a waiter led them to a table near a window. Ralph orders a ham and eggs, and Suzanne ordered steak and eggs. The waiter quickly returned with their food and set it down the table. Ralph had bought a newspaper, and he was reading it. After the waiter left, they started to eat their breakfast.

"Is there anything in the newspaper?" Suzanne asked.

"No. Nothing important," Ralph replied.

"Ralph. I had a wonderful time last night."

"Suzanne. You're great."

"I'm beginning to like you."

"I always loved you," Ralph said.

"I don't want to hurt you," she said.

"What do you mean?"

"You're just a friend."

"But we made love."

"One night does not make a life time commitment."

"I'll marry you."

"Don't be foolish."

"Can you have more children?"

"I don't know."

"You might become pregnant?" Ralph exclaimed. He visualized a very pregnant Suzanne.

"It's a possibility," she said. She could see delight in his face.

"But we're both unmarried."

Ralph quickly calculated Suzanne's chances of becoming pregnant by him. He thought the odds were against it. "At your age, your chances of you becoming pregnant are small."

"Then you don't have anything worry about," she declared.

Other than her two husbands, she had slept with few men. Ralph was only one with whom she did not take precautions against pregnancy. Originally she had intended to take precautions, but Vivien Renwick 's pregnancy had made forget.

"I haven't made love to many women," he declared.

"That's good to hear,. I don't like womanizers."

"I've always respected women."

"Ralph. If I became pregnant, I wouldn't tell you anyway," Suzanne said.

"But I would still be the putative father."

"I sleep with a lot of men," she declared.

"I don't believe you," Ralph said.

"Let's drop the subject," Suzanne said.

"Suzanne. I do have feelings for you. "

"I know that you love me. But I don't know how I feel about you." They finished breakfast, and they returned to conference.

## Chapter 19

Eight months pregnant, Vivien Renwick Dodd moved with much difficulty through her roomy house in Bellevue, Washington. Entering the living room, she flopped down on a sofa, and she started to read a trade magazine. She was wearing a white maternity dress. She was waiting for her husband, Michael Dodd, to return from a trip to a shopping mall. Outside, the November day of 1984 was rainy and cloudy, and the temperature was in the high forties.

Vivien was ecstatic about her pregnancy and the approaching birth of her third child. She silently wished her expectant baby would be a baby girl. Although Michael was initially upset about her pregnancy, he soon grew excited about the addition of another child to the family. At thirty-nine years old, he thought that she was too old to give birth to more children. He asserted that two children, Bradley and Sarah, were enough. But there was nothing that he could do about her pregnancy, as Vivien was determined to give birth. After accepting her pregnancy, he became devoted to her and provided her support.

Hearing a car pull up into the driveway, she lifted herself off the sofa, and she looked out the picture window. She saw Michael, Bradley, and Sarah coming into the house. Michael was wearing a tan leather jacket, a red stripe dress shirt and blue slacks.

Eleven years old, Bradley was nearing five foot four tall. He was going to be big as his father. He had dark hair and eyes and a light complexion. He was wearing a black ski jacket, a blue plaid shirt and jeans.

Nine and half years old, Sarah was a pretty little girl. Like her brother, she had dark hair and eyes and a tight complexion. Many people said that she looked like her mother, Vivien. She was wearing a red ski jacket, a tan plaid shirt and faded jeans.

Taking two steps at a time, Bradley scurried up the long concrete stairs. Opening the front door, he yelled, "Mother. We're home."

"Where's your father?" Vivien asked.

"Sarah and he are still coming in," he said, "I ran up the stairs."

"How many times that I told you not to run up the stairs?"

"I've never got hurt," Bradley blurted out.

"You've just been lucky," she remarked, "Now promise me that you will quit running up the stairs."

"I promise."

Michael and Sarah walked into the house. Hurrying to her mother's side, Sarah said, "Daddy said that I could go Linda's house."

"Well. If your father gave you permission to go," Vivien said, "You have my permission."

Walking up to Vivien and Sarah, Michael said, "Sarah. Does Linda's parents know that you're coming?"

"No," Sarah said, "I've always just shown up."

"I'd better telephone them and find out whether Sarah is welcome," Vivien said. She walked into the kitchen and telephoned Linda's parents.

"Dad. Can Myron come over?" Bradley asked.

"What are Myron and you planning to do?" Michael asked.

"We want to play some computer games in the basement play room," Bradley replied.

"Fine. Myron is welcome in this house," Michael said.

After completing her telephone call, Vivien walked back into the living room. She said, "Sarah can go Linda's house to play."

"Sarah. I want you home by dinner time," Michael said.

"Sure. Daddy." Sarah hurried to the front door, and she exited the house.

"Well. I'd better give Myron a call and tell him to come over," Bradley stated. He shuffled into the kitchen.

Reaching into a pocket of his leather jacket, Michael pulled out a letter and handed it to Vivien. He said, "Trixie Tupper had written you a letter."

"That's strange," she said, "Trixie and I usually don't exchange letters."

Michael removed his leather jacket and placed it in a closet. Sitting down on the sofa, he picked up a sports magazine and started to thumb through it.

Vivien moved toward an easy chair and sat down. Tearing the letter opened, she began to read it. After she finished reading the letter, she said to Michael, "I got some disturbing news from Trixie."

Michael dropped his magazine, and he asked anxiously, "Did something happen on the Colville Indian Reservation?"

"Apparently Suzanne Redwood is pregnant."

He cried out, "Is Suzanne married?"

"No. Suzanne is not married," Vivien said, "That's what's so strange about her becoming pregnant."

"Does Trixie mention who is the putative father?"

"No. Trixie only says that it was a man that Suzanne had met at a

conference," Vivien disclosed.

Vivien couldn't believe that the normally prudish Suzanne would allow herself to be picked up by a man at a Native American conference and be seduced. It was out of character for Suzanne. But maybe Suzanne had changed over the years.

Vivien didn't believe that it was wrong a single woman to sleep with other single men. And she didn't have any problems with single women giving birth to babies and keeping them. She was always liberal about sexual matters and parenting.

"How many months pregnant is Suzanne?" he asked.

"Six months."

"She must have conceived in May."

"Weren't you and Suzanne in Spokane in May," Vivien asked teasingly. She knew it was a cruel joke, but Michael was such a serious man. She liked to tease him.

Alarmed, Michael stared at Vivien's grinning face. He wasn't sure whether she was joking with him. He admitted guardedly, "Yes. I talked to Suzanne at the conference in Spokane."

"Honey. Suzanne already mentioned it to me."

"Suzanne sure has changed over the years," Michael remarked, "I remember when she was a calculating social climber."

"And now she's having a baby out of wedlock," Vivien said eagerly.

"I like the old Suzanne better," he admitted.

"I happen to like the new Suzanne," Vivien declared, "She's more a human being."

"But a woman of her education and age shouldn't be having babies out of wedlock," he stated self-righteously. He knew his smug comment were fighting words to Vivien, and he expected an argument from her.

"Michael. You were always moralistic," she asserted.

"Well. I was raised right."

"You're such a straight arrow."

"Someone has to bring order to the world."

"Is that why you served in Vietnam?" she asked heatedly. The Vietnam War was a subject that always got her mad. She hadn't quite forgiven Michael for becoming a second lieutenant in Vietnam.

"I was drafted."

"No. I wasn't talking about that," Vivien said, "You volunteered to become a second lieutenant."

"I did my patriotic duty by serving as a lieutenant in Vietnam," Michael declared.

"Did you kill women and children?" Vivien's eyes lit up.

"No. As far as I know, I didn't," he replied. Vivien had never

dared to ask him that question before. It was a disturbing question.

"Then what did you do in Vietnam?" Vivien asked.

Michael could see that Vivien was angry. This was the first that she had ever asked about his combat role in Vietnam. He had nothing to hide, but Vivien probably suspected the worst.

He answered, "Well. I did do a lot of shooting. When the Vietcong shot at me, I fired back. I did participated in many search and destroy missions where we initiated shooting with the Vietcong. We did kill many Vietcong, but many of my men were also killed. I was just following orders."

"And did the search and destroy missions include villages and hamlets?" she asked.

"Of course, the missions includes villages and hamlets."

"Then you must have had contact with women and children."

"Sure. But my platoon didn't shoot any women or children,"

Michael said, "But it was a nasty business."

"And you were only following orders," she cried out.

"Yes."

"Michael. I could never understand you."

"Nothing happened in Vietnam which I would be shame of,"

Michael said, "Trust me."

"I can't see how you're any better than Suzanne Redwood," Vivien declared.

"I never said that I was better than Suzanne."

"You just got done criticizing her for having a baby out of wedlock," she said.

"Well. I would criticize any woman for doing that," he asserted.

"The only thing I care about is whether Suzanne is happy," Vivien declared, "I don't care about your moralistic preaching."

"Okay. Okay. I'm sorry that I criticized her."

Vivien thought about Suzanne. She was concerned that Suzanne might be lonely and depressed, and she might need her emotional support. In her letter, Trixie had stated little about the mental health of Suzanne. It had been a couple of months since she had talked by telephone to Suzanne. It would be nice to talk to Suzanne in person about both their pregnancies.

She suggested, "Michael. We should go the Colville Indian Reservation and visit Suzanne."

"This time of year," Michael exclaimed. After their argument about Vietnam, he was in no mood to do any favors for Suzanne or his wife.

"Why not?"

"Because we could get caught in a snow blizzard on the



mountain passes."

"Then I'll go alone," Vivien said defiantly,

Michael grimaced at Vivien. He hated it when she tried to make him feel guilty. And he didn't like driving across snow-covered mountains. But he felt obligated to drive Vivien to Coulee Dam, Washington. He said reluctantly, "I'll take you to Coulee Dam. But only if we stay at a motel."

"But Suzanne will insist that we stay at her home."

"Then we aren't going."

"I told you that I can drive myself."

"What about Bradley and Sarah?" Michael asked.

"My parents, Jack and Joan, can keep of them," Vivien explained, "We'll only spend a couple nights at Suzanne's."

Michael thought of spending two nights at Suzanne's house. He said, "If it's only a couple of nights, then I'll take you over there."

"Good."

"But I want you back in Seattle when you have our baby," he stressed.

"We'll back in Seattle long before then," she reacted, "I have four weeks to go."

"Well. The baby could be premature," he remarked defensively. He pondered why he made the inane comment in the first place.

"What about your law practice?" she asked.

"I'll call Raymond and have him handle my clients for the next couple of days," Michael answered.

"Do you have any trials?"

"No," Michael said, "What about your job."

"There shouldn't be any problems with the advertising firm," she predicted, "They're very understanding about granting leave."

"Fine."

"Then we are in agreement," Vivien said.

"Yes."

The next day, in the late afternoon, Michael Dodd was skillfully maneuvering his new station wagon through the deep snow. The town of Coulee Dam was two miles down the slick road. An early snowstorm had come to the Coulee Dam Reservation. He could hardly see through snow that fell from the sky, and he didn't have snow tires on his car. Periodically his car would hit slippery spots in the road and slid, but he would quickly regain control of the station wagon. He had never liked driving in the snow. As he neared the town of Coulee Dam, his spirits rose.

Vivien Renwick Dodd was riding silently in the passenger side of

the front seat. In her life, she had experienced few snowstorms, and she preferred the cold winter rains of Seattle. Every time the station wagon veered or slid, she grasped tightly the door handle, holding on to it for dear life. She feared for the safety of her loving husband and herself. She was afraid that the station wagon would go out of control, slide into a ditch and flip over on its top.

She asked anxiously, "How much farther do we have to go?"

"It's another mile to Coulee Dam," Michael replied.

"But I don't see the town of Coulee Dam."

"It's being obscured by the heavy snow."

As the station wagon neared the city limits, Vivien began to see bridge, business district and other structures. Soon a residential area came into view. She was tremendously relieved that they had made it to the town of Coulee Dam. Suzanne's home was a short distance away.

When Vivien had talked to Suzanne over the telephone, she was greatly excited about their coming visit. Suzanne had insisted that they stay at her home as she had an empty guest room. To the chagrin of Michael, Vivien graciously accepted her invitation.

Vivien asked, "How far is Suzanne's house?"

"Another two blocks," Michael replied.

"Her house does have a great view of the Columbia River."

"Yes. It does have a magnificent view," he agreed. He drove the station wagon past the business district of Coulee Dam. Making a right turn, he steered the station wagon down the state highway, which overlooked the Columbia River. Suzanne's large home came into view. Traveling one more block, he pulled into Suzanne's driveway and parked the car.

Turning to Michael, Vivien exclaimed, "I'm sure glad that we're here. The snowstorm was making me a nervous wreck."

"I agree. I don't like driving in snow," Michael said. He wearing a brown pullover sweater and sky blue slacks. When he left the station wagon, he opened the back passenger door, and he donned a red ski jacket.

"Throw me my coat," Vivien requested.

"Sure." He grasped Vivien's blue cloth coat and handed to her over the front seat.

"Is it cold outside?" she asked. She was attired in a brown stripe maternity shirt and Khaki maternity pants.

"Yes. It's freezing."

Opening her car door, she stepped into the cold air. She exclaimed, "It is cold." And she hastily wrapped herself in her coat.

"I'll get the luggage," Michael said. He moved towards the back end

of the station wagon, and he opened the tailgate. Grabbing two heavy suitcases, he lifted them out of the station wagon.

Vivien plodded through the snow-covered sidewalk, and she climbed a series of concrete steps to the front door. Knocking on the oak door, she waited for someone appeared.

The door slowly opened, and Crystal Bucknell was standing in the doorway. Crystal was becoming a full-fledged teenage girl. She was dressed in a red stripe jumpsuit. She immediately recognized Vivien and, she said loudly, "Aunt Vivien. Come in."

Entering the house, Vivien commented, "Crystal. You're becoming a pretty young lady."

Crystal blushed at Vivien's flattering compliment, and she said, "Thank you."

"You're going to be beautiful as your mother."

"I hope so."

"Stephanie and you will have all the boys chasing you," Vivien teased.

"Where's Bradley and Sarah?" Crystal asked.

"They had to stay in Seattle and attend school. "

Crystal had heard from her mother that Vivien was eight-months pregnant. Her observations confirmed her mother's statement. She asked, "When is the baby due?"

"Within four weeks," Vivien replied, "Where's your mother?"

"She's in her bedroom changing clothes," Crystal said, "She's just got home from work."

"Can you tell her that we've arrived." Vivien requested.

"Okay." Crystal headed down the hallway to her mother's bedroom.

Entering the house, Michael carried the suitcases into the living room. He placed them near a closet door. Then he asked, "Where's Suzanne?"

"She's coming," Vivien answered.

As Vivien spoke her words, Suzanne stepped into the living room. Six months pregnant, she was wearing a yellow pullover maternity dress. She was obviously pregnant. Suzanne's other daughter, Stephanie, followed her into the living room. Upon seeing Vivien and Michael, Suzanne cried out, "You made it."

"Yes. But the roads were treacherous," Vivien stated.

"It was tough driving," Michael commented.

"Thanks for coming," Suzanne said enthusiastically, "Take a seat on the sofa."

"Suzanne. You're looking beautiful," Vivien said. She sat down on the sofa, and Suzanne sat down on a love seat. Michael remained

standing.

"Michael. Aren't going to sit down?" Vivien asked.

"No. I think that Suzanne and you have plenty to talk about," Michael said, "I plan go into town and say hello to my father and stepmother, Stanley and Kay."

"We plan to have dinner at seven," Suzanne said.

"Stanley and Kay might want me to stay for dinner," he replied.

"Crystal and Stephanie are cooking the dinner," Suzanne said.

"Then I'll try to return by dinner," Michael promised. He didn't want to disappoint Crystal and Stephanie. Leaving the living room, he walked towards the front door and exited the house.

Vivien was happy that Michael was voluntarily absenting himself from the house. Suzanne and she had much talk about. Vivien knew that Michael and Suzanne had never been good friends. She had always pondered why they were such antagonist, especially when they were both intelligent, attractive, and Native Americans.

Looking at Crystal and Stephanie, Suzanne said to them, "Why don't you two start cooking dinner?"

"Sure. Mother," Crystal replied.

"I want to cook the string beans," Stephanie cried out.

"If you need help," Suzanne instructed, "come and get me."

"What are we having for dinner?" Vivien inquired.

"T-Bone steak and baked potatoes," Crystal announced.

"It sounds scrumptious," Vivien remarked cheerfully. She wanted to encourage Crystal and Stephanie who had previously prepared few meals.

Crystal and Stephanie left the living room, and they walked into the kitchen. After turning on the electric stove, they pulled pots, pans dishes and bowls from the wooden cupboards. They were very proud of cooking dinner for Vivien and Michael, whom they treated as a favorite aunt and uncle.

But they were disappointed that the free-spirited Bradley and Sarah had not accompanied their parents on the visit. They were intelligent and cheerful kids. They liked Bradley's sense of humor. They both enjoyed playing computer games with Bradley and Sarah. Both Bradley and Sarah were greatly fascinated by the mountainous terrain of Colville Indian Reservation.

Vivien was pleased that Suzanne's daughters left the living room. She could talk to Suzanne in private, and she had many questions to ask Suzanne about her pregnancy. She asked, "Suzanne. How are you feeling?"

"I'm feeling great."

"When is baby due?"

"In about three months," Suzanne said, "When is your baby due?"

"Within four weeks," Vivien replied.

"Isn't it great?" Suzanne exclaimed. She was jubilant that they were pregnant at the same time at their age.

"Michael and I are looking forward to having my third child," Vivien said.

"We'll both be nursing babies at the same time," Suzanne stated.

"Suzanne. You don't look depressed or dejected," Vivien commented.

"Why should I be depressed?"

"Well, Suzanne. You're not married."

"It does make any difference to me," Suzanne answered, "I'm highly pleased about being pregnant."

"Who's the father of your baby?"

Suzanne thought of telling Vivien the truth, but she quickly dismissed the idea. She wanted to keep matters private. She replied, "It could be several men."

"You're not going to tell me their names?"

"No."

"Suzanne. You're not the type to sleep around."

Putting her hands on her pregnant bulge, Suzanne said, "The proof is in the pudding."

"You're right about that," Vivien replied, "Do you plan to marry the father of your baby?"

"I want to have the baby first. Then I'll think about it."

"Is he a married man?" Vivien said. It was the obvious question to ask in light of Suzanne's reluctance to name or marry the father.

"No. None of them were married men."

"Are you in love with any of the men?" Vivien inquired.

"There wasn't enough time to fall in love," Suzanne remarked, "But they were handsome and fun."

"Suzanne. It's hard to believe that you're pregnant."

"I've changed."

"But you were never promiscuous before."

"That sounds strange coming from you," Suzanne mocked.

"I'm not one to judge anyone," Vivien remarked.

"A lot of men now view me as accessible."

"That's probably true," Vivien said replied.

"Who knows I may just get married again."

Vivien thought of Suzanne's parents, Tom and Pauline. She knew that they were members of a charismatic protestant church. In fact Suzanne had attended church regularly as a young woman. She asked, "What do your parents think of your pregnancy?"

Suzanne didn't like Vivien's prying question. But she thought that

Vivien deserved an answer. Her religious parents were deeply hurt by her unmarried pregnancy. They could not understand why their lovely daughter had changed. They remembered that when she left the Colville Indian Reservation for Seattle, she was moral and upright. They blamed Larry Bucknell and Dr. Seaton Edwald for corrupting their precious daughter.

She admitted, "Tom and Pauline are very disappointed about my pregnancy."

"They must be crushed," Vivien said, "Aren't they Christians?"

"Vivien. I don't want to talk about my parents' religious beliefs. "

"I was just wondering."

"Anyway, I told my parents that the putative father was a Native American," Suzanne disclosed.

"Why did you tell them that?"

"Because they always wanted me to marry a Native American."

Vivien perceived that Suzanne's parents were very pro-Native American. There was not doubt in her mind that they would be gratified if their beloved daughter married a Native American male.

"It does make a little sense," Vivien admitted, "Are the putative father a Native American?"

Suzanne saw no harm in identifying the putative father as a Native American male. Once the baby was born, everyone would realize that the father was a Native American. She said. "Yes. The father was Native American. I was at a Native American conference."

"I bet that. your parents want you to marry the father."

"Yeah. They do."

"Well. It's your life."

"My parents will get over their displeasure, and they accept my baby," Suzanne predicted.

"Especially when you get married again. "

"I have no plans at this time."

"Please Suzanne. Let's not get into argument over your intentions of not remarrying," Vivien pleaded. She was convinced that Suzanne would waste no time in finding someone to marry once the baby was born.

"Well. That's my intentions."

"What does Larry Bucknell say about your pregnancy?" Vivien inquired. She surmised that the high-born Larry Bucknell was bound to be threatened by Suzanne's unmarried pregnancy.

Suzanne recalled talking to Larry over the telephone about her pregnancy. When Crystal had inadvertently mentioned it to him, he had angrily telephoned her. Over the phone, he declared that her unmarried pregnancy was the greatest scandal to hit the Bucknell

family. He stated that he had made the right decision in divorcing her. He even accused Michael Dodd of being the father. She said, "Larry threatened to take the children from me, because I'm an unfit mother."

"God. You talk about pot calling the kettle black."

"He could be serious."

"Well. Michael will help you," Vivien said.

"I still have plenty of money to pay attorneys," Suzanne revealed, "Anyway, Larry would probably end up paying my attorney's fees."

"Chet Bucknell would never allow his son to return two Native American children to his home," Vivien analyzed.

"Yeah. Chet has plenty of influence over his son. "

"Well. Chet has the money, thus the influence."

"I'm not going lose any sleep over Larry's threats," Suzanne said.

"I've never like Larry or Chet Bucknell," Vivien blurted out, "They're still ruthlessly exploiting the environment." She was still actively involved in the environmental movement. Chet Bucknell and his company were number one on her list of the worst polluters of the environment in Western Washington.

"Larry doesn't mean anything to me anymore," Suzanne said. She finally realized that Larry and she had little in common, except their two daughters.

"That's good to hear after all these years."

After they finished talking about Suzanne's pregnancy, they discussed Vivien's pregnancy. Although they were thirty-nine years old, they appeared to be doing well with their pregnancies. Their pregnancies made them feel youthful and daring. Next topic of discussion was their beloved children.

Michael returned from his visit to his elderly father, Stanley. A short time later, Crystal announced joyfully that dinner was ready. Vivien lavished praise on the gourmet cooking of Crystal and Stephanie who were slightly embarrassed. When they finished eating, they returned to the living room and watched television.

Later the adults decided to play cards in the dining room. Their card playing didn't end until around midnight. By that time, Crystal and her sister, Stephanie, had been ordered to bed by Suzanne.

Suzanne eyed the large wood frame clock on a wall in the dining room. It was nearing midnight, and she was growing tired. Her sympathetic boss at the BIA Social Services Program had granted her leave for tomorrow, for which she was grateful. She said, "I'm getting tired."

"So am I," Vivien yawned loudly. In the poker games that they were playing, Vivien was far ahead in the winnings, and she was

having a wonderful time.

"You're not going to quit on me," Michael protested loudly.

"We can play cards tomorrow," Vivien said.

"He said, 'I'll win my money back tomorrow.'"

"Let me show you the guest room," Suzanne said.

"I could sleep ten hours," Vivien said, "The trip across the mountains was quite tiring."

"You can sleep in tomorrow," Suzanne responded.

"That's what I plan to do," Vivien replied.

"What's on the agenda for tomorrow?" Suzanne asked.

"After we spent the morning with you, we plan to visit my parents, Stanley and Kay," Michael said.

"Then all three of us will dine with Trixie Tupper," Vivien said.

"It sounds like a busy day," Suzanne commented. She got up from the oak dining table, and she guided Vivien and Michael down the hallway to the guest room. Michael was carrying the two suitcases behind the two females. They entered the room.

Suzanne showed them the amenities of guest room. Painted light blue, it was a spacious room with a queen-size bed. It was well furnished with French style furnishings. As she left the room, she said, "Sleep peacefully."

"Good night," Vivien replied.

Michael asked cautiously, "Did Suzanne mention who was the father of her baby?"

"Yes. She named you as the father," Vivien humored, and she then let out a suppressed laugh.

Upon hearing Vivien's words, Michael's heart pounded hard against his chest, and a spasm flashed through his beefy body. He only recovered when he heard Vivien's teasing laughter. He reacted, "Vivien. Don't tease me."

"I didn't mean any harm," she said cheerfully, "Suzanne won't tell me the father's name."

"It's hard to believe that Suzanne will give birth to a baby out of wedlock," he said.

"It's not important."

"Yeah. I was born out of wedlock myself," Michael said. They rarely discussed his illegitimate birth as he remembered little about his natural mother, Grace. His father, Stanley, had not volunteered any information.

"Who is your father?" she asked.

Displeased with the question, he replied, "It has never been important to me to know who is my father."

"Your father could be walking the streets of Coulee Dam."



"I never cared," Michael remarked.

"And you and Suzanne could be brother and sister."

Michael's mouth dropped open. He hadn't never consider whether Suzanne could be a close relative of his natural father. In his mind he quickly dismissed Vivien's conjecture. He said, "Tom Redwood is a Christian man."

"According to Suzanne, Tom didn't become a Christian until he was twenty-five years old," she revealed, "Two years after her birth and your birth."

"Vivien. I don't want to talk about it anymore," he said, "I'm just beginning to like Suzanne Redwood."

"I've noticed that your view of her has mellowed."

"It's going to take time."

"Suzanne did say that the father of her baby was a Native American."

"He's a Native American!" He sounded surprised.

"Yes."

"That's a change for Suzanne," he remarked. He thought of Suzanne's preference for dating and marrying Caucasian men.

"It's up to her to decide whom she wants to be the father of children," Vivien preached, "Whether they are White or Native American."

"I'm not criticizing Suzanne."

"I thought that you were," she said.

"No, I wasn't."

"Well. I'm sleepy," Vivien finally said, "I want to go to bed." She walked in the guest bathroom to brush her teeth.

"I'm tired too." Michael began disrobing his clothes. He generally just slept in his shorts. He thought about donning a large T-shirt and his sweat pants, but he changed his mind. Vivien would simply laugh at him and call him prudish. Pulling back the covers, he crawled into bed.

Returning to the bedroom, Vivien put on her night clothes. Then she said, "I'm ready for bed."

Michael examined her pregnant body. He liked Vivien's body when she was pregnant. Though she was misshaped, he did find her sexy.

Vivien slipped into bed, and she laid her soft hands on Michael's beefy body. She whispered, "Please hold me."

Michael put his arm around her body, and he said softly, "I love you."

"I love you too," Vivien returned. They quickly went to sleep.

Opening his eyes, Michael was lying on his back, staring at the

white ceiling. Next to him, Vivien was sleeping soundly. From past experience, he had learned to let Vivien sleep. Rolling over on his side, he glanced at a radio clock next to the bed. It was seven thirty in the morning. Climbing out of bed, he walked to a window and looked outside. The ground was covered by six inches of snow. But the sky was clear and blue. The sun was rising over a mountainous hill. He remembered this same scene many times from youth. He knew that the warming sun would quickly melt the snow. It was still too early for snow to stay on the ground.

After taking a quick shower and shaving, he dressed in a yellow plaid dress shirt and gray slacks. He again looked at Vivien who remained silently asleep. He thought of waking her up, for Suzanne was probably waiting for him in the kitchen.

Opening the bedroom door, he stepped down the long hallway. He heard some rock music, and he followed the music to the living room then the kitchen. He saw Suzanne Redwood sitting at the kitchen table. She was reading the morning newspaper and eating a small breakfast.

He could smell fresh perked coffee. At the moment, she was oblivious to his presence.

He was hesitant about announcing his presence. He said, "Good morning, Suzanne."

Suzanne looked up at Michael Dodd, and she smiled at him. She was wearing a loose blue jogging outfit. She said, "Where's Vivien?"

"She's still sleeping."

"Fine. That gives us some time to talk," she said, "Take a seat."

He replied, "But let me get some coffee first."

"The coffee is on the kitchen counter." She pointed to the coffee maker.

Walking to a kitchen counter, he poured himself a large cup of coffee, adding sugar and cream. Returning to the table, he sat down on a wooden chair, and he looked at Suzanne's face. He said, "Well. Who's the father of your baby?"

"That's private matter," Suzanne responded.

"Well. I think the father should know."

"Oh, I think that he knows."

"Then who?"

"Not now."

"I never believe that you would ever have a baby out of wedlock."

"There's nothing I can do about it now," she replied, "I'm already six month pregnant. I can easily support my baby without the help of the father."

"But it's still not right," Michael emphasized.

"It no longer matters whether it is right or not," Suzanne commented, "In three months I'll give birth to a child."

"I wish that I could help you," Michael stated.

"I'm not a pathetic person."

"I wasn't suggesting that."

"I don't need your help."

After Vivien Renwick Dodd woke up from her restful sleep, Michael and she spent the remainder of the bright morning visiting Suzanne Redwood. In the early afternoon, Michael and Vivien traveled to his father's home. For the next five hours, they visited Michael's father and stepmother, Stanley and Kay.

Now retired, Stanley's hair was completely gray, but he had gain little weight over the years. Kay was ten years younger than Stanley. In her fifties, Kay was beginning to look like a typical grandmother. His parents were excited about the coming birth of another grandchild. They admired Vivien's courage for having a baby at thirty-nine years old, but they discouraged her from having more babies. Vivien reassured them that she didn't plan to have anymore babies.

When five p.m. came, Michael told Stanley and Kay that they planned to dine with Trixie Spearman Tupper. They returned to Suzanne's home, and they got ready for dinner. Suzanne's daughter, Crystal, volunteered to babysit her sister, Stephanie. Taking Michael's station wagon, they drove to the business district of Coulee Dam.

Attired in a pink maternity dress, Suzanne led the way into the Sugar Plum Restaurant. It had the well-deserved reputation of being the best restaurant in the town of Coulee Dam.

Michael had opened the door for Suzanne and Vivien. Wearing a brown stripe maternity shirt and blue pants, Vivien followed Suzanne into the restaurant.

After Vivien passed through the door, Michael followed her in the roomy restaurant, which was decorated with old photographs and antiques from Coulee Dam's glorious past. Because it was a weekday night, the restaurant had few customers in the restaurant area. But the barroom was full of noisy patrons.

Eyeing the entrance of the restaurant, Trixie Spearman Tupper was sitting at a large table, waiting for the arrival of Suzanne, Michael and Vivien. She was wearing a dark blue women's suit. Her husband, Allen, was sitting with her. Earlier he had adamantly refused to dress up for dinner, because he didn't want to look high class.

Sighting Suzanne entering the restaurant, Trixie frantically waved to the three to come over to the table. Searching the restaurant with her eyes, Suzanne sighted Trixie waving her hand

at her. She said to Michael and Vivien, "There's Trixie and Allen."

Still in the lead, Suzanne scurried to their table, which was capable of serving eight persons. At a more leisurely pace, Vivien and Michael followed. From afar, Michael watched Suzanne and Trixie exchange some words. After which Suzanne sat down at the table next to Trixie.

Approaching the table, Michael and Vivien exchanged pleasantries with Allen and Trixie, and they sat down at the table. Michael eyed Allen Tupper's clothing. He surmised that college had not changed non-conformist Allen who preferred to dress like a person twenty years younger. Allen typically wore an assortment of T-shirts and faded blue jeans. Michael figured that Trixie was having no success in wringing the rebel out of him. He asked, "Allen. How are you doing in college?"

"Okay. But college is not changing me one bit," Allen replied aggressively. "I'm still going to be a Native American when I get out of college."

Allen explained that he was attending Portland State University, and he was planning to be a pre-law major.

"Are you planning to go to law school?" Michael asked

"No. I plan to become a tribal public defender or a paralegal," Allen answered.

"But the tribe doesn't have a public defender system for the Tribal Court," Michael pointed out, "or a legal services program."

"Well. I plan to change that," Trixie asserted loudly.

Michael thought about Trixie's statement. How could she possibly change things with the tribe. The tribal council was totally resistant to any kind of change, though the council men made an excellent income, lived in modern houses, and lived a modern lifestyle. He also thought that Trixie had little political influence in spite of the fact her Uncle Ned was on the tribal council. The council men paid little attention to female tribal members. And she was only the manager of the tribal post and pole plant, which was a small tribal enterprise with fifteen employees. He asked, "Trixie. What do you mean?"

"I plan to run for the tribal chairmanship of the tribe," Trixie announced proudly.

"You're finally following my advice," Suzanne cried out gleefully.

"I've told Trixie that she doesn't stand a chance," Allen muttered.

"I think that she can win," Suzanne asserted. She enjoyed disagreeing with male-chauvinist Allen, because it made him insecure and frustrated.

"Who's the present tribal chairman," Vivien asked. Since Michael had shown little interest in tribal politics, she knew little about the makeup of the tribal government.

"Buster Maxwell," Allen announced with pride.

"You mean Czar Maxwell," Trixie blurted out.

"Trixie. You sound radical and militant," Allen reacted.

"It's about time that women become radical," Vivien declared. She had always been a feminist since her college days.

"Yeah. But Buster has been chairman of the tribe for nearly sixteen years," Michael said, "and he has always won smashing over his opponents."

"That's right - Michael," Allen cried out, "Talk some sense into her hard skull." He knew that he could depend on Michael for support against his three female antagonists who were ganging up on him.

"But Buster has been a terrible tribal chairman," Trixie replied, "And he has no respect for women."

"Well. I've always liked Buster," Allen responded.

"That's because Czar Maxwell and you are drinking buddies," Trixie said to Allen.

"Buster is a good man," Allen said.

"Did Buster support you when you ran for council three times?" Trixie asked Allen.

"Buster told me that he had to remain neutral in the election," Allen disclosed.

"No. He didn't remain neutral, Buster was busy supporting my Uncle Ned for re-election," Trixie revealed.

"No. Buster told me that he supported me," Allen cried out.

"As long as you bought him beer," Trixie pointed out.

"Well. I know whom I'm going to vote for," Allen finally said.

"What made you decide to run for the tribal chairmanship," Michael asked Trixie.

"I'm sick and tired of the tribal council interfering with my operation of the post and pole plant," Trixie divulged. She explained that the councilmen were forcing her to hire their lazy relatives. The plant was already overstaffed. The ineffective tribal chairman, Buster Maxwell, refused to do anything about it.

"It's all politics," Suzanne exclaimed. In the past she had ignored tribal politics, because she had little respect for the reactionary tribal councilmen. But Trixie was changing her mind about tribal politics.

"When is the tribal election?" Vivien asked.

"In early January," Trixie replied, " The filing period for tribal chairman ends Friday."

"Trixie. You're going to get yourself fired," Allen cried out, "Buster doesn't tolerate disloyal employees."

"I was looking for a job when I got this one," Trixie exclaimed.

"It will be good to have you with me in Portland," Allen said gleefully to Trixie, "It will be a lot easier to find work there."

"Trixie. I think you can win," Suzanne retorted, "I'm going to help you campaign."

"But Buster Maxwell comes from a large clan, and he has the tavern vote," Allen said confidently.

"But Trixie comes from a large clan too," Suzanne declared.

"Well. Trixie will need to campaign heavily in the taverns if she is going to have any chance at winning," Allen remarked.

"Allen. It didn't do you any good to campaign in the taverns," Trixie asserted. She remembered when Allen had ran three times for the tribal council. After campaigning heavily in the reservation beer taverns, Allen had only garnered a few votes. Humiliated, after each losing election, he would stay out of the taverns for a month. Eventually Buster Maxwell would telephone him and invite him to go drinking.

Michael thought about the swing vote in the tribal elections. It always was the off- reservation voters. They tended to vote for the best qualified person. He said, "Trixie. You should go after the off-reservation voters."

"I've thought about that," Trixie said.

"The off-reservation vote seems to decide every election," Suzanne said.

"You'll have to send each off-reservation voter a campaign letter," Michael suggested, "and an absentee ballot request card."

"It will be expensive," Trixie said.

"I would spend the money on buying beers for voters in the taverns," Allen interrupted.

"Allen. It didn't do you any good," Trixie blurted out.

"At least I had some fun campaigning in the taverns," Allen replied.

"Trixie. I think that you have a chance to win against Buster Maxwell," Michael analyzed aloud, "But you need to go after the off-reservation vote."

"I wouldn't count Buster out," Allen exclaimed, "He's going to come out swinging with a battle ax."

"I'm not worried about Czar Maxwell," Trixie said.

"The election could get brutal," Michael said.

"I've got nothing to lose," Trixie said.

"You're win," Suzanne encouraged.

"I'd better." They continued talking about tribal politics until they finished their dinner.

## Chapter 20

On unusually clear early December, 1984 day, Michael Dodd walked briskly into a hospital in Bellevue, Washington. Catching an elevator, he rode it to the third floor where the maternity ward was located. His mother-in-law, Joan Renwick, had called him from his home. She stated that his wife, Vivien, was about to give birth to their third child, and Vivien was on her way to the hospital. Her father, Jack Renwick, was transporting her to the hospital. Quickly leaving his law office, Michael headed directly to the hospital.

In the last few weeks. Michael and Vivien had argued incessantly about where the baby should be born. Vivien wanted a natural child birth at home. Because of her age, Michael wanted the baby born at a hospital. Finally Vivien's baby doctor recommended that she give birth in a hospital. Although Vivien protested, she acquiesced to the doctor's advice, and she made arrangements to enter a hospital when the baby was about to be born.

Michael walked down the corridor to the maternity ward. He sighted Vivien's parents, Jack and Joan Renwick, sitting near the entrance of the delivery room. Walking up to his in-laws, he asked, "How is Vivien doing?"

"Vivien is doing fine," Joan said cheerfully, "She's having a normal delivery."

"She wants you in the delivery room," Jack said.

"Yeah, I know."

"Michael. Are you going into the delivery room?" Joan asked.

"Yes." Michael walked over to a middle-aged brunette nurse who was wearing a white nurse's uniform. She led him through a large door.

Sitting down on a long couch, Joan and Jack nervously waited for the birth of their next grandchild. They both were now in their sixties and they had an abundance of gray hair. They were still a handsome couple. Their wrinkled faces exhibited their many years of laborious but fruitful existence on this fragile earth. Over the years they managed to maintain their ideal weight, but their waistlines and curves were thicker. Although they were retired, they were still active in community affairs, especially the environmental movement. Like Vivien, they had regarded Larry and Chet Bucknell as plunderers of the environment, and

they had staunchly opposed the Bucknells' ill-conceived real estate developments.

"I hope that Vivien doesn't have any more babies," Jack said seriously. He was very concerned about the health of his eldest daughter and her soon new born baby.

"Now days it's not unusual for women in late thirties and early forties to have babies," Joan attempted to reassure him, though she wasn't convinced herself.

"Well. As long as it's not my daughter."

"I'm certain that Vivien doesn't plan to have further babies."

They waited another hour. Hearing a door opening, they glanced up at the door into which Michael had disappeared. It was Michael. He said in elation, "Vivien gave birth to a baby girl."

"Thank God, it's over," Jack exclaimed. Relief surged through his body.

"How much did the baby weigh?" Joan asked.

"Seven pounds and eight ounces."

"When can we see Vivien?" Jack inquired.

"After the orderly takes Vivien to her room," Michael said, "It was a natural child birth."

As Michael talked, a male orderly brought a pushcart through the doors of the delivery room. The brown-haired orderly was dressed in a light green top and pants. Conscious, Vivien was lying on top of the pushcart. She had insisted on a natural child birth, and, thus, she was fully conscious during the birth of her baby.

Dressed in a white nurse's uniform, a young blonde nurse followed the pushcart. She was carefully carrying the baby in her arms. The baby had the reddish color and marks of a new born baby. It had dark hair and eyes.

"There's Vivien," Joan declared happily.

The three followed the procession to Vivien's room which was located down the corridor. The orderly pushed the pushcart into the room. Painted white, the room had two hospital beds and usual hospital equipment. But Vivien was the only person occupying the room. The nurse placed the baby on the far bed, and she helped the orderly place Vivien onto the bed. After the orderly left the room, the nurse cranked up the top part of Vivien's bed. Handing the baby to Vivien, the nurse signaled Michael and the grandparents to enter the room. The proud grandparents hurried into the room.

"Vivien. Are you okay?" Joan asked in a concerned voice.

"Sure, Mother."

"Your baby is beautiful," Joan announced.

"She is pretty baby," Vivien agreed.



"What do you plan to name her?" Jack said.

"Danielle."

"That's a pretty name. Fitting for a pretty granddaughter," Jack said proudly.

"Michael. You must be proud," Joan declared.

"Yes. I'm proud of my new daughter and Vivien."

"I'm very happy," Vivien responded.

Outside of Suzanne Redwood's home in Coulee Dam, Washington, the snow has finally come to stay for the rest of the winter. It was early December, 1984. If a Chinook wind didn't melt the snow, the snow should be gone by the end of February. The winters might be cold in Coulee Dam, but they were usually short.

Suzanne Redwood and Trixie Spearman Tupper were sitting at the dining table. They were busy stuffing campaign envelopes for Trixie's campaign for the tribal chairmanship of the tribe. Later in the afternoon, they planned to mail four thousand campaign letters. After the first mailing, they planned a second mailing close to election day, which was scheduled for early January of 1985.

Their campaign strategy was to get as many off-reservation voters as possible to vote by absentee ballot in the general election. Every tribal voter had the option of voting at the polls or by absentee ballot. They thought that the off-reservation voters would favor Trixie over the present tribal chairman, Buster Maxwell. The off-reservation voters tended to vote for the better-educated candidates. But the off-reservation voters also had a history of heavily favoring the incumbent over the challenger. Thus, Trixie didn't know which way the off-reservation voters would ultimately vote.

Now seven months pregnant, Suzanne heard her telephone ring, and she scampered into the kitchen. Trixie remained in the dining room stuffing envelopes. Ten minutes later, Suzanne returned to the dining room. She exclaimed happily, "Vivien had a baby girl."

"Is Vivien okay?"

"Yes. She is doing fine," Suzanne replied.

"That's a relief," Trixie replied, "Who was on the telephone?"

"It was Vivien."

"Huh. When was the baby born?"

"Yesterday."

"Why didn't Michael Dodd call you yesterday?" Trixie asked.

"I don't know," Suzanne said, "He just won't telephone me."

Trixie recalled the time when all three of them attended high

school together. She remembered the adolescent animosity between the two. She pondered why their rivalry had died so hard. She said, "Are you two still fighting after all of these years?"

"No. We're all mellowing."

"What's the baby's name?"

"The baby's name is Danielle," Suzanne replied.

"Danielle. It's a pretty name."

"Yeah. I think so."

"When are Vivien and Michael coming to show us the baby?"

Trixie asked.

"Probably not until January."

"January."

"Well. Michael's parents, Stanley and Kay, are spending a few months in Arizona," Suzanne explained, "Vivien and Michael plan to fly down to Arizona and visit them during Christmas."

"I'll just have to wait until January to see baby Danielle."

"It looks like it," Suzanne said.

Returning to stuffing envelopes, they worked feverishly for another two hours. When they finished stuffing the last envelope, they both let out a yell of triumph. Then they walked into the kitchen where Suzanne cooked them a couple of cheeseburgers and fries for lunch. Sitting at the kitchen table, Trixie said, "Suzanne. Thank you for your help."

"You don't need to thank me."

"But I'll repay the money for the campaign material as soon as I can," Trixie promised.

"Trixie. It's a campaign contribution."

"But whoever heard of campaign contributions for tribal elections?" Trixie said.

"I want to get Buster Maxwell out as tribal chairman."

"So do I."

"Has the tribal council been giving you a rough time?" Suzanne asked.

"Yeah. I've been called before the Finance Committee a couple times," Trixie revealed, "Buster Maxwell must be running scared."

"Well. You have something to offer the voters."

"Buster is threatening to re-organize the tribal enterprises after the election," Trixie divulged.

"In other words you'd better not lose," Suzanne said.

"Buster is actually threatened by my candidacy."

"Trixie. You come from a large extended family; you're well educated, and you've been a successful business woman," Suzanne said.

"I don't want to fall on my face like my husband," Trixie said. Three times Allen Tupper had ran for the tribal council. In each unsuccessful attempt he had only managed to receive a few meager votes.

"What kind of campaign is Buster running?" Suzanne asked.

"He has been campaigning heavily in the reservation taverns."

"It sounds like Buster."

"He's buying free beer for every tribal voter at the taverns," Trixie said.

"He must be spending a lot of money," Suzanne said.

"Well. Beer isn't cheap."

"Trixie. We're doing the right thing by putting our money into the mail," Suzanne said, "and not wasting our scant funds by campaigning in the taverns."

"I hope that you're right," Trixie responded.

"We'll know within a month," Suzanne declared, "What about debating Buster Maxwell?"

"I heard that there might be one debate."

"You'll murder Buster in a debate."

"Buster can be a ruthless campaigner."

"I'm positive that he will try to use smear tactics," Suzanne opined.

"Well. There's plenty at stake in this election," Trixie said, "Buster is bound to come out swinging."

"You'll do well."

Suzanne Redwood and Trixie Spearman Tupper walked into the new gymnasium of local high school. Trixie was scheduled to debate Buster Maxwell tonight. It was about seven p.m. on a Tuesday night in the first week of January. 1985.

The tribal election was scheduled for the following Saturday. Though the campaign lasted a little over a month, Trixie was tired of non-stop campaigning. She had virtually visited every home on the Colville Indian Reservation, trying to stir up interest in her campaign. A week earlier, Suzanne and she had sent out a second campaign mailing to the tribal voters, reminding them to vote in the tribal election.

The gym bleachers were full of tribal members who were interested in the debate between the challenger, Trixie, and the tribal chairman, Buster Maxwell. Everyone was expecting a close race for the tribal chairmanship of the tribe. They were anticipating a rambunctious debate between Trixie and Buster. Buster had been bragging all week how he planned to destroy Trixie in the debate.

Eight months pregnant, Suzanne found a seat on the bottom of the bleachers. She was wearing a green maternity dress. Trixie was standing by Suzanne. Suzanne asked Trixie, "Are you nervous?"

"Yes, I'm nervous," Trixie replied.

"I would expect the worst from Buster," Suzanne advised, "He's bound to be desperate."

"There's a ton of ballot absentee ballots that already been mailed in," Trixie said confidently,

"Trixie. It's looking good for you."

"I hope so."

"There's your opponent," Suzanne said. She pointed to Buster Maxwell who was walking into the gym. Buster was followed by a group of four Native American males, who were wearing casual shirts and blue jeans.

In his middle fifties, Buster was a huge Native American man with short grayish black hair, brown eyes, and a brown complexion. He had a prominent nose and high cheek bones. He was wearing a red traditional ribbon shirt, buckskin vest, blue jeans and black cowboy boots. He had the gift of gab and an elegant voice.

"I'd better head to the debaters' table," Trixie said.

"Trixie. No matter what happens tonight. You're going to win the election on Saturday," Suzanne reassured.

"I'll do my best."

"Give Buster some good punches."

Turning away from Suzanne, Trixie ambled towards the debaters' table. Her acid-filled stomach started to knot, and her fearful heart beat rapidly. The debater's table was long portable table, made of wood and steel legs. There were cushioned chairs for the debaters and the debate moderator.

The moderator was sitting at the center of the debaters' table. There was a microphone in front of him. He was a young tribal councilman who was not up for re-election. His name was Dusty Sims. A tall man with long black hair, the moderator was dressed in a leather jacket, blue stripe dress shirt, brown slacks, and brown cowboy boots.

Trixie walked up to the table, and she said, "Hello Dusty."

"Hi Trixie," he replied, "Are ready for tonight's debate."

"Yes."

"I admire you for having the courage to run against Buster Maxwell," Dusty said.

"Well. Someone has to run against Czar Maxwell."

"Buster is a pretty rough customer," he said, "I would expect anything from him tonight."

"He looks a little desperate," Trixie said.

"You got him worried."

"I'll handle him."

"Buster got the gym packed with his relatives and supporters," Dusty pointed out.

Panning the crowd, Trixie saw a motley of brown faces. She recognized the faces of many of her husband's tavern friends. She immediately concluded that they were the supporters of Buster Maxwell. She wasn't surprised since she expected an unfriendly reception from his tavern supporters. She wished that she had brought more of her own supporters to the debate. But she was still a political novice. She said, "There's nothing I can do about the crowd."

"Buster can get pretty mean when the crowd gets behind him."

"I'll watch my step."

As Trixie and Dusty talked, Buster Maxwell was still saying hello to his supporters, sitting in the bleachers. When he shook his last hand, he angrily stomped to the debaters' table, trying to intimidate Trixie. He made no effort to shake his opponent's hand. He barked, "Well, Dusty. Let's get on with the debate. I got more campaigning to do tonight."

"Trixie. Are you ready to proceed?" Dusty asked.

"Yes. I'm ready."

"Then we will proceed with the debate," Dusty announced.

In an attempt to intimidate Trixie, Buster gave her a wry look. Trixie simply ignored him and sat down.

Picking up a microphone, Dusty stayed on his feet and introduced the two candidates for tribal chairman. He first introduced the incumbent tribal chairman, Buster Maxwell. Buster's supporters in the gym went wild with enthusiasm for Buster. They began to stomp their feet and to yell for him to speak.

Grabbing a microphone, Buster thundered, "Thank you for your support. I'm going to be merciful and quick tonight." The crowd gave him a loud applause of appreciation.

One of Buster's supporters cried out, "Get her." The man was obviously intoxicated.

When the crowd quieted down, Dusty introduced Trixie. Suzanne slapped loudly for Trixie. But only a few other tribal voters slapped their hands in support for Trixie. The crowd was clearly pro-Buster Maxwell.

"I want each of the candidates to say a few words to the tribal voters," Dusty said, "Let's start with Trixie Spearman Tupper."

Trixie grasped the microphone in front of her, and she pulled it closer

to her curvy body. She was visibly apprehensive as she spoke into the microphone. She talked about the need for new leadership in the tribe and about the mismanagement of tribal business enterprises. She spoke out against nepotism in the tribe. When she finished only a few souls gave her hand. Suzanne was one of them.

Seizing a microphone, Buster got to his feet and started to give an elegant speech about the enemies of tribal sovereignty. He vividly recalled the days of the Eisenhower Administration's policy of terminating the tribes and the struggle to keep tribes throughout the nation from being terminated. He specifically blamed urban and well-educated Native Americans for the termination era. He pointed out that Trixie had once lived in Portland, Oregon, and she was a college graduate. He implied that Trixie was a Native American who favored termination and was against tribal sovereignty.

Buster's smear tactics made Trixie irate. Grabbing her microphone, she cried out, "Czar Maxwell. You're trying to smear me. I've never been for termination, and I've always supported tribal self-government."

"I know that you want to terminate this tribe," Buster yelled out.

"Buster. You lie."

"You're nothing but a well-educated nothing," Buster snarled, "You should be home washing dishes."

"Buster. You're a crook," Trixie cried out without thinking. She had always suspected Buster of misusing tribal funds. Buster's body shook with rage, and his eyes turned red. He gripped his fists. He howled, "How dare you call me a crook."

"If elected tribal chairman, I plan have the tribal books audit by a reputable accounting firm." Trixie blurted out.

"The tribal records aren't going to be audited by anyone," Buster declared heatedly.

"You wait and see when I'm elected chairman," Trixie cried out.

"You're nothing but a militant feminist."

"Buster. I'm going to see you behind bars."

"You're a terminator," Buster shouted.

"I never was a terminator."

Buster was surprised that Trixie was such a strong debater. He could see that the crowd was talking among themselves about the exchange between Trixie and himself. He wasn't expecting that Trixie would call him a crook. He decided to break up the debate. Throwing his hands up, he shouted, "I'm not going to debate a known terminator."

Buster threw down the microphone, and he walked to where his four pals were sitting in the bleachers. The four got up from their front row seats in the bleachers, and they started to congratulate Buster on his

imaginary debate victory. In turn, they each shook vigorously his hand. His other supporters and extended family members swarmed out the bleachers moved towards Buster. Each wanted to shake his hand and congratulate him.

Suzanne hurried to Trixie at the debaters' table. She maneuvered through the vociferous crowd, who visibly agitated about the brief debate between Buster and Trixie. Approaching Trixie, Suzanne asked, "Trixie. Are you okay?"

"Yes. But we had better leave the gym," Trixie said, "The crowd is getting into a mean mood."

"They're turning into a mob," Suzanne cried out.

"Let me take you out the back door," Dusty offered.

"That's a good idea," Trixie replied.

Dusty moved headlong to the gym stage, and he climbed a stairway to leading to a back door. Trixie and Suzanne followed close behind. They heard one of Buster's pals yell out, "There they go. Let's get them."

But Trixie and Suzanne were already at the back door. Exiting the door, they rushed to Trixie's car. The cold air of the night hit their excited face. The stars shone in the dark clear sky. Climbing into the car, Trixie steered the car out of the parking lot and drove down a street. She said, "Suzanne. Let's head to your place."

"That's fine with me," Suzanne replied, "I can't believe what happened at the debate."

"Yeah. It wasn't much of a debate," Trixie agreed.

"Buster Maxwell actually tried to smear you."

"He must be really scared of losing the election."

"Buster looked pretty desperate at the debate."

"I just can't understand it," Trixie said emotionally, "I've never been a terminator."

"Well. If Buster loses, what can he do?" Suzanne asked.

"Buster can go back to being a logger."

"He's pretty old to be a logger," Suzanne said, "He's not in good enough shape to be a logger."

"I think he's strong enough," Trixie replied.

"Well. Buster has a lot to lose."

"There's a lot at stake for me too," Trixie pointed out, "I had better win the election."

"Buster has many supporters at the debate," Suzanne said.

"I'll do okay with the poll vote," Trixie predicted, "But I'm counting on the absentee ballots to win the election."

"Well. So far, it's been an exciting election."

Trixie Spearman Tupper and Suzanne Redwood entered the tribal headquarters of the tribe. It was huge steel building, which was painted green. The metal building housed the tribal council chambers where the election ballots were being counted. The building was fourteen miles from the town of Coulee Dam, and it was located on the campus of the local federal Indian agency at Nespelem, Washington. The agency was surrounded by mountainous terrain, which was now snow covered.

There was six inches of snow on the ground, and snow was gently falling from the cloudy sky on this Monday morning in January, 1985.

"Aren't you excited about the ballot counting?" Suzanne asked Trixie. Suzanne was attired in a bluish maternity dress.

"Oh. I'm a little anxious," Trixie responded.

"You're only six hundred votes behind. "

"It just as well be thousand."

"There are over two thousand absentee ballots to be counted this morning," Suzanne encouraged.

"Yes. I still have chance."

"You're going to win."

They walked into the tribal council chambers, which was full of people. Most of whom were tribal councilmen. The spacious room could hold over a hundred persons. The victorious candidates for tribal council were being congratulated by their supporters and family members. The losing candidates were visibly distressed by their loss. But they still congratulated and shook the hand of the winners.

The election committee of the tribal council had already counted the ballots for the other elections. The four members of the committee were sitting at a large rectangular oak table. They were busy preparing to count the absentee ballots for the position of tribal chairman. The poll vote ballots were counted on Saturday, and only the absentee ballots remained to be counted. Two thousand absentee ballots were lying on the oak table.

Suzanne and Trixie found seats near a large window. The oak table was two feet away from their seats. A blackboard was situated in the front of the room. With a piece of white chalk in his hand, a Bureau of Indian Affairs employee was standing by the blackboard. A stocky middle-aged man, he was attired in a gray suit. He was keeping count of the ballots cast for the candidates. He began to write the names of Buster Maxwell and Trixie Tupper on the blackboard.

Glancing at the entrance to the council chambers, Suzanne said excitedly, "There's Buster Maxwell."



With air of arrogance, Buster paraded into the room. He was wearing a yellow plaid shirt, a leather vest, blue jeans, and black cowboy boots. He followed by a group of men supporters, who were attired in casual shirts, jeans and cowboy boots. Sighting Trixie and Suzanne, he gave them an icy stare, and he then found seats for himself and his supporters across the room.

"Buster looks in a mean mood," Trixie opined.

"He's simply anxious like you," Suzanne said.

"I wished the ballot counting was over."

"They'll count them soon enough."

The election committee chairman was a man in his late fifties. Smiley Propp was a retired road engineer with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. A distinguished-looking but a short man, he had been a member of the tribal council since 1980.

"Smiley Propp is ready to count the absentee ballots," Suzanne announced.

"I can't look," Trixie said.

Smiley started to pick up the ballots one at a time. He yelled out the name of candidate for whom the voter had voted. The first twenty votes went for Buster. Trixie's face turned white with panic. Buster's supporters began to prematurely congratulate him. Relieved, Buster began to grin at Trixie. But his elation was cut short as the next thirty votes went for Trixie. Clearly the trend of the vote was in Trixie's favor.

When Trixie reduced the vote margin to hundred vote, Buster began to stare in disbelief at the blackboard. There was still over six hundred ballots to be counted. He quickly calculated that he would lose the election. Standing up, he hurriedly left the council chambers.

Suzanne saw Buster leaving the room. She said, "I wonder where Buster going?"

"I have no idea," Trixie replied.

"He's probably headed to the tribal attorney's office," Suzanne surmised, "to get legal advice on to protest the election."

"I'm going to fire the tribal attorney," Trixie announced.

"What for?"

"He's always playing politics with the tribal council."

"Does he work for the law firm of Fuller & Fuller?" Suzanne asked.

"Yes. I plan to fire the entire law firm."

Both watched the blackboard. Trixie drew even and then took the lead. Her lead began to steadily lengthen. "Trixie. Congratulations," she said, "You're going to win."

"I'm not going to celebrate yet."

"You got it in the bag."

"Let's wait until the last ballot has been counted," Trixie urged.

Thirty minutes later, Trixie was a head by seventy-five votes with fifty ballots remaining to be counted. Buster poked his head into the council chambers and glanced at the blackboard. His face turned an ash color, and body shook as he had lost the election.

Stepping back into the room, he returned his seat and sat down. The whole room was quiet as they couldn't believe the election upset. Then the last ballot was counted, Trixie had won the election for tribal chairman by eighty votes.

Buster could no longer control his frustration, disappointment, and anger. Jumping to his feet, he yelled, "Fraud at the polls!"

"Buster. Are you protesting the election?" the chairman of the election committee asked.

"Yeah. Trixie Tupper cheated."

"How did she cheat?" the election chairman asked loudly.

"She stole the absentee ballots and substituted new ones."

"Do you have any evidence?" the election chairman asked.

"She had to have cheated or I would not have lost the election," Buster asserted boldly. He fully expected that the members of the election committee would come to his aid and declare the election void.

"Is that your only evidence?"

"Do I need any more proof?"

"Well. There's no way that Trixie could have stolen the absentee ballots," the election chairman ruled.

"Are overruling my election challenge?" Buster cried out.

"Yes."

"How can you do this to me?"

"Let's get on with the final tabulation of the ballots," the election chairman announced.

"You can't do that to me," Buster yelled out.

"I don't have any choice," the election chairman said.

"After sixteen years as tribal chairman, you're throwing me out the door," Buster screamed out.

"What's the final vote count for Buster Maxwell," the election chairman asked.

The BIA employee at the blackboard announced, "2105 votes. "

"What the final vote count for Trixie T upper."

"2185 votes."

"I declare Trixie Tupper the winner of the election and next tribal chairman of the tribe," the election chairman proclaimed.

"You're going to hear from my lawyers," Buster yelled out. Then visibly angrily, he stomped out of the tribal council chambers. His shocked supporters also hurried out of the room. They were unusually silent as they left.

"Trixie. You won," Suzanne exclaimed.

"I'm all shook up," Trixie replied. Her clothes were damp from perspiration.

"I knew that you would win."

"I had my doubts."

"Well. With you as chairwoman, I now have some influence with the tribe," Suzanne said gleefully.

"I'm going to change things," Trixie asserted.

"The tribe does need to be reformed."

"I got four years to try." Trixie got to her feet and started shaking hands with people wishing to congratulate her. It was one of the finest moments of her life.

## Chapter 21

Michael Dodd was driving his station wagon through the town of Grand Coulee. His wife, Vivien, was with him in the front seat of the station wagon. Their third child, Danielle, was sleeping in the back seat. Their other two children, Bradley and Sarah, were spending the weekend with grandparents, Jack and Joan Renwick.

It was a Saturday morning in the first week of February, 1985. A brief winter thaw had come to Colville Indian Reservation. The eight inches of snow on the ground was quickly melting, and roads and streets was bare but wet. The mountainous terrain surrounding the Grand Coulee Dam area was still snow-covered. The sun was shining brightly in a cloudless blue sky.

"Do you want me to drive you straight to the hospital?" Michael asked.

"Yes. I'm worried about Suzanne," Vivien replied.

"Well. She shouldn't be having babies at thirty-nine years old."

"It didn't stop me."

"But you're different," he said, "You have a loving husband."

"Michael. Quit criticizing Suzanne."

"She just makes me mad."

"I wish I knew who fathered Suzanne's baby," Vivien expressed heatedly, "I would give him a piece of my mind. "

"You would?"

"Yes. He should be with Suzanne."

"You're are quick to judge."

"I'm not being judgmental."

"Is Suzanne that sick?" Michael asked.

"She is having a rough time giving birth to her baby."

"She'll pull through."

"How far is the hospital?" Vivien asked.

"Two blocks away."

"Michael. Are you coming into the hospital?"

"No. I want to visit my father, Stanley," Michael disclosed.

"You never did like Suzanne," Vivien asserted.

"I got over Suzanne a long time ago," he said, "Anyway, she's probably under sedation."

"I think a vigil for Suzanne would be nice."

"I first rather visit my father and then visit Suzanne."

"Are taking Danielle with you?"

"Yes. I'll take her." Michael steered his station wagon into the hospital parking lot. He drove up to the front entrance of the hospital and stopped.

Exiting the station wagon, Vivien said, "How long will you be at Stanley and Kay's home?"

"I figure until about five o'clock," Michael predicted.

"Could you drop our suitcases off at Suzanne's house?"

"Sure." Michael and Vivien planned to spend the night at Suzanne's house as she had an empty guest room.

Vivien watched Michael's station wagon disappear into the distance. She then entered the hospital. It was one story building, but it had several wings. For a small area, Grand Coulee Dam had an functioning small hospital. Stopping at the reception desk, Vivien asked a nurse where the maternity ward was located, A young red- haired nurse pointed down the corridor. Thanking the nurse, Vivien continued down the corridor. In the distance, she could make out Trixie Spearman Tupper, Suzanne's daughters, Crystal and Stephanie, and Suzanne's parents, Tom and Pauline Redwood. As she neared the group, she asked, "How is Suzanne doing?"

Crystal ran to Vivien, and she exclaimed nervously, "Mother is about to have her baby."

"That's good to hear," Vivien said, smiling at Crystal. She continued down the corridor to Trixie, who was sitting on a gray cushioned chair outside of the delivery room. Wearing a blue top and white pants, Stephanie was sitting beside her. Tom and Pauline were sitting on a long couch across from the delivery room.

As Vivien neared, Trixie said, "Vivien. I'm glad you made it."

"It was a long drive from Seattle," Vivien stated.

"Where's Michael?" Trixie asked.

"He went to visit to Stanley and Kay," Vivien replied, "He has baby Danielle with him."

Then Vivien walked over to Tom and Pauline. In their sixties, they were about to retire from the Bureau of Indian Affairs where both of them had worked for more than thirty-five years. With a grim face, Tom was reading a sports magazine, and Pauline was working on beading a leather wallet. Vivien said to them, "Hi Tom and Pauline."

"Vivien. It's good to see you again," Pauline replied.

"I wanted to be here when Suzanne had her baby," Vivien said.

"Where's your baby - Danielle?"

"Michael took Danielle to visit Stanley and Kay Dodd."

Pauline pondered whether Vivien knew who was the father of Suzanne's baby. Vivien had been Suzanne's roommate at the University of Washington. Since college, they had remained close friends. Pauline asked, "Did Suzanne reveal to you who was the father of her baby?"

"No. She only told me that the father was a Native American whom she met at a conference in Spokane," Vivien divulged.

"At least he's a Native American," Pauline blurted out.

"We'll soon find out."

She remembered that Vivien was a White woman and, she said further, "Vivien. I wasn't making a remark about you."

"I understand."

"I'm really worried about Suzanne," Pauline revealed.

"Is Suzanne in labor?"

"Yes."

"The baby could be born any time," Vivien predicted.

"But I'm still worried," Pauline said.

"Suzanne is in good hands." After exchanging a few more words, Vivien left Pauline and Tom and walked back to Trixie.

Trixie saw Vivien returning. She urgently wanted to speak to Vivien in private. When Vivien approached, Trixie said, "Vivien. I need to talk to you in private."

"Is it about Suzanne?" Vivien said softly.

"No. It's about Michael."

"Okay. We can talk down the corridor."

Climbing to her feet, Trixie stepped down the corridor until she was out of hearing range. Vivien followed her. Trixie said, "Vivien. I want Michael to become the tribal attorney for the tribe."

"I'm surprised," Vivien replied in astonished voice, "What happened to the law firm of Fuller & Fuller?"

"I fired them."

"As tribal chairman, can you hire or fire the tribal attorneys?"

"Yes. The tribal council had delegated me that authority," Trixie explained.

"Well. The decision is up to Michael," Vivien said.

"I just wanted to get your opinion."

"If he wants to become the tribal attorney," Vivien replied, "I won't stand in Michael's way."

"But Seattle area is your home," Trixie said.

"I'm not tied to Seattle."

"The tribe does need a new editor for the tribal newspaper," Trixie said, "You can have the editor job until you find something else to do."

"It's still up to Michael" Vivien pondered how Michael would react to the offer of being made tribal attorney. She had always wanted her husband to be the tribal attorney for the tribe. She was tired of Michael being a domestic relations lawyer. Becoming a tribal attorney sounded exciting to her.

"Are you staying at Suzanne's house?" Trixie said.

"Yes. For the next two nights."

"Are Michael and you doing anything tonight?"

"No. We plan to stay indoors," Vivien answered.

"Well. I'll come over tonight and talk to Michael about the tribal attorney job," Trixie suggested.

"You're welcome to talk to Michael."

Hearing a commotion, they glanced down the corridor, and they saw a middle-aged nurse holding a baby. They both immediately realized that Suzanne had given birth to her baby. Hurrying down the corridor, they walked up to the brunette nurse, who was wearing a blue nurse's uniform.

The other family members had gathered around the nurse. The grandparents, Tom and Pauline, were visibly elated about the birth of another grandchild. Smiling happily, Crystal and Stephanie were exhilarated about the birth of another sibling. The nurse handed to the baby to Pauline, who cradled the baby in her arms.

"Is the baby a boy or girl?" Vivien asked joyfully.

"Suzanne had a boy," Pauline answered.

"Much does he weigh?" Trixie asked.

"Eight pounds," Pauline replied.

"He's a big baby boy," Vivien asserted.

Looking at the nurse, Trixie asked, "Is Suzanne sleeping?"

"Yes," the nurse answered.

"When can we visit Suzanne," Trixie asked the nurse.

"Tomorrow morning."

"Does the baby have a name?" Vivien asked Pauline.

"No. Suzanne has not named the baby yet," Pauline answered.

"Let me hold the baby," Vivien requested.

"Okay," Pauline said. She gently handed the baby boy to Vivien. The baby had black hair, brown eyes, and brown complexion.

Apparently the father was a Native American. Vivien examined the baby for Suzanne's features, and the baby did possess some of Suzanne's facial features.

"Someday the baby is going to be a handsome man," Vivien offered.

"He will be as handsome as Michael," Pauline added.

Later that night, Trixie Spearman Tupper parked her car in front of

Suzanne's elegant house in the town of Coulee Dam. She saw Michael's station wagon parked in the driveway, and lights of the house were brightly shining.

Sitting in her warm car, Trixie thought about offering the job of tribal attorney to Michael. She hoped that he wouldn't turn the job down. But she was uncertain whether Michael would be willing to give up the rich urban lifestyle of Seattle and return to the rural Indian reservation of his youth. Seattle had much more to offer Michael and Vivien than the Colville Indian Reservation. She pondered whether she was being foolish for asking him. But she had been encouraged by Vivien's response at the hospital.

Exiting her car, she strolled up the bare concrete walkway to the front door. The night was chilly, and the dark sky was cloudless. Numerous stars were shining in the sky. The full moon illuminated the mountainous terrain surrounding Coulee Dam. Knocking on the door, she waited for someone to open the door.

The door flew open, and Suzanne's daughter, Stephanie, was standing in the doorway, Stephanie cried out, "Hi Aunt Trixie. Come in."

Entering the house, Trixie asked, "Where's Michael and Vivien?"

"They're in the dining room playing cards," Stephanie replied.

Trixie walked into the living room, and she saw Michael, Vivien, and Suzanne's other daughter, Crystal, sitting around the dining table playing a card game.

Vivien looked toward the living room, and she observed Trixie moving towards the dining room. Vivien said, "Trixie. You made it."

"Take a seat," Michael urged.

Trixie sat down at the dining table across from Michael. Looking at Crystal and Stephanie, Vivien said, "Why don't you girls go watch television."

"Sure. I want to watch my favorite movie on the VCR," Crystal reacted, "Stephanie. Let's go into the living room." Both girls raced into the living room. Crystal grabbed a video cassette and placed it into the VCR. At the same time, Stephanie turned on the television set. When the movie flashed onto the screen, they found seats on the sofa.

Looking at Trixie, Michael said, "You wanted to talk to me?"

"Yes," Trixie replied.

"What about?"

"I want to make you the tribal attorney," Trixie said cautiously.

"Me?"

"Yes."



"What happened to the law firm of Fuller & Fuller?" Michael asked. Fuller & Fuller had represented the tribe for the sixteen years. In fact the past tribal chairman, Buster Maxwell, had hired them. Michael had always suspected them of taking sides in tribal politics.

"I fired them," Trixie answered tersely.

"Why did they get fired?"

"It was time for a change," Trixie replied.

"I'm flattered by your offer," he said.

"Michael. I need you to represent the tribe," Trixie begged, "You're the only one who can do it. "

"Are you talking about me being in-house counsel?"

"Yes. I want you to be a reservation-based attorney," Trixie answered.

"I never thought about moving back to the Coville Indian Reservation," he remarked, "I would have to give up my Seattle law practice."

Vivien was anxious that Michael accept Trixie's offer. She said, "Michael. I'm willing to move to the reservation. It will be an exciting experience."

"But Vivien would have to give up her job with the advertising company," he pointed out.

"It's no big loss," Vivien said firmly, "Trixie has offered me the job of editor of the tribal newspaper."

"I always wanted to represent the tribe," Michael disclosed. He still was apprehensive about coming to work for the tribe. The tribe had never offered him a job before. He had heard many bad things about the tribal council.

"Then you will accept the job?" Trixie asked Michael.

"Yes."

"Michael. You're making the right decision," Trixie said in a pleased tone of voice.

"I'm happy too," Vivien said.

"When can you move to the reservation?" Trixie asked.

"I would say about two months?" Michael answered.

"Great!" Trixie said.

The next day Michael and Vivien arrived at his father's house in the town of Coulee Dam. Exiting the station wagon, they walked up to front door and tried the door. But it was locked. Then they rang the doorbell.

The February weather had turned cold, but the sky was still clear of clouds. Wearing a yellow jumpsuit, Vivien was carrying baby Danielle

in her arms.

When the front door opened, Stanley was standing in the doorway. He had been painting a back bedroom. He said, "Michael and Vivien. Come in."

"Sure, father," Michael said. He let Vivien enter first then followed her into the house.

"How is Danielle today?" Stanley asked.

"Danielle is fine," Vivien replied.

"She's such a beautiful granddaughter."

Hearing the voices of Michael and Vivien, Kay hurried into the living room. She exclaimed, "Vivien. How is Suzanne doing?"

"She had a baby boy."

"Does he have a name yet?"

"No. Suzanne hasn't named him."

"What does the baby look like?" Kay had heard rumors that the unnamed father of Suzanne's baby was a Native American.

"He looks like a Native American."

"Then his father must have been a Native American?" Kay asked,

"Yeah. It looks like it," Vivien replied. The baby boy did look familiar to Vivien, but she thought that it was Suzanne's genes.

"Father. I'm returning to the Colville Indian Reservation," Michael revealed. He expected that his father would be elated about the news.

"What?" Stanley exclaimed.

"Trixie Tupper plans to hire me as the tribal attorney," Michael divulged.

"Isn't it great?" Vivien said excitedly.

"I knew that Trixie would get rid of Fuller & Fuller," Kay remarked. She religiously followed the activities of the tribe in the newspapers.

"You're finally returning home after all these years," Stanley cried out.

"Michael. I'm looking forward to it," Kay voiced.

"What is Vivien going to do for a job?" Stanley asked. He realized that his highly-educated daughter-in-law would have problems finding suitable work in Coulee Dam. He was afraid that Vivien would quickly become bored with the reservation life if she didn't have a suitable job.

"Don't worry about me," Vivien said, "I'll find something to do."

"Trixie plans to hire Vivien as the editor of the tribal newspaper," Michael disclosed.

"Since Trixie became tribal chairperson," Kay declared, "she has been really shaking up the tribal government."

"It's about time," Stanley said.

"Trixie is doing great things," Michael commented.

"Trixie has changed a lot since she was in high school," Kay recalled.

"Yeah. Trixie was so shy back then," Stanley said, "She has sure surprised me."

"Yeah. I remember Trixie back in high school," Michael said. He thought of the times when Trixie ran around with the pretentious Suzanne Redwood. He pondered who had changed more - Trixie or Suzanne.

"I never thought of her as a tribal leader," Kay said, "But you can never prejudge people."

"I've always thought highly of her," Vivien remarked.

Michael wanted to speak to his father about his natural father. He needed to question Stanley about his natural father, who must have been a Native American. "Father. I need to talk to you alone," Michael said in a serious tone of voice.

"Okay, son," Stanley said, "We can talk in my workshop." He realized that it was something important. Michael had never asked him about his natural father. Since Michael had not married a local girl, Stanley had felt no obligation to tell Michael the name of his natural father.

"Sure. The workshop will do."

"Then follow me." Stanley proceeded down the hallway to his workshop, which was behind the garage. Entering the workshop, he stood by a table.

Michael entered workshop and looked at his father. Stanley seemed to anticipated what Michael was going to say. Michael said, "We've never talked about my parentage."

"You want to know who is your father?"

"Yes. I'm returning to the Reservation, and I need to know."

"It's only right. You will be living here now."

"Your natural father is Gus Spearman."

"Trixie's father!" Michael cried out.

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"Grace told me," Stanley replied with difficulty.

Michael realized that he was emotionally tearing his father apart. Stanley was an innocent bystander. He said, "Father. I'm sorry."

"No, son. You had to know."

"I won't tell anyone."

"Michael. You're being stupid," Stanley replied.

"How's that?"

"Your children is going to grow up someday., and they need

to know.”

"Well. I see no need to tell anyone now," Michael said.

"What about Vivien?" Stanley asked.

Vivien would be the last person that I would tell," Michael remarked.

"Vivien has her ways of getting things from you."

"When I'm ready I will tell her."

"It's up to you."

It was early afternoon. Following the directions of a nurse, Michael and Vivien walked down a corridor to room 190 of the hospital. Michael was carrying his baby daughter, Danielle. Vivien poked her head into the room, and she saw Suzanne lying on her hospital bed. She was holding her baby boy in her arms. She said, "Suzanne. Michael and I are here to visit. "

"Come in," Suzanne said happily. She was wearing a white hospital gown, She was elated that Vivien and Michael were visiting her.

Vivien and Michael entered the room, and they sat down on two chairs by Suzanne's bed. Michael said, "Suzanne. You're looking great."

"Thank you," Suzanne said, "I'm feel great."

"What's the name of baby bay?" Vivien asked.

"I haven't name him yet."

"Are you going to name him after his father?" Vivien asked.

"I've been thinking about it," Suzanne replied.

"You must be exhilarated about the birth of your baby boy," Vivien offered.

"Yes, I am."

At this time Ralph Cragmont entered the hospital room. He looked at Suzanne with loving eyes, and he said, "Michael and Vivien. It's good to see you again."

"Ralph. You are a hard person to find," Michael said.

"Hello Ralph," Vivien said. Michael had told her that Ralph was a close childhood friend. Since he was the Tribal Chief of Police, Michael would be meeting with him a lot.

Vivien returning to talking to Suzanne. She asked, "Does your son's father know about the birth of his son," Vivien asked.

"He knows," Suzanne said softly.

"I wish that he was here," Vivien said, "I would really read him the riot act."

"It's me," Ralph Cragmont said, "I'm the father."

Both Michael and Vivien were speechless at Ralph's admission. They both looked at Suzanne for confirmation.

Suzanne said, "Ralph is the father."

"That's a relief," Ralph exclaimed.

"I just was unsure about you," Suzanne said.

"Then Suzanne will you marry me?" Ralph asked.

"Ralph. You earned the right to marry me," Suzanne said, "Besides I love you."

The End