



# aruba gold

by:

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In 1993 I wrote and published this story. It was intended to include a little about Aruba, the early days of Lago, a little about St. Croix and the Hess refinery, my time in Barbados and characters I had know, met, and enjoyed.

I now have only one copy of the book left, and I do not have the text on the computer, so I am re-typing the book to place it on the Lago Colony web site. In doing so I am leaving out a lot that was in the original story, only because I am to lazy to retype the entire story, even with the abridged edition, it will probably run to over 170 pages.

I hope you enjoy the story.

## THE CHURCH AT NOORD

### CHAPTER I

#### THE SETTING -1983

**The Church of Santa Anna at Noord had not been renovated in many years because of a lack of money. The oil industry, begun in 1924 on the East end of the island of Aruba, and the small amount of aloe that was still grown on the island had not brought prosperity to Noord as it had to the rest of the island.**

**Then, in the mid-fifties the government began promoting tourism, and with legalized gambling as a lure, began to attract people to Aruba. The government's plan was working and soon people from Venezuela and North America, hungry to gamble, started flocking to the island. A hotel building boom erupted on the west end of the island along Palm and Eagle Beach and brought with it a new prosperity. This increased prosperity increased the contributions coming to the church and when the priest of Santa Anna asked the Bishop of Aruba to allow them to undertake a long overdue renovation, the Bishop agreed.**

**The original concrete floor, which had settled and cracked over the years, would be dug up and replaced with new steel reinforced concrete. The interior plaster was in very bad condition, moisture had seeped into the walls and this was causing the plaster to crack and in many places to fall off the coral stone walls. In order to assure a lasting repair to the walls all the plaster had to be removed and a new coat applied. When the coral stones making up the walls were exposed it was found that many were loose and not firmly embedded in the wall. All loose stones were removed and re-installed in the wall, using fresh cement mortar.**

**The outdated electrical wiring was removed and replaced with modern switches, plugs, breakers and wire.**

**The old bathrooms were completely modernized and the old galvanized and cast-iron pipes were replaced with copper and plastic pipe.**

**The wooden beams supporting the roof, the window frames around the old stained glass and the wood shutters on the outside of the windows were scraped down to the bare wood, all rotten wood was replaced and then it all received a new, fresh coat of paint.**

**The exterior of the church was cleaned, cracks repaired, missing plaster was replaced and the exterior was repainted.**

**With this extensive renovation to the nave, service was moved to a temporary location in one of the school class rooms adjacent to the church.**

**Before the work began, the carved oak alter was removed and stored in the vestibule. The pews were removed and taken to a local shop to be refinished. With the church empty of furnishings the workman arrived and the church was transformed into a dusty construction site, swarming with workman, each doing his job to restore the church to its once splendid grandeur.**

**Poppy Cruz was one of those tradesmen. He was a stone mason, having started at the age of eight when he worked with his father, who was also a stone mason. At that age he carried baskets of small stones to fill the small voids in the coral stone walls his father would build. As he grew older and stronger he cut and carried larger stone and mortar for his father and by the age of thirteen he was working alongside his father. His father had taught him that the trick to being a good stone mason was to work with your mind, not your back.**

**"Look at the space to be filled." His father would tell him. "Then look at the pile of coral stone that is available, now, in your mind fill the space and chose the stone that will fill it." With experience Pappy learned to pick the correct stone each time and thus only lifted each stone once, not like many others, who would pick up a stone, find it did not fit the space, put it down and pick up another.**

**When Poppy went to work on the church his reputation as a good stone mason was know and he was give the job of checking each coral stone in the old wall and replacing and re-grouting those stones that were loose or poorly fitted.**

**First the less experienced workers removed the plaster from the walls. Then Poppy came behind them and using the end of the handle of his trowel he hit each stone. He could tell from the sound if the stone was loose and if it was he removed it. If he was happy with its fit he applied fresh mortar to the stone and re-set it in the wall. If he was not happy with the fit he would find another stone to replace the miss-fitting stone.**

As he moved along the wall checking and resetting the loose stone another crew of men came behind him and applied a new coat of plaster to the repaired wall. After three coats of plaster it was allowed to dry and then the painters would finish the wall.

Poppy liked his job. He worked alone, mixing his own mortar and, even without a helper, he stayed ahead of the plastering crew.

Poppy had been working at the church for two weeks. Repair to the east wall had been completed and he was now ready to begin on the south wall. When Poppy began on the southwest corner he found numerous stones that had to be reset. The first stone he removed was not like the other stones he had found in the east wall, this stone was smooth, it had square corners and he could see the chisel marks where the stone had been painstakingly made into a cube. All the other stones in the wall were as they came from the field, rough with irregular shapes.

When Poppy removed to smooth cube from the wall, he examined it, and found it was made from two smooth blocks of stone that had been cemented together. Fascinated with the cube he laid it on the floor and tapped on the seam with his hammer and chisel. The old lime mortar did not offer much resistance and after a couple of taps the two parts broke apart.

As the cube broke open Poppy could not believe what he saw. Each half had been chipped out to form a cavity and inside this cavity there was a folded piece of gray paper. Gingerly, Pappy picked up the paper; it felt brittle in his dry, callused hands. His first reaction was to take it to the contractor, but, "No" he thought, the contractor would only take it to the priest. "Not the priest." He said to himself.

Pappy had been raised a Catholic and as a boy had attended church every Sunday. As a young man, Sunday became a day to visit the run shop and when the priest in Santa Cruz had spoken to Pappy about missing church and frequenting the run shop he had become resentful of the church.

**Holding the dry, gray paper in his rough hands he thought of the priest of his youth, he thought of the church he no longer attended and without so much as a second thought he placed the unfolded paper in the top, middle pocket of his coveralls.**

**With the new found paper safely ticked away he turned his attention back to the two pieces of smooth coral lying on the floor.**

**He pick up the one half, turned it over in his hand, spread mortar on the face and then picked up the other half and cemented the two halves back together. He then spread mortar on the outside of the cube and replaced it in the wall.**

**As he continued to work on the wall he thought about the paper in his pocket and what he would do with it. His sister worked for government, she cleaned the Archaeological Museum, and she would know someone who would know what to do with the paper.**

**That afternoon Poppy picked up his sister Anna at the museum before she caught the bus for Santa Cruz.**

**"Hurry, get in the truck." He told her.**

**"What is the matter with you?" Anna wanted to know as Poppy drove down Nassaustraat and home to Santa Cruz.**

**"I found a paper in the wall of the church."**

**"What sort of paper?"**

**"Just wait until we get home."**

**Poppy and Anna sat at the round table in the middle of the small living room in Anna's house, He unbuttoned the flap over the pocket of his overalls and removed the folded gray paper and placed it un-folded on the table.**

**"If you found the paper in the church then you must give it to the priest." Was all Anna said.**

**"I found the paper."**

**"Yes, but you found it in the church, therefore, it belongs to the church."**

**Poppy began to unfold the crisp paper he had taken from his pocket.**

**"Wait, you must treat that very carefully or it will only fall to pieces."**

**"Here, you do it." He said as he thrust the paper at her.**

**With great care Anna finished unfolding the paper and placed it flat on the table. There was something written on the paper but neither of them could read it.**

**"I have seen this sort of writing in the museum." Anna said, "But I don't know what it says."**

**"How will we find out?" Poppy asked her.**

**"I will take it to work tomorrow and ask one of the young men at the museum to read it for me." Anna said. "I am sure there is someone there that will understand what it says."**

**"No, we let no one at the museum read this." Poppy replied, "This paper is very important and I am not going to give it to someone else."**

**Anna looked at him and said, "We can't read it and unless we know what it says, it is useless."**

**"I will send it to Junie in Florida. He will get it translated for us."**

**Junie was Poppy's son and he was a senior at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida.**

**"Junie will be home in two weeks for Christmas." Anna reminded him.**

**"Then we will keep the paper until he gets here." Poppy began to refold the paper.**

**The next two weeks dragged by but finely it was Saturday, the day that Junie was to return for Christmas vacation.**

**Standing in the customs and immigration area Junie seemed taller, to Poppy, as he watched him waiting in line to have his bag cleared.**

**The four months he had been away has changed Junie, he thought, but a haircut and a few days in the Aruba sun and he would look like his father remembered him. His hair was longer and darker, but the barber would cut it and the sun would bleach it. He was not has dark as he was when he spent the summer playing soccer, but in a few days his brown pale skin would turn bronze color.**

**Poppy waited until they were in the truck headed east on L. G. Smith Boulevard before he spoke of the paper.**

**"I am working at the Church at Noord and I found a piece of paper in the wall." Was all he said.**

**Junie looked at him with a blank expression, so he went on.**

**"I found the paper in a coral stone in the wall. Anna wants me to give it to the priest but I want you to take it back to school and see if you can have it translated."**

**Junie had never seen his father this excited about anything before. In his own mind he wondered how important the paper might be. He also felt his aunt was probably right, the paper should be given to the priest, after all it was found in the church, so it was the property of the church.**

**When they got home Poppy produced the paper and together they looked at it.**

**"I can not read it." Junie said, "But I have a roommate who is studying the early Spanish period in the Americas and I am sure he will be able to make sense of it."**

**"Good." His father said. "I will have Anna take the paper to work with her to make a copy and then you can take the copy back to school with you." Now come, dinner is ready and I am sure you are hungry."**

**On January 3ed Junie boarded Air Aruba's flight 23 back to Miami. In Miami Junie connected with Eastern and flew to Gainesville where he was met by his roommate Mark.**

**"Well, how was your Christmas in Aruba?" Mark asked as they got in his car.**

**"I had a great time." Junie said. Then he went on to tell Mark about the paper his father had found in the wall of the church. When he asked Mark if he might be able to translate it Mark said he would be happy to try.**

**When they got to their dorm room Junie opened his suitcase and took out the folder that held the copy of the paper his father had found.**

**Mark looked at the writing on the paper and said it should not be too hard to translate, it was written in early colonial Spanish and he had some practice at reading early colonial Spanish.**

**Mark took the paper to his desk and began to read and write the translation on a yellow pad.**

**Within twenty minutes he handed the pad to Junie. "Here it is, this is the best I can do, see if it makes much sense to you."**

**Junie took the pad and began to read.**

***Indians for many hundreds of years have collected gold nuggets on the island, they placed the gold in a cave. The cave is west of the red hill, in a hole, a tree grows from the hole and you can reach the cave by going down into the hole, climbing the tree. There are five button coins to locate the cavern in the cave where the gold is located. All the coins are a different size. Start with the smallest coin on top. The marking on the top and smallest coin will locate the first passage at the first cavern in the cave. As you move from cavern to cavern use the next size coin to determine which passage to take as each cavern has many passages. At the fifth cavern you must dig and there you will find the gold.***

**"Are you sure this is what it says?" Junie asked.**

**"Pretty damn close." Mark answered.**

**Junie and Mark talked about what the paper said. There was a red hill on the east end of Aruba but Junie know of no cave near the hill. He explained to Mark that it was inside the oil company concession and was a community housing the foreign staff employees who worked for the oil company.**

**Junie waited until Saturday to call his father. He wanted time to think about what he would tell him about the paper. He also wanted to be alone when he called and Mark was going home for the weekend.**

**When he got his father on the phone he spoke to him in Papiamentu.**

**"Hi Pop, this is Junie, how are you doing?"**

**"Yes, Yes, Junie, what did the paper say?" His father was more excited about the paper than he was about how Junie was and about the trip back to Gainesville.**

**Junie had expected this.**

**"Yes Pop, I did get it translated, let me read it to you."**

**Junie began to read to his father in Papiamentu.**

***"I am a stone mason from Venezuela who came to Aruba with my brother in 1918. We were looking for work and found work on this church. We have worked on this church for six months and felt we needed to leave a message within our work. We feel we have done a good job and this will probably never be found, but if it is, we want God to bless those who find this message. When this job is completed we will return to Venezuela and our families."***

**"I knew it was a message from another stone mason, I could tell by the way it was placed in the coral cube." "It just looked special." He was so excited. "What do you think I should do with the paper?" Junie's father finely asked.**

**"Well, I would keep it in you little box you have for all your important papers." Junie told him. "If you give it to the church they will ask why you kept it from them and if you give it to the museum they will inform the church, so you are better to keep it and let no one know about it."**

**"You are right." His father said. "I will put it away and let the blessing come to me for I am the one who found it."**

**Junie felt bad about deceiving his father, but he know that if he had told his father of the translation he would have been all over the island of Aruba climbing into every cave he could find looking for gold. If his father thought there was gold in a cave he would end up killing himself looking for it.**

**Junie thought about it, he knew that after he graduated he was planning to return to Aruba and work for the oil refinery, he had worked for them during the summer and he was attending the University of Florida on a Lago scholarship. When he returned he would begin a pragmatic search and he would find the gold, if there was any. Right now the gold was safe, where ever it was and he did not need to worry about his father killing himself looking for gold.**

# THE DISCOVERY

## Chapter II

### THE SETTING: BEFORE RECORDED TIME

Ano was born in what is now Venezuela, but at the time of his birth the world was still a very primitive place, land had not been divided up into countries and there were still new lands to be discovered. Ano's mother and father were Caiquetios Indians, a tribe of Arawak Indians that populated the Paraguana peninsula of Venezuela long before the Spanish came to the New World.

Ano grew up with the other children of the tribe. The tribe was his family; the children spent their days playing on the beach, or in the forest, or sitting, watching in silence, as the elders of the tribe built the boats they used to venture out into the deep, dark blue sea to catch fish. Raw fish was the tribe's staple diet, supplemented with what berries, nuts and fruits they found in the forest. These staples supplied the Caiquetios Indians with the fiber and protein they needed in their diet. They never became proficient in planting crops; rather they harvested the berries, nuts and wild plants from the forest. Fishing was different. Catching fish was their primary source of food and the Caiquetios Indians became good boat builders, good seaman and very good fish man.

To build their boats they perfected the art of burning logs to build dugout canoes. The tall straight trees found in the forest of the Paraguana peninsula were the beginning of the Caiquetios Indians boats. The process of building a boat began in the forest moved to the waters edge and was completed when the boat was launched. The time it took to build a boat, from selecting a tree, to launching, was anywhere from three to five years.

**When Ano turned seven he started accompanying the boat builders to the forest to select a tree from which to build a boat. Because the Caiquetios had no steel tools, the trees were brought down using fire. Small dry branches and twigs were placed at the base of the selected tree and burned until the tree toppled. As a young boy Ano helped gather the twigs and branches that would feed the fire to fell the large tree. When the tree fell to the ground it was left in the forest for a year or two. This permitted the fallen tree's soul to leave the tree. Ano was taught that all things, including trees, had souls. If the fell tree were left alone in the forest to die in peace the tree's soul would leave behind a strong log and from this log a strong boat could be build. If disturbed, the tree's soul would try and take the log with it and the log would crack and rot and thus never become a boat. For this reason the logs were left in the forest for a year or so before the Indians returned to check on them.**

**When the log was dry and hard the Indians knew the soul was happy and had left a strong log behind. It was time to burn the tree again. The large flare at the base of the tree was burned off as well as the top of the tree where the branches began to grow and the tree trunk became smaller. What remained when these two ends were burned off was a uniform sized log about twenty paces in length with a diameter of a little over half the height of a grown man.**

**Now it was time to move the log to the beach. Moving a log of this size was no easy job and the job took all the men of the tribe as well as all the young boys. As a small boy Ano helped by moving the smaller round logs on which the large log was rolled. Later, when he was stronger, he helped to push the log to the beach. At the beach the log was oriented perpendicular to the sea and rolled so that the natural curvature faced downward. In this position the log was ready to be transformed into a boat by burning out the inside of the log.**

**First small fires of sticks and leaves were built on top of the log. These fires were allowed to burn down into the center of the dry log, and as the log and the fires consumed the interior of the log, the Indians would use broken conch shell to scrape and clean the burned and charred remains of the log out of its center. This took constant attention, care had to be taken so as not to extinguish the fire and to make sure the fire burned out only that section of log which the Indians wanted to have removed. To build a good boat it was necessary to burn out as much of the log as possible without making the sides of the boat too thin, or worse, allowing the fire to burn through the side of the log. If the sides and bottom were left too thick, the boat would be too heavy, if they allowed the fire to burn too close to the side or bottom of the log the boat would be too thin. A thin boat was not a strong boat. A thin boat would not stand up to the heavy seas that the Indians encountered when they ventured out to catch their fish.**

**Ano also helped the boat builders by carrying sea water in gourds to help them control the fire and as he grew older he was taught to feel the outside of the log and judge how close the fire was to the outside and thus, by sprinkling water on the fire, control the fire.**

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**In addition to learning how to build boats and to fish, Ano also found time to watch the old man who makes the Quiripa, or button money. Button money was used by the Caiquetios Indians for trade, to purchase grain from others, as well as to trade for crude tools made from shells and stone. The Quiripa was also used to purchase wives from other families in the tribe. The Quiripa were made of the shell of Carco, an animal which were found along the beaches. Each Quiripa had a hole through which a leather thong was placed so the Quiripa could be worn on the body of the Indian and thus display the wealth each Indian.**

The old man who made the button coins exchanged them for food and wives and he was the richest man in the tribe with the most wives and he had the most Quiripa displayed on his body. However, he was not the Chief of the tribe, that honor went to the best hunter and fisherman of the tribe.

Ano would spend his free time watching the old man first break and then scrape the Carco Shell on rocks to get it round. He would then rotate the rounded shell on a pointed rock until a hole appeared in the center of the shell. The old man's fingers had callus upon callus caused from scraping and turning the pieces on the rocks. Ano marveled how such old rough hands could make such things of beauty.

Ano watched, but he was never permitted to make a coin. He had been chosen to be a fisherman and boat builder, another boy had been selected by the tribal leaders to learn the art of making the button money.

Although Ano was never permitted to make a button coin but he knew within himself that he could do it, he had learned by watching the old man.

To learn to fish Ano was taken out in the boats when he was very young. He was shown how to spear the large fish with spears made from strong straight wood with sharp points. The sharp points were put on the spears by burning and scraping the end until it was sharp.

On very clear days when the older fisherman took him out into the deep blue water he felt he could see something when he looked in front of the boat and far across the sea. There, where the sea and the sky met, there was something.

When Ano asked the older fisherman about what he saw they told him it was nothing, it was too far to go and if anyone ever ventured out that far the Sea God would devour them.

Even with this warning Ano seemed drawn to that which he saw and thought continuously about going to see what it was.

**One day I will go to that which I see in front of the boat he told himself every time there was a very clear day and he saw the dark outline in front of the boat.**

**As Ano grew older he became a good fisherman and sailor. He understood the sea and he understood the Sea God. Sometimes the Sea God got mad and the deep blue water became very rough, too rough to venture out, even in the best built boat.**

**Other times the Sea God was happy and the sea got calm, so calm that it was like the lagoon where Ano had fished as a boy, even when you were out in the blue water. This did not happen very often so Ano know the Sea God was not happy very often.**

**Ano remembered the days the Sea God was happy, the flat sea was not something you soon forgot and he knew this was the kind of condition he would need if ever he were to go and see what it was at the edge of the ocean, in front of the boat, where the sky and sea met.**

**One hot morning Ano awoke, the heat made it hard to breath, but the Sea God was happy and the sea was flat. Ano called to the other young men of the tribe and they set out to fish on the flat sea. When they reached the area in the blue water where they normally fished the men stopped paddling.**

**"Let's go out a little farther." Ano said, "It is smooth and I can see there are large fish if we go further than this."**

**The men resumed paddling.**

**When the outline of the land from the back of the boat became the same as the outline they saw in the front of the boat the men stopped paddling again. The sea was still flat, but none of them had ever been this far from land. Tao, one of the men who were paddling said; "This is a good place to fish, let is not go any farther or the Sea God will become angry and not let us return."**

**Ano know Tao and the others were afraid, he also felt the danger, nevertheless he wanted to see what was in front of the boat. Having come this far he knew it had to be other land but he also knew it was foolish to push the men so he said; "Put out small fish and see what they will bring."**

**The man dropped the small fish into the water and waited. The first thing to appear was a very large sea turtle, larger than any of them had ever seen; it opened its beaked mouth and began to eat the floating fish the men had thrown into the sea.**

**Seeing the turtle, Ano jumped up and out of the boat, landing on the back of the turtle. He grabbed the turtle's shell behind the head and planted his knees firmly on the turtle's back. Pulling with his hands and pushing with his knees he prevented the turtle from diving. He had caught smaller turtles in this way, but this one was over six feet long and three feet wide. The large turtle thrashed its flippers in the water throwing Ano off balance. As Ano tried to regain his position the turtle's back it threw its head down and began to dive. Ano hung on and after a couple of dives Ano was out of breath, but he managed to regain his position on the turtles back and force it to the surface and back towards the boat. The men on the boat were ready with their sharp, wood harpoons.**

**Ano fought the turtle and forced it to swim beside the boat and once beside the boat Tao thrust his harpoon into the neck of the determined turtle. The wound slowed the turtle for a moment, but then it started to thrash harder. Blood pumped from the wound and Ano knew that if he did not get the turtle into the boat the sharks would smell the blood in the water and they would attack.**

**As Ano forced the turtle back to the boat Tao and the others were ready. On their knees they reached over the side of the boat and grabbed the turtle and with one heave they brought the turtle to the side of the boat. Nano, the youngest on the boat, leaned over and grabbed the front flipper which was out of the water and pulling at the air. He held on to the flipper and fell back into the center of the boat. This forced the turtle into the boat but almost caused the boat to capsize. As the boat heeled over the gunwale sank below the water and the sea began to run in, filling the boat. Ano realized the boat was in danger of being submerged. He pulled himself into the boat and instructed some to keep the turtle on its back and the others to take the half gourds and begin to bail. The boat was now on an even keel, the Indians held the turtle in place, the others bailed, and soon the boat was again high above the surface of the sea and the turtle was inside the boat.**

**"Let's get this turtle home and have a feast." Ano said.**

**The men began to paddle back to the land they had left.**

**As they were returning home the Sea God awoke and the sea became rough, Ano knew it would be a long time before the Sea God would again be happy and let the sea become as flat as it was this day.**

**The memory of the flat sea and the land he saw in front of the boat did not leave Ano's mind. Others of the tribe remembered the great feast and continued to tell the story of how Ano caught the great turtle, but it was the new land that held Ano's interest, not the large turtle.**

**Time passed and the Sea God did sleep again and the blue Caribbean became calm. This time, as the men paddled out onto the calm water, they were not afraid. Ano had gained a reputation as a great sailor and a good fisherman, one of the best of the young men in the tribe, he was trusted, they knew that Ano would again find a large turtle and again they would have a great feast. But Ano was not thinking about a large turtle, he was thinking about the land he had seen in front of the boat. As the land behind the boat disappeared the land Ano had seen in front of the boat did not appear, all he saw were gray clouds and flat, open sea, Ano was worried, maybe he only thought he had seen**

**land.**

**Finally one of the men in the boat said; "Throw out the small fish and see if we can again get a large turtle."**

**"No!" Ano ordered, "We must go farther to get a larger turtle."**

**The sea was still flat; Ano turned his head and looked in all directions but all he saw was deep blue sea and gray clouds.**

**Suddenly there it was, to top of a mountain, it had not been a dream, and Ano had seen land in front of the boat.**

**"We must have turned around as we are going back to the land." Nano said, for he too has seen the land in front of the boat.**

**"No." Ano replied, "That is a new land and we are going to it."**

**The clouds cleared and the faint outline of a mountain appeared upon the horizon, like a pile of dark sand on a beach.**

**As they came closer, the land took on a form and had color. Much of the land was gray, but bits of green could be seen on the tops of black cliffs. To the right they could see a small hill and here the land looked red. Then they came to a reef the sea was still flat, so no waves were breaking over the reef. They found a passage through the reef with little trouble and as they entered inside the reef the water changed from blue to a light green color. They could see the white sand bottom. The green lagoon ended at a coral cliff that came out of the water. They had reached the new land.**

**Further down they found a beach, on the beach they found crabs and in the shallow water they found the Carco. The men knew the Carco were good to eat and Ano knew that the shell of the Carco was what the old man used to make the button coins with the holes.**

**Ano, Tao, Nano and the others dragged the boat up on the beach and then they began to gather the Carco from the shallow water.**

**The sun was setting and the men were tired. Paddling the canoe across the wide expanse of flat still water had been exciting and between the paddling and excitement they were exhausted. They ate their fill of Carco and lie down on the sand beside the boat and fell asleep.**

**Ano awoke first. He sat up and listened, the wind had returned and he could hear small waves lapping on the beach, beyond the lagoon he could hear the larger waves breaking over the reef. The Sea God was awake and the still water was gone.**

**As the others awoke they looked out to sea and they saw land, just as they had seen the new land. "That is the land we came from and we are now on new land." Ano explained to the group.**

**"We can not go back for the Sea God has awaked and will not permit passage back to our land." "Come, we must explore the new land." And Ano set off along the beach.**

**The beach curved, as the beach ended there was the reef and the open blue sea. They walked along the shore and came to sand dunes and another, smaller, beach that curved around a lagoon with a reef. This beach had both white and pink sand.**

**The Indians spent the night at this small beach and the next morning they were wakening by rain. The rain was heavy and they were able to catch water in their hands and drink the water. It was the first water they had since coming to the new land. They found crabs and more Carco, which they ate until they were full.**

**When the rain stopped they continued along the beach, it was sandy but there was no lagoon and the land ran right into the blue water. Ahead they could see the red hill and as they approached the hill the land became rough and it was hard to walk.**

**It took most of the day to walk around the red hill and then they say a changed landscape. There were long coral cliffs and the sea was rough and the waves were breaking on the cliffs. There were no beaches, no lagoons, only a relentless sea and waves pounding the cliffs. Each wave, when it hit the cliff, broke into millions of droplets of water and the strong wind carried the droplets of water over the hard coral. No vegetation grew in this wet coral, only small black crabs seemed able to survive in this damp, salt environment.**

**As they walked, they saw another lagoon, this one was also protected by a reef but the waves came over the reef with such force that when the waves reached the beach they were larger than the waves on the beach where they had left the boat.**

**At the beach they turned inland, there were sand dunes and very large trees with many branches and no trunk. These trees had very large round leaves, green and purple berries and small green birds were living in the bushes and eating the purple berries. Beyond the sand and the trees were black cliffs.**

**The Indians were getting tired and they were very thirsty, the rain water they had drunk in the morning had been sucked from their bodies by the hot sun and the spray from the sea had coated their skin with a thick layer of salt.**

**They spent the night by the large bushes and ate the purple berries on the bushes.**

**Before daybreak they were off. A day had passed since they had water from the rain and the purple berries did little to relieve their thirst. The salt on their skin was drawing water from their bodies and they knew they needed to find water.**

**They walked all day and found no water, only the open sea, coral and breaking waves. As the sun began to set they noticed a small group of trees nested at the base of the jagged cliffs, not too far from the sea. They were tired, their feet were bleeding, because of walking on the hard sharp coral, and they wanted water. The trees looked inviting and as they approached they found water flowing from a small cave in the coral cliff. It ran on the surface for a short distance and then disappeared into the white, sun bleached coral.**

**Ano knelt and scooped up the water, it was fresh and sweet.**

**"Drink the water." He told the others, "It is sweet and good."**

**They drank and again ate the purple berries they found on the trees and then they slept.**

**The next morning before the others were awake, Ano was up exploring the area. Close to where the water ran from the cliff there was a black hole in the cliff. When he climbed the cliff he found it was the entrance to a cave. As he stood by the entrance to the cave and looking out to the sea he was a break in the coral and a sand beach. He left the mouth of the cave and walked to the break in the coral, climbed down the cliff and onto the beach. The beach was covered in scurrying crabs, one of which he caught.**

**This will make a good meal, he thought, as he held the crab by its shell and removed one of its legs. He sucked the sweet meat from each of the crab's legs and then discarded the legless body. As soon as the dismembered body hit the sand the other crabs began to feed on it. Ano picked up one of the cannibals feeding on the discarded body and began to eat its legs; one crab did not make a full meal.**

**As he ate the crab's legs he thought; I like this place, there is water, crabs to eat, a cave to sleep in and a nice beach from which to swim and bath.**

**He left the beach and returned to where the others were sleeping.**

**"Come, I will take you to a place where you can get something to eat." He told the others. When they saw the crabs they could not believe their eyes, so many crabs in one place.**

**After eating their fill of crabs they walked towards the sand dunes and then into the rocky hills behind the sand dunes. They walked in a small, steep, valley between the low hills. The cactus and rough rocks make it hard to walk. As he walked Ano looked down and saw a shiny stone at his feet. He picked it up, it was the size of one of the purple berries but it was yellow in color and when it caught the sunlight it reflected the light into Ano's eyes. He had never seen anything so beautiful as this in his life.**

**Ano handed the yellow stone to Tao.**

**"Look, here is another shiny rock." Said Nano.**

**As they all looked, they found the shiny yellow rocks, there were all over the valley. The exploration of the rest of the land was forgotten, as all attention was focused on gathering the yellow stones.**

**"I found a place above the water where we can hide these stones." Ano said as he showed them to the entrance to the cave.**

**They deposited the yellow stones they had carried with them and then returned to find more.**

**The Indians stayed on the new land for over a year. When the Sea God awoke the sea turned angry and makes it impossible to return to their land.**

**They missed their tribe, but they were also enjoying their new discovery. Everything about the new found land was fresh and different. They slept in the cave, it gave them protection from the hot sun, kept them dry when it did rain, was near the fresh water and beach where they had an endless supply of crabs to eat. The trees near the water supplied them with purple berries some of the time and everything they needed to sustain life was within a short walk of the cave.**

For entertainment they gathered the shiny rocks from the valleys in the hills behind the cave. The dry river beds were covered in a quilt of shiny stones which they gathered and then placed at the entrance to the cave so each morning the early sunlight would reflect off the stones. The Indians felt that the Sun God must be happy with the stones because the light struck the rocks and then danced on all parts of the cave giving off an array of exquisite colors. Each morning the Indians would awake early to watch the Sun God dance on the walls of the cave.

Each morning Ano walked to the water's edge where he gathered Carco from along the cliffs. First he ate the meat inside the shell, he preferred the Carco to crabs. Then he placed the empty shells in a pile, letting the ants eat whatever remained inside the shell. When the shell was clean he broke it and from these fragments he selected the best pieces with which to make Quiripa.

He remembered the time spent and the lessons learned as a boy watching the old man make the Quiripa, now he was putting this knowledge to use, he was the money maker.

Ano found he could make the Quiripa faster than the old man, here on the new land the rocks were harder and when he rubbed the Carco shell on this hard rock it turned the piece round much faster than when the old man had rubbed the shell on the rock of his home.

The rocks here were also sharper than those he had known at home so the hole was easier to put through the shell. While Ano spent his days making Quiripa the others went into the hills and gathered the shiny rocks and brought them to the cave.

Although life on the new land was good to the Indians they were alone, no woman had come with them on the trip and they missed the tribe. Talk often turned to returning to the land from which they had come and Ano assured them that when the sea was calm they would return. They returned often to the place where they had left the boat and Ano always left the Quiripa he made at the boat, there was not use for the Quiripa at the cave but he knew he could use it when they returned.

After a long time the Sea God became happy and the sea became flat. On that day they filled gourds with water from the spring and set off for the boat. Ano would not permit them to take any of the shiny stones with them, he insisted they stay on the new land; his plan was to return some day.

They reached the boat, the sea was still flat and they set off paddling as hard as they could. It took most of the day but by the afternoon they were in site of their tribes place on the beach and they saw other boats out on the smooth water fishing. The men in the other boats saw Ano's boat and recognized it, they began to yell for joy, no one had expected to see Ano and the man he had left with return.

They were heroes. A feast was prepared to celebrate their return. All the tribe listened as the returning heroes told the tale of the new land. For the feast Ano filled his hair with Quiripa and he made sure that all the men who had sailed with him had their hair filled with Quiripa. Each man had six braids in his hair and in each braid there were twelve Quiripa. Ano's hair had ten braids and each of his braids had fifteen Quiripa. Each of Ano's men had more Quiripa than the old man. They told stories of the cave, the lagoons filled with fish and the crabs on the beach, and the more stories they told the more the rest of the tribe wanted to go and see the new land.

When the feast ended the tribal elders asked Ano to sit with them for council.

"You have gone far and found much." The Chief told Ano.

**"I have found a new land and now I would like to buy wives for me and my men and return to this new land." Ano told the council.**

**"If that is your wish then do so." Ano was told by the council.**

**All the men who had made the trip with Ano wanted to return as did others in the tribe but Ano said only those who had gone before would return. They found and purchased wives and then they waited for the Sea God.**

**With the Quiripa they had not only purchased wives, and tools they had purchased a second boat because now there would be both man and woman making the trip.**

**The day came when again the Sea God was happy and the water was flat and the group set off for the new land in two boats.**

**The group landed in the area that is now Sabaneta, here they established a small village and built huts of sticks and mud. The huts were only for sleeping and to shield them from the sun, most of the time they were outside, fishing and gathering shiny rock.**

**It did not take long before others came in boats and soon there was a settlement and Ano was made the Chief.**

**He and the original five that had made the first trip still went to the cave to see the light from the Sun God as it struck the shiny rock. However, there were now only a few shiny rocks to be found, most had been gathered by the Indians before the others came. The influx of new Indians was a concern to Ano and he knew that something would have to be done about the shiny rocks, left at their present location they would be discovered and Ano knew this would cause dissension in the tribe.**

**Ano realized the shiny rocks had to be moved and he had found a new cave, a cave whose entrance was in a hole in the coral and close to the red hill.**

**Taking the original group Ano and the other four Indians explored this new cave, it was large, larger than the cave where the rocks were now kept, but there was no sunlight in the cave. Ano explained that the absence of sunlight was not a problem, they would build fire in the cave and this would allow the rocks to give off the beautiful color and light the wall of the new cave.**

**The new cave had many caverns and many passageways leading off of each cavern and Ano devised a plan to hide the stones that would require all five of them to go to the hiding place together. On their own, no one Indian could find the stones, they would have to go together when they visited the stones hiding place.**

**Ano made five Quiripa, each a different size. One each of the five Quiripa he made a mark, a different mark on each one.**

**Each man was given one of the Quiripa. As they entered the cave and came to the first cavern each man made a mark just like the mark on his Quiripa over the entrance to one of the passageways.**

**The man with the smallest Quiripa leads the way down the passage that was marked with the mark on his Quiripa.**

**At the next cavern the man whose Quiripa had marked the passage made the same mark on the passage as they entered the second cavern. This was done so they could find their way out of the cave. The others made their marks on other passageways. After each man designated a passage with his mark the man with the next larger Quiripa proceeded down the passage way bearing his mark.**

**This was repeated at each of the five caverns they came to and at the sixth cavern they all made their marks on the five passages out of this cavern. However, the marks were made in the order from the largest to the smallest on one of the passages and this is the one they followed to the cavern which became the final hiding place for the stones.**

**To leave the cave they followed the signs taking the passage marked by the largest Quiripa first and then at the next cavern the next smaller Quiripa.**

**None of the Indians could remember the order of the markings or the size of the others Quiripa and thus it took all of them to return to the cavern where they shiny rocks were finely placed.**

**If new shiny rocks were found by any of the Indians who arrived later at the new land they were purchased by Ano, he was the man who made the button coins, he was the Chief and he was the one who made the rules.**

**When Ano acquired enough shiny rocks from the newcomers he would call together the other original four and they would go to the cave in the ground and place the new stones with the ones they had gathered earlier.**

**As the original group grew older and their sons became men the oldest son was told of the shiny stones and when his father died he got the Quiripa and was taken to see the stones in the cave.**

**As time went by some of the Indians tried to keep some of the shiny stones but Ano's family remained in control and forbid the keeping of shiny stones except for the original five families.**

**When Alonso de Ojeda, the Spanish explorer arrived in Aruba in 1499 he found Indians on the island but no gold. He had no idea that the Indians had for hundreds and hundreds of years walked the dry river beds and collected shiny stones. When the Spanish asked about gold they did not think of the shiny rocks as gold.**

**Finding no gold or other precious metals on the island the Spanish declared the island "isla inutiles" which means "useless island."**

**The only thing of value on the island were the Indians so the Spanish rounded them up and shipped them to Santo Domingo where they labored, and most of them died, in the Spanish copper mines.**

**All the descendants of the original five families were shipped to Santo Domingo. Each of the oldest sons wore a round shell with a hole in it around his neck. To the Spanish the shell was worthless so they let the Indians keep their trinkets.**

**In 1511 Juan de Ampues repatriated some of the Indians from Hispaniola back to Aruba. Three of the original family returned and were put to work tending to the goats and horses the Spanish had placed on the island. The three who returned to Aruba knew the story of the shiny rocks, two of them had seen the shiny rocks but with out the other two who were still in Santo Domingo there was no way of finding the shiny rock.**

**Because of the lack of Spanish fortification on the east end of Aruba the Spanish, Dutch and French pirates that plundered the shipping between Venezuela and Curacao began to use Aruba as a safe haven. This caused the Indians to move inland on the island to Alta Vista. King Charles V of Spain intending to use Aruba as a reservation for the Indians had declared Aruba off limits to European settlers, but the pirates paid the King no mind and the Indians were being raped and forced to work for the pirates.**

**By moving to Alta Vista the Indians created a land barrier between themselves and the rowdy pirates. Here at Alta Vista they could practice the Catholic religion they had learned from the Spanish and they felt safe from the pirates. When the Spanish needed them to round up the horses or goats they always seemed able to reach them.**

**The three surviving members of the original five families soon realized that the shiny rocks in the cave must be gold. They also understood that should the Spanish learn of the gold they would stop at nothing to find it.**

**In 1634 the Dutch took possession of the island of Aruba along with other Spanish island in the Caribbean. These islands and their native population were part of the spoils of the Eight-Year War between Spain and Holland.**

**When the Protestant Dutch took over Aruba they did not encourage the Catholic religion and forbade any Catholic missionaries to settle in Aruba. The Dutch realized they needed the Indians to tend the animals on the island, so during this period the Dutch treated the Indians as a free people. The Indians continued to live at Alto Vista and say their rosaries under the divi-divi tree that grew at the top of the windswept hill.**

**The Dutch lifted the ban on Catholic missionaries in 1704 and in 1784 Domingo Antonio Silvestre, a Caiquetios Indian from Venezuela who had been taught to read and write by Spanish missionaries arrived in Aruba to work with the Catholic Indians. He found the Catholic Indians congregated at Alto Vista, and decided to build a chapel there, to serve the needs of the island's Catholic Indians.**

**Monka, the last of his family and owner of one of the button coins lived at Alto Vista; he was alone because his entire family had been wiped out by disease brought to the island by the Spanish.**

**As he lay on his death bed Monka called for the Indian priest, Father Silvestra.**

**Monka was not asking for the sacrament, he had something to tell the Priest.**

**"Father," he began, "There is something I must tell you before I die."**

**"A confession?" the Priest asked.**

**"No, not a confession a favor is what I ask of you." Monka told the Priest.**

**As the Priest leaned over to hear what the dying Indian had to say Monka began to relate the story of the cavern of gold. He told the priest of the other four button coins with the strange marking on each, he told them about how they were sized and how this was the pass to the cavern that held the gold. He asked the Priest to remove the button coin that was around his neck.**

**The Priest lifted Monka's head and slipped the leather thong which held the coin over his head.**

**"What would you want me to do with the coin?" he asked.**

**But there was no reply, Monka was dead.**

**Father Silvestre was gripped with panic, if the Dutch learned of a cavern of gold on the island of Aruba they would turn the island up side down looking for the gold. The Dutch were treating the Catholic Indians as free people and allowing them to worship as they pleased but with the mention of gold this would all change, they would probably enslave the Indians and force them to dig and search the entire island for the cavern. They would also probably turn to other means to force them to tell of the gold's location.**

**Father Silvestre placed the leather thong with the coin around his own neck; it hung next to the cross he wore.**

**As he concentrated his efforts on building the chapel at Alta Vista he tried to forget about the coin, about the gold and about the repercussions such a story would have on the island's population.**

**As they were building the walls of the chapel a plan came to Father Silvestre. He told the chief stone mason that he needed a corner stone for the chapel. A stone that would be hollowed out and he, Father Silvestre would put a message in the cornerstone for future generations to find should they take the chapel down.**

**When the stone was finished Father Silvestre had written the story he heard from the lips of Monka. As the priest placed the paper in the hollow of the two parts of the cornerstone he instructed the chief stone mason to cement the two halves together and place it in the corner right hand corner of the front wall of the chapel.**

**As the cornerstone was laid Father Silvestre held a service and explained to the Indians that this stone held the story of they plight with pirates, their story of moving to Alta Vista and the history of the chapel. He further explained to the congregation that should the chapel be moved or torn down the cornerstone should be move to the new chapel or church. Only if the church were in danger of loosing a place of worship should the stone be opened and the history reveled.**

**After the cornerstone was embedded into the wall of the chapel at Alta Vista and after the mortar had dried Father Silvestre decided to dispose of the coin.**

**On his death bed Monka had told him of the cave, its location by the red hill and how the cave was in a hole with a tree growing from the bottom of the hold.**

**When the chapel was nearing completion Father Silvestre took the week off and walked to the red hill, he found the hole, just as Monka had said and standing at the edge of the hole he threw the coin into the hole.**

**Now it is in God's hands he said to himself, if God wishes the gold to be found he and only he will bring the prices together.**

**The chapel at Alto Vista was finished in 1750. However Father Silvestre did not live to see it finished. He died shortly after he rid himself of the coin. The Indians say he died from the stress of building the chapel. Had they known of the coin and what it signified they would have known that the stress of knowing the story of the cavern of gold had killed Father Silvestre.**

**On April 20, 1750 the chapel was consecrated by a Capuchin Monk by the name of Father Pablo and named for Our Lady of the Rosary. This first Catholic chapel served a nucleus and was the beginning of a strong dominance the Church would achieve on the island of Aruba.**

**In the late seventeen hundred an epidemic broke out among the Indians of Alta Vista. As more and more of them died it was decided that the area was cursed and the survivors moved west to Noord. The chapel was closed in 1816 and the building soon deteriorated. Yet, even with only the foundation visible, the site remained a holy place and people passing the ruins would stop and pray.**

The survivors who moved to Noord built a new church. Around the church they built and established a community that grew and prospered. As the population of Noord grew so the need for a larger church grew. In 1914 the third church at Noord was started at the same location as the original church. The stones from the foundation of the chapel at Alto Vista were brought to Noord and used in building the walls of the new church which was completed in 1919.

# THE COINS

## Chapter 3

### THE SETTING: 1983

Junie knew that to begin his search for the gold that was mentioned on the paper his father had found at the church, he would have to studying and understand the geology of Aruba and the gold industry. While still at the University of Florida in his senior year he began his research. From Dr. Hortogs book, "Aruba Past and Present" he learned that gold was not discovered in Aruba until 1824. When the Spanish arrived in Aruba they found no gold lying on the ground. Where had the gold that was mentioned in the paper come from? When gold was first discovered in Aruba, so the story goes, a twelve year old boy by the name of William Rasmijn, who was tending to goats or sheep in the country, found a gold nugget in a dry river bed. He picked it up, not knowing what he had found, and took it home and gave it to his father. The father, not realizing the boy had found gold, sold the yellow rock to an Oranjestad merchant for \$17.00. The merchant later sold the gold nugget for \$70.00, its real value and the gold rush in Aruba was on. The gold young William had found was natural or alluvial gold. People flocked to the canoco, the uninhabited area of the island, to walk the arroyos, as the dry river beds were call, in search of gold. It was reported that within the five months of William first finding a gold nugget, an additional twenty-five pounds of alluvial gold was collected by the hordes that searched the island. Soon the government stopped the random search for gold by individuals, required a permit be

**purchased to look for gold and placed armed guards in the canoco. Junie reasoned that the Spanish found no gold in Aruba when they first landed because the Indians had found all the gold. Then over the next couple of hundred years the rains had washed away some of the rocks and soil and new alluvial gold came to the surface. This was the gold that young William Rasmijn had found, the second harvest that had surfaced after many hundreds of years of rain. If people found twenty-five pounds of gold in five months, how much gold could the Indians have found? They had been on the island for many hundreds of years; this cave that the paper spoke of must be full of alluvial gold. Late in the 1800's men began to dig for gold in the hills of Aruba and a modern mill and smelter was built in Balashi, near Frenchman's Pass. This turn of the century, up-to-date facility, had six huge furnaces and a large oar crusher, capable of grinding thirty to forty tons of ore a day. The new mill had an electrical generating plant and employed two hundred labors. By 1908 cost overruns and low profits caused the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. to liquidate. The mill, smelter and concession were purchased by local investors who had formed the Aruba Gold Maatschappi. This locally owned company operated the smelter until 1915 when the First World War created a shortage of the necessary chemicals to extract the gold from the ore and because the Balashi smelter machinery had come from Germany, the war made it impossible to obtain spare parts. With no way of solving the problems of shortage of chemicals and parts the mill and smelter were closed and left to the harsh Aruba elements.**

## **COIN ONE**

**This research convinced Junie that in all probability there was a cave of gold on Aruba. Now he needed to learn about the Quiripa, the coins with the markings. He was surprised to learn that one of the world experts on the Quiripa lived in Aruba. He called Mr. Odor. After introducing himself he asked Mr. Odor about the Quiripa, ones with marking on them.**

**“Quiripa were not made with marking, they are all just the shell with no marking.” He was told by Mr. Odor. Mr. Odor went on; “However I have seen a couple of Quiripa with strange markings but I am sure they were not put on by the Indians who used the Quiripa the markings were added later by someone else, for what reason I can not say.”**

**"How many of the Quiripa with the marking have you seen?" Junie asked.**

**“I seem to remember three, if my memory is not failing me.” Mr. Odor replied over the phone.**

**“Can you remember the markings and where you saw them?” Junie asked.**

**“I make it a policy to record every rare or unique coin I see.” “It will take some time to look up by notes but if you will so good as to call me back tomorrow I will they and find the notes I made about the three Quiripa.”**

**"I will do that." Junie answered. “You can expect a call tomorrow about the same time if that is convenient for you?” Mr. Odor said it was and they hung up.**

**The next day Junie called Mr. Odor at the prescribed time. “Hello, Mr. Odor, this is Junie Crews, were you able to find your notes about the three Quiripa?”**

**“Yes, as a matter of fact I did.” Mr. Odor answered. “Ok, here is what I found. The first Quiripa I was with markings was in nineteen hundred and thirty-one. It belonged to a fellow by the name of Bill Kishman; he worked for Lago as a geologist. He told me he had found the coin in a cave in the Lago Colony.”**

**“Did you make a note of the size or the markings on the coin?” Junie did not want to sound too excited when he asked the question but he was excited, this was getting to be too easy.**

**“Yes, it is right here in my notes. The coin was marked with looked like the letter “Z”. There were four of them and they were connected, like when you type four zeds together.” Junie envisioned what four zeds would look like. ZZZZ.**

**“And the size, did you record the size of the coin?” Junie asked. He was worried that his excitement would be transmitted over the phone lines and Mr. Odor would ask him why the interest in the marked Quiripa.**

**"Yes, it is right here in my notes. The coin was exactly the same size as an American twenty-five cent piece, a quarter.” Mr. Odor had not detected Junie’s excitement and did not seem interested in his reason for wanting to know about the strange Quiripa.**

## **THE FIRST COIN**

**Pan American Petroleum & Transport Co. was owned by Edward L. Doheny, an American independent oil producer who had discovered oil in Mexico in 1901. When Pan American’s crude oil supply in Mexico began to run low Mr. Doheny formed Lago Petroleum Corp. and began to explore for oil in Venezuela. Pan American needed a new source of crude to fulfill its contracts. Shell Oil had recently discovered oil in Venezuela and Mr. Doheny followed Shell there confident he to would reap the rewards of a major new oil discovery. Finding and exporting crude from Venezuela was not easy. The region posed many problems which had to be overcome in order to get the crude out of the country. Shipping the crude was the biggest problem. The lake where the crude was discovered, Lake Maracaibo was to shallow for ocean going tankers to enter. The entrance to the Lake, off the Gulf of Venezuela was also a shallow channel and sandbars were always shifting due to changing weather and sea conditions. Navigation in and out of the lake was considered a challenge.**

The shallow water of the lake did cause a shipping problem but it was an asset to the wildcatters drilling of oil in the lake bed. The shallow water of the lake which restricted the tankers made it possible for the drilling crews to build wooden platforms over the water from which to drill the lake bottom. The oil reserve found under Lake Maracaibo proved to be the largest reserve found in Venezuela. When Lago Petroleum first discovered oil in Lake Maracaibo in 1923 they moved the crude by barges pushed by shallow draft tug boats. The barges of crude were taken to Horses' Bay Harbor on the west end of the barren island of Aruba. There were no harbors, manmade or natural on the coast of Venezuela to which they could take the crude and then transfer it to ocean going tankers. Aruba was the transshipping point for Pan American Petroleum crude. Later, small, flat bottom, shallow draft tankers were constructed expressly for the purpose of navigating the ever-changing, shallow entrance to the lake and bring the oil back to larger tankers in Aruba. These "lake tankers" were first put into service in 1924. With the new lake tankers Lago Petroleum needed a sheltered harbor in which to build a transshipment facility, a harbor with piers, on shore storage tanks and on shore pumps to transfer the crude to the larger tankers. Up to now the ships and barges were pumping their cargo directly into the ocean going tankers while they lay anchored and tethered together in Horses' Bay Harbor in Oranjestad.

Captain Rodger was employed by Pan American Petroleum and assigned the job of locating such a harbor. He chose Aruba's San Nicholas Harbor which had earlier been used to ship phosphate from the island. The old phosphate docks were still in place when Captain Rodger arrived. This natural harbor with its sand bottom had a depth of 18 feet and Captain Rodger knew it could be dredged to 25 feet to take the ocean going tankers.

**As Captain Rodger stood on the veranda of the white house the company had leased for an office and living quarters for Captain Rodger he began to plan the transshipment facility in his mind. He would dredge the harbor, build finger piers perpendicular to the coral bluff and build storage tanks on the hard coral adjacent to the cliffs. He made a note that he needed a geologist to help with the design, he worried about the coral and its ability to support the large storage tanks he was planning. He needed answers to this question so he made a note to ask Mr. Doheny about finding a good geologist. Bill Kishman was in the Tampico office of Pan American Oil when he saw the notice on the board.**

**The Marine Department of a Pan American subsidiary was looking for a geologist to work in Aruba. This job interested him. He had wanted to leave Mexico. He had been there for seven years and was beginning to feel uneasy about venturing outside of the company compound; it was time to move on. Bill wrote about the job and within a few weeks he received a reply from Captain Roger, he had gotten the job and things were to happen very rapidly. The letter instructed him to report to the Pan American Oil personnel office, here he was told to get his things packed he was to board a tanker bound for Aruba in six days time. The tanker arrived in Tampico with a load of Venezuelan crude which was to be refined in Mexico and now the tanker was returning to Aruba for another load of crude. The tanker would return to Aruba under ballast, the only cargo would be Bill, his belonging and the belongings of fourteen other men who were transferring from Tampico to Aruba.**

The voyage took eight days and Bill soon found that he was with the first construction crew that would begin work on the new harbor and transshipment facility in Aruba. The tanker rounded the west end of Aruba and dropped anchor in Horses' Bay Harbor, next to two smaller tankers. As soon as the larger tanker was anchored and the two little tankers were made fast on either side of the large tanker. Soon the two smaller tankers were connected to the larger tanker by large rubber hoses and the pumping of crude began. While this was taking place the fifteen passengers watched, no one was permitted to leave the ship until the pumping was started. With the pumping underway a young American came on board and announced that he was their welcoming party.

After disembarking the ship the young American led the fourteen to a large flat bed Ford truck with benches in the back. They and their belongings managed to fit in the back of the truck and with the young man driving they set off on a coral path to their new jobs and home. Bill watched as the truck followed the coral path along the coast, this was not like Vera Cruz and the oil fields of Mexico. This was hot, but a breeze seemed to blow steadily from the sea and kept him cool. The island did not have much vegetation, but the color of the water made up for the lack of trees. The water was breathtaking. As they drove east they passed natives riding on small burros, the natives waved and the passengers waved back. One hour and fifteen miles east of where they had left the ship they arrived at the other end of the island. There was a white house on the bluff, a dock in disrepair and a freighter was anchored in San Nicholas Harbor. The freighter had just arrived from New Orleans; her cargo was construction materials and supplies to build the new facility. As soon as the freighter's anchor took hold in the sandy bottom of San Nicholas Harbor a self propelled barge with a small boom was alongside and the unloading began.

Everything that would be needed was on that ship including drums of fresh drinking water. The material to build housing for the workers, food, medical supplies and equipment were all unloaded. The truck with the fifteen men pulled up to the white house and everyone piled out. This was to be their new home until the “sheep sheds” was completed, then the men would move into the long barrack style building and that would become their home. When the men had put their belonging in the house, they were sleeping six to a room, they were walking back to get in the truck.

“What about lunch?” one of the fifteen asked the driver.

“Breakfast is at six, we work from seven to twelve. Lunch is from twelve to one, and then we go back to work until five o’clock.” The driver of the truck told the men.

As the driver walked to the truck he went on, “It’s only eleven o’clock, so you got an hour before lunch so now we still got an hour of work to do. Besides, all of you had eight days for rest, with pay, on you tanker ride.” He went on, “Hop in the truck and I will show you around the establishment and point out where each of you are to report to after lunch. We only have an hour to kill so let’s get back in the truck.”

“Which one of you is Bill Kishman?” The driver asked from the cab of the truck.

“That me.” Bill answered. “I’m going to drop you at the superintendent’s office before I take the rest of the jokers down to the pier, the super. Wants to talk to you.”

“You not here an hour and already you ass is in trouble.” One of the men joked.

The driver stopped the truck in front of a small wooden structure, elevated up on concrete piers with crude oil motes around each pier. Over the door was a painted sign, it read, Main Office Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd. Aruba, D. W. I.

**“Ok, Bill, this is where you get off.” The driver yelled from the cab as he braked the truck in front of the steps leading to the front door. Bill jumped off the truck.**

**“With luck they will ship your ass back on the same tanker we came on.” One of the men said to Bill as he waved the truck good-by.**

**Inside the office were six desks, three were cluttered with paper and blueprints, the other three looked as though they were being used. A man was sitting behind one of the desks, the rest were vacant.**

**“My name is Bill Kishman.” The man behind the desk stood, extended his hand and said, “Hi, I’m Harry Smith, time-keeper and paper-pusher, nice to meet you.” “You must have come in on that tanker this morning.”**

**“That’s right.” Bill answered shaking Harry’s hand. “I was told to report to the Superintendent, is he around?”**

**“Yep, he’s been asking about you, just go through that door over there.” Harry pointed to the door on the opposite side of the room from the door Bill had just come in. Bill walked over and knocked on the door.**

**“Come in, God-Damn-It, it open.” A loud voice said from behind the door. Bill opened the door and walked into an office with a desk, three filing cabinets, a large table covered with blueprints and a large man seated behind the desk with his feet propped up on the desk. He was wearing cowboy boots and had on a Stetson.**

**As Bill approached the desk the large man stood, extended his hand and said; “Welcome to Aruba, God-Damn hot, sorry ass place that it is, my name is John Garvey but everyone calls me Skipper”.**

**They shook hands. "It's nice to meet you Mr. Garvey." Bill said. "Skipper, God-Damn It, call me Skipper." Garvey said as he sat back down behind his desk, put his feet back up on the desk and leaned back in his chair. "Pull up that chair over there and let's talk." "You, I hope are a good geologist." He started, "Need a Damn good geologist to tell us if this Damn coral will support the God-Damn tanks we are planning to build. You need to know these are going to be God-Damn big tanks, each one is designed to hold 80,000 barrels of crude."**

**"What is the diameter of the tanks?" Bill asked.**

**"Sixty God-Damn feet." Skipper answered. Bill took out his slide rule and did a quick calculation, the tanks would have to be forty feet high to hold 80,000 barrels of oil and a barrel of crude was approximately 300 pounds, "Hell." Bill thought. "That's only about 675 pounds per sq. foot that the tanks would exert on the coral." "Just doing some quick calculations I would say the tanks are only to got exert about 675 pounds per sq. ft. on the coral and I would think that it would hold that sort of weight."**

**Bill wondered why he had been brought all the way from Mexico to answer that sort of question. It isn't the God-Damn coral that bothers me." Skipper said. "It's what's not underneath the coral that got me worried." "We have found a lot of caves and holes in the stuff and I would hate to build a tank and have it fall into some God-Damn underground cave after we get it filled with coral."**

**"He had a point." Thought Bill.**

**Skipper went on. "So, first we need to know are we building on a sponge and if so, will this God-Damn sponge hold the new large tanks." "Next we got to figure a way to prepare the God-Damn coral for the tanks foundation." "We have thought of using the beach sand but I'm worried about the God-Damn salt in the sand, see if you can figure out something to fill the God-Damn coral so we can pour our concrete on it and not waste the God-Damn concrete filling the voids in the coral." "Well, that should keep you busy for a day or so. Think you can handle your first assignment?" Skipper asked.**

**“Yes Sir, I’ll get right on it and get back to you with some answers.” Bill said, and then he went on. “I’ll need a drill to core the sites of the new tanks and some help with the drill.”**

**“Go see Harry.” Skipper said. “He’ll get you a desk, show you where the prints of the project are thrown about and tell you how to get what tools and help you’ll need.” As he spoke he took his feet off the desk and began to stand up. Bill also stood, their talk was over.**

**Harry looked up as Bill stepped out of Skippers office. “That’s your desk, over there by the window.” He said. It was almost as if he had been listening to the conversation Bill had just had with Skipper.**

**“Here is your badge, and the number on the badge is used to check out tools from the tool room. When you go to the tool room see Pinky, he will get whatever you need as well as the local men to help you.”**

**Bill walked over and sat down behind the desk. It was covered with blueprints. “Just throw them on another desk.” Harry said.**

**Bill looked out of the window, in the distance, past the coral and cactus he could the green lagoon, the reef and then the dark blue Caribbean Ocean. To the right was a sand beach and where the cove met the reef the lagoon ended. “You got any sort of map of this area?” Bill asked Harry.**

**“Yep, got a couple, one done by the phosphate people that were here before us and one done by a crew Captain Rodger hired before he signed the lease for the place. I think the phosphate people did a better job if you ask me.” Harry went over to one of the file cabinet against the wall and removed two folders and handed them to Bill.**

Bill looked at each map in each of the folders. “Other than those two maps there hasn’t been much survey or map work done on the place.” Harry said as he returned to his desk. One of the folders also had a copy of the lease for the land that the Dutch Government and Pan American Petroleum had entered into. The map showed the approximate boundaries of the concession that encompassed the lease. The other folder held only a map, done by the phosphate company and Harry was right, it was a better map. It showed the location of the phosphate mines, it indicated the locations of a cave as well as brackish water wells; east of there they were building the port.

As he looked at the map Bill decided that a little exploration was in order, he needed to get a feel for the island and the land. “Where can I get a canteen for water?” he asked Harry.

“Go see Pinky next door in the tool shed, he will issue one to you if there are any to be had.” Harry answered without looking up.

Bill walked to the next shed, a little larger then his new office but without the windows. “Hi, I’ am Bill Kishman. You must be Pinky.” He said to the man he saw sitting behind a counter as he entered the shed.

“That’s me.” The red-headed man with a face and arms covered in freckles replied as he reached across the counter to shake Bill’s hand. “What can I get for you today?” he asked.

“You got a canteen?” Bill asked, I am going out to look over the east end of the island and want to take some water with me.

“Sure thing.” Pinky replied, as he got off the stool he was sitting on, unlocked the door behind him and started down between two rows of shelves Bill could see when the door was opened. He disappeared into the back of the shed. Soon he was back.

**“Here you are, brand new; with a web belt just the army use.” Pinky handed the new canteen to Bill. Bill fastened it about his waist. It fit without him having to adjust the web belt. On a three-by-five card Pinky wrote; “One personal canteen and belt”, along with the time and date. “Just sign on the bottom of the card”, he said as he turned the card and handed the pen to Bill. “If you don’t return it they will take it out of your pay.”**

**“Thanks”, Bill said as he signed the card and left the tool shed.**

**Beside the tool shed, in the shade of the roof overhang, Bill had seen a fifty-five gallon steel drum on a stand. It was painted white and in big red letter was stenciled; “Drinking Water Only”. Bill walked to the barrel and filled his canteen. The water was warm but at least it was fresh and wet. As he filled the canteen with the warm water he thought about the cold nights he had spent in Colorado. Damn, there has to be someplace on this earth that is not to hot and not to cold he thought to himself. As he did so he felt the strong cool breeze blowing off the blue Caribbean on his back, it felt good, the water in the drum may be hot but the breeze felt cool. “Maybe this is the place, sitting under a nice shaded tree.” He said out loud in answer to his thoughts. As soon as he said it he looked around to see if anyone heard him, he did not want anyone to think he was talking to himself. There was no-one near the barrel of water.**

**As Bill replaced the top on the full canteen the truck that had dropped him at the office earlier came and stopped, it was loaded with men who had been working at the pier. The young driver stuck his head out the window and shouted to Bill. “Lunch time.” “Jump up on the running board and I’ll give you a ride to the dinning hall.” Bill jumped on and hung on to the handle of the door as the truck moved off. As the truck slowed to stop in front of the screened shed that served as the dinning hall the men in the back of the truck were already jumping off and making their way to the front door.**

**Bill jumped off, shouting; “Thanks”, to the driver and followed the others into the dinning hall.**

The dinning hall was rather formal for a construction site. Waiters and busboys in white coats stood by to serve the hungry men. The tables, which sat ten men, four on each side and one on each end were covered with white, freshly ironed table cloths. The backs of the wooden chairs were covered in white linen that looked like it was removed, washed and ironed each day. The table was set with silver and a linen napkin, folded in the shape of a fan, was between the silverware at each place. Bill sat down at a table with three men who had been on the ship with him.

“What they got you doing?” one of the man asked Bill, he was wearing the canteen.

“Oh, the canteen.” Bill said; “I am going for a walk after lunch.” “I need to look over the place and give the Super. some answers about the coral and where to find fill material.”

“Damn;” chimed in one of the men, “they call you in to the office first thing and we thought they were going to ship your ass back to Mexico but instead they send you out sightseeing on Company time.” “You sure as Hell get the breaks.”

“Well, it’s not exactly sightseeing.” Bill was addressing the entire table, not just the man who had spoken, “I am going to see how the island is put together and see if it will support all the crap you guys are planning to build on it.”

“If you are going walking out there on the coral,” this from a man how just sat down and had not been on the ship. He flung his arm in the direction of the East and continued; “You’ll need to get your self a machete.” “You’ll need it, to chop your way through all the cactus and those spiny trees you are going to find out there.”

“Thanks, that’s good advise.” Bill said.

After lunch, armed with a machete he got from Pinky back at the tool room and his full canteen of water, Bill started walking east. He stuck close to the water, it was a ten foot drop to the surface of the emerald green water of the lagoon and it was impossible to judge how deep the water was, it was so clear as to be transparent. The sand bottom had patches of a flat, brown-green grass that swayed back and forth with the action of each wave. Bill could see lobsters without pincers walking in the flat bladed grass and fish swimming above the lobsters. Bill had never seen water this clear. It was not long before Bill realized it was a good thing he had taken the old timers advice and checked out a machete, the coral was covered with cactus that blocked his way. After an hour of walking and hacking that the cactus he reached the beach. He climbed down the cliff and walked along the beach to a point where the reef met the land and the land ran directly into the blue sea. There were palm trees here and in the distance he could see sand dunes. The sun was very hot but the sea breeze kept him cool. After crossing the small sand dunes he saw a beautiful lagoon with a beautiful beach and shallow water in the little lagoon. Further on there was a large mangrove tree, he had seen the mangroves in Mexico, and here the white sand turned pink. Here he left the waters edge and turned inland, the map had shown the well at the top of the cliff about three hundred yards from the beach. When he reached the top there was a large expanse of coral, covered with cactus. He found the well, it had been used by the phosphate miners and there was a path across the coral to another cliff. Further to the east was a hill of red earth and he could see a lighthouse structure on the top of the hill. The lighthouse was shown on the phosphate map and he had also seen it on the charts on board ship. The path from the well lead up the second cliff, across more coral and up a hill of coral. Here he found the phosphate mines. They were down in a large hole and each of the seven mine shafts were dug into the sides. Bill stood looking into he hole, he decided not to climb down, it was getting late, he did not have a flashlight with him so he dared not enter any of the shafts. The phosphate map had show a railroad from the port to the

mines and Bill found the old track bed which was more or less free of cactus, he stated back along the track bed. The sun was getting low on the western horizon and as he walked into the setting sun his face and shoulders began to burn and feel tight. He knew he had gotten a sunburn just in the few hours he had been out walking.

As he entered the sheep sheds one of the men who had arrived on the island before him looked at him and said; "My God man, you got yourself roasted today. You are going to suffer for that tonight."

"I know." Bill said, "I guess I should have worn a hat and not taken my shirt off." "Go see the cook at the dinning hall and get some vinegar to put on that burn. Do it right now and it will help take the sting out of the burn?" The man told him.

"Vinegar?" it was a question as well as an exclamation. "You got to be kidding." Bill said.

"Nope, vinegar, it works, takes out the sting when you get a sunburn." The man assured him.

Bill was not convinced but decided to ask the cook for some vinegar when he went for dinner. "What did you find out there on your little walk?" One of the man from the ship asked.

"Nothing but coral, cactus and saltwater." Bill assured him.

"Did you get to BA Beach?" the man how made the observation about Bill's sunburn asked. What and where is BA Beach?" Bill asked, he had not seen it on either of the maps.

"Nice beach, a little rough, but nice, just north of Colorado Point, the red hill at the east end of the island." Came the reply. The man went on; "We call it BA Beach because on Sunday we all go up there and go swimming, bare-ass-swimming. Hell, most of the time the waves are so rough they would take your swim trunks off is you was to wear them."

"No, I didn't get to BA Beach." Bill told him. "I found the phosphate mine; it was getting last so I just followed the railroad track bed back here."

**A warm shower in brackish water did not refresh Bill. He put on a clean shirt and walked to the dinning hall with the rest of the group. After dinner he went to the shed where he had been assigned a desk, he wanted to make notes about his walk and what he had found. While in the office his shoulders and back were beginning to burn so he stopped by the dinning hall or the way back to he sheep sheds and asked the cook if he could get some vinegar.**

**“Got yourself a sunburn I see.” The cook said, “This vinegar will fix you right up, if you haven’t waited to long, should do it as soon as you can after being exposed to that strong ass sun we got here.”**

**When he got back to the sheep sheds most of the men were asleep or lying on their cots reading. As he walked to his cot he saw a flashlight on the table beside the cot of the man who had told him about the vinegar. Bill stopped, the man was reading. “I’ am planning to explore some of the old mine shafts tomorrow.” He told the man who was reading. “Do you think I am borrowing your flashlight tomorrow so I can see what’s down in those shafts?”**

**“Consider it your.” The man told him as he passed Bill the flashlight. Bill found it difficult to sleep. The sunburn was bothering him and he kept thinking of his walk. This is an interesting place he thought, it does not seem to be very hospitable on the surface but there is a beauty in the sea, the pounding waves, the coral, cactus and the beautiful blue sky with the fluffy white clouds. All the harshness of the island blended together to create a beauty that he liked. He knew he had done the right thing, coming to Aruba; it was going to be an exciting place to work.**

**Bill looked at his watch, it was 4:30 am, the sun would not be up for another hour or so but he could not sleep his shoulders and back were burning and stinging at the same time and the skin was tight, he had not slept much during the night. He got up and went to the bathroom, took another brackish water shower, shaved, with what cold brackish water was, he wished he had some of the hot fresh water from the drum. The shower did not help and he was still burring as he slipped on his socks, pants and a tee shirt. He had decide to put a tee shirt under his long sleeve white cotton shirt with the hope that it would help keep the sun's rays off his back. He was not going to take his shirt off again today. When he was dressed he gathered up his canteen, machete and flashlight and left the sheep shed and all the sleeping men and mad his way to the dinning hall below the cliff. There were lights on in the kitchen area, the cooks were getting ready for 6:00 breakfast and he knew they must have coffee on the stove.**

**When he entered the kitchen area he found two American cooks and about ten natives helpers. One of the cooks saw him as he stepped into the kitchen and called out to him; "How about a cup of coffee?" "That is just what I was hoping you would say." Bill answered as he walked over to where the cook was pointing, a large coffee pot stood on the kerosene stove and steam was coming from the pouring snout.**

**"Help your self to a can of hot orange juice." The cook went on, "It's over there on the shelf behind all the kerosene stoves.**

**Bill walked over and got a can of orange juice, it was warm, just at the cook had said, there still was not ice on Aruba, an Ice Plant was under construction but it would be many weeks before it was complete and operational. Using two hands to lift the large oversize coffee pot Bill poured himself a cup of coffee opened the can of juice. "Breakfast won't be for another hour." The cook said. Then he asked; "How did the vinegar work?"**

**"Didn't use it." Bill replied, "I did not want the sheep shed smelling of vinegar on my account."**

**“To bad.” The cook said, “It would have helped.” “What are you up to today?”**

**“Same as yesterday, explore the island.” Bill said, “Only today I am going to keep my shirt on.”**

**“What the Hell is there to explore?” the cook asked, “Nothing but God Damn cactus and coral as far as I can see.” He went on; “And I made that discovery walking between there and the sheep shed.”**

**The native helpers were talking among themselves and Bill asked; “Is that the native language they speak here in Aruba?”**

**“Guess it is.” The first cook said, “No one can understand them, they call it Papiamento, I am told it is a mixture of Spanish, Dutch, some kind of Indian talk and African talk all mixed together, I think what they are saying is “Pop you ain’t meant to know.”**

**Bill and the other cook laughed.**

**Then one of the cooks said; “Sounds kind of funny don’t it?”**

**“Well, I guess any language you don’t understand sound funny the first time you hear it.” Bill answered. “I thought French sounded funny the first time I heard it, same with Spanish but after awhile you get to understanding some of the words and it begins to make sense.”**

**While the conversation was going on Bill drank his orange juice and coffee and looked around the kitchen. It was big, modern and very clean. Then he noticed four woman making sandwiches at a table at the far end of the kitchen. Two of them were madding the sandwiches, one was wrapping them in wax paper and the forth placed the wrapped sandwiches along with an apple, an orange and two cookies in a cardboard box. Then she put paper napkins in the box, on top of the wrapped food and closed the box.**

**“Is that woman packing box lunches?” Bill asked one of the cooks.**

**“Yea.” He replied, “We make up over three hundreds box lunches and dinners a day. Got to feed the shift workers and guys who can’t get away to eat at the dinning hall. We send them down to the pier, out to the dredge and all the way to Horses Bay where they are transferring crude from the lake tankers to the larger ships. Guess we will keep doing that till the new harbor get finished.”**

**“Any chance of me getting a box lunch to take on my hike, that way I don’t have to come back for lunch?” Bill asked.**

**“Sure, just help yourself, take two if you like.” The head cook said.**

**“Thanks.” Bill said as he finished his coffee and walked over to the table where the four women were working and pick up a finished box. “See you guys for dinner.” He called out as he left the kitchen. Outside the dinning hall he found another drum of drinking water and filled his canteen. Now the water felt cool, the sun had not yet come up in the east but soon it would and very soon the water would be hot like it was yesterday at noon. Bill followed the railroad track bed; he wanted to explore the mine and go see BA Beach. It would be interesting to compare the placid lagoons he saw yesterday with what he was told were rough waves that would take you swimming suit off, if you wore one. Bill was about half way to Colorado Point; he had left the railroad track bed and was following the second coral cliff back from the sea. It was slow going, there was a lot of cactus to be cut and he took great pains stepping over the cactus so as not to get it stuck in his shoes or legs. As he made his way along the cliff he saw a tree to his left, but it was only the top of a tree, it must be a low bush, he thought as he made his way towards it. When he reached it re realized it was a full grown tree only it was growing from a large hole in the coral. The hole was a jagged cut in the coral, about a hundred feet long, thirty feet wide and about twenty feet deep. He looked down into the hole and realized it was sand in the bottom. Large pieces of coral, which had broken off the edge in time past, lay on the floor of the hole. Bill reasoned that it must have been a cavern in the coral whose roof had fallen in and created the hole. “Christ,” he thought, “What the Hell would happen if we built a tank**

over something like that and then filled the tank with crude and the roof of the cavern collapsed.”

Bill did not want to think about it, he made his mind up to tell Skipper that they would have to test bore every tank site to eliminate something like that happening.

Standing on top of the coral looking into the cave Bill could see a ragged opening on the north end of the hole, “A cave?” he wondered. The tree was sturdy and he realized he could climb down the tree and get to the bottom, Bill decided to go down and take a look.

When he reached to bottom of the hole he walked on the sand towards the opening, it was a cave. He turned on his borrowed flashlight and started in. It gets dark very quickly as the passage turned. Bill followed the passage for about three hundred feet and reached a large cavern. Here he moved the beam of light over the cavern walls. It looked like there were six different passages leading off in different directions from this cavern. Each passage was marked with a symbol on the cavern wall using charcoal. As he looked at the marking he decided they were made by the phosphate mines, probably to help find their way in and out of the cave. As he selected a passage to continue down he realized that this was not the area where tanks were proposed, this was to be left for housing for the employees. This was a relief, a storage tank full of crude excreted a lot more pressure on its foundation than a house did. After walking about five hundred feet in this second passage he encountered another large cavern. Here again there were many passages leading off this cavern and they too were marked with strange symbols. He looked at the cavern that had lead him to this cavern it had the same marking at this end as it did where he entered. He looked at the other makings and they were not repeated. It was a map; he was convinced, used by the phosphate mines when they explored the cave hoping to find a deposit of phosphate. He know he had only seen the beginning of this cave, it must be enormous he thought but decided to go back, he did not what to get lost and no one knew he was in the cave. He retraced his steps and

once outside he stood and looked up out of the hole.

The sun was directly above, high noon, time to eat. He looked at his watch, it said 12:12. "Ha." He thought, the sun is right, it is high noon and his stomach also said it was noon, he was hungry. It was cool in the hole and the tree offered a lot of shade from the sun, so he decide to eat his box lunch down in the hole, before climbing back up the tree to the coral plateau, where he knew there was no shelter from the sun. As he sat eating his two sandwiches something in the san caught the sunlight and reflected it back into Bill's eyes. Standing, he walked over to the object and picked it up. It was round, about the size of an American quarter, had a hole in the center and it looked old, like it had been made of a shell with mother of pearl. Scratched into the mother of pearl was a design. Four Z's connected. It looked just like the marking over the passage he had taken in the cave. Bill put the strange object in his pocket, collected the box, his canteen, the flashlight and machete and climbed up the tree, out of the hole and into the strong afternoon sun.

Again he started walking across the coral. This time he headed east until he reached the edge of the red hill with the lighthouse, Colorado Point the map had said. He did not walk up the hill but turned north and followed the coast line walking about three to five hundred feet from the edge of the island where the waves were pounding the cliff. Even at this distance from the sea Bill was getting wet by the salt spray that was coming off the waves has they smashed into the coral cliffs and were vaporized, the droplets of seawater picked up by the strong wind off the sea and carried inland and soaking Bill. After about a mile walk he found the beach, the waves were large but they rolled up on the beach, not having a cliff to smash into.

When he got closer to the beach he saw men on the sand in the water. They were all nude. Bill set down his flashlight, canteen, empty lunch box and machete and took off his salty damp clothes. Stripped naked he ran into the oncoming wave and dove headfirst into a massive wave that pushed him under, tumbled him and washed him back up on the beach. Many of the men swimming Bill did not recognize but he did recognize the two cooks from the kitchen. He joined them and together they tried to swim in the rough churning water.

After about forty minutes they were all exhausted and went up on the beach. The cooks had towels and one of the cooks let Bill use his towel to dry off before getting dressed. When they were dressed they started back to the sheep sheds. The coral from BA Beach rose slowly until it they were up about fifty feet above the sea and then the coral was flat.

When they got to the flat area of the coral Bill noticed a large hole in the coral. "You fellows go along." He told the two cooks, "I am going over and take a look at that hole over there."

The cooks nodded and kept walking, they wanted to get home and out to San Nicholas for a drink. It was getting dark but there was still enough light for Bill to see the hole, a hole that had been dug, it was not a cavern that whose roof had fallen in. Bill climbed down into the shallow hole and picked up a handful of the chalky material. He realized at once that it was cliché. Calcium Carbonate, found in arid and semi-arid areas. Someone in the past had mined the white material and started the pit. Bill smiled; cliché would make an excellent fill to cover the sharp coral, before they built a tank. He had found the material to use in place of beach sand; he had one firm answer for Skipper.

The next day Bill reported to Skipper. Bill told Skipper of the cliché pit and the cave he had found. He explained to Skipper that he felt because of the cave he felt they should test bore every tank site to make sure there were no caverns under the site.

**Skipper listened and then informed him that he wanted to begin excavation and stock piling of cliché as soon as possible. “We are going to need a large amount of fill once we begin building the storage tanks.” He told Bill. “I am going to put you in charge of that project.”**

**“I’ll get right on it.” Bill said as he turned to leave the office.**

**“Not so fast young man.” Skipper said as he was ready to leave the office. Bill stopped and faced Skipper. “I also want you to head up the drilling and investigation of the tank sites. When the surveyors have laid out where we what to build the God Damn things you move in and do the drilling.” “So while you are rounding up a crew to dig and stockpile cliché also looks for a crew to run two pneumatic drills.” “Decide what type of steam shovel you will need, how many dump trucks, and figure on three pneumatic drills on track with two air compressors, that way you will have a spare. When you decide what you need let me know this afternoon what they are and I will get them on the next ship that leaves New York.”**

**“I will get right on it.” Bill said as he again began to leave the office.**

**“God Damn it man, don’t be in such a hurry, there is a third thing I want you to do.” Skipper was smiling as Bill again turned back to face his desk. “We have a contractor coming in to build fifty bungalows for the English officers who will command the lake tankers. They are bringing their families, bloody British, take their wives everywhere, even to India. Anyway I want you to keep an eye on the builder, know anything about building houses?”**

**“Not really.” Bill answered.**

**“Well, just keep an eye on the guy, and remember all house builders are crooks and will get by doing as little as possible.”**

**Bill stood; he did not try to leave the office. Skipper looked at him for a moment and then he said; “Well, God Damn it man, lets get going you got work to do.”**

Robert the surveyor provided the maps and locations of the new tanks. Jim, the engineer, drew the tanks and their pipe system on the map and as each new map was completed Bill moved in a drill crew and sent ten test holes into the hard coral to a depth of 100 feet. In all the test holes they drilled they never found a void in the dense coral larger than six feet and no void was within sixty three feet of the surface of the coral. With this type of density Bill certified all the chosen sites as being able to support the new tanks. Because the coral was so dense it was decided not to try and cut coral to make a level base for the tank, instead cliché was brought in to bring the grade up to the highest point of coral, thus saving many man-hours of jack hammer work or worse, dynamite. In addition to drilling and certifying the sites Bill was kept busy with the digging, hauling and stockpiling of the cliché. Then once a day he would go and check on the progress of the fifty Bungalows.

Within six months of Bill's arrival in Aruba the finger piers were completed, six tanks were finished, the ice house was up and running so they had cold water at all the job sites and things were looking up. Soon after that the fifty houses were finished and the English families moved to the island.

While the men in Aruba were busy building the oil port for Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd., Lago's parent company, Pan American Petroleum, was negotiating with the Standard Oil Company of Indiana. Mr. Doheny, CEO and the major stockholder of Pan American was trying to sell his company to the CEO of Standard of Indiana. Pan American crude exploration in Venezuela had concessions on 3,000,000 acres of land around and on Lake Maracaibo which The Standard Oil Company of Indiana wanted; if they purchased the Venezuelan concessions the transshipment port being built in Aruba would be part of the deal.

**On November 4, 1925 The Standard Oil Company of Indiana, in a series of stock swaps, took control of Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd. as well as Lago Petroleum Corporation of Venezuela from Pan American Petroleum. Now with Standard Oil of Indiana's deep pockets and broad marketing base in the United States the Aruba transshipment facility underwent even more rapid development. When Lago was purchased by Standard Oil of Indiana in 1925 there were thirty lake tankers bringing crude to Aruba. By 1929, only four years after the sale and because of new markets opened up by the sale and excellent management the number of lake tankers shuttling between Aruba and Venezuela had increased to seventy-six. As Standard of Indiana's Lake Maracaibo crude production increased it was decided to build a large refinery somewhere in the area that was close to the crude supply. In 1927 the decision was made to build the refinery in Aruba. Aruba, under Dutch control offered a stable political environment for investment, Venezuela was not considered politically stable and therefore not the place to build the refinery. The island already had a good harbor owned by Standard of Indiana and storage tanks were in place so work on the new refinery was begun. In May of 1929 construction materials for construction of the new refinery began to arrive and by January 1, 1929 the new refinery went on line. It incorporated the most modern processes and technology in the world, and had the capacity to refine 110,000 barrels of crude oil a day. This new construction required many more skilled men not only to build but also to operate the new refinery. The new men required housing, they were bringing their families so additional housing was needed as well as a school, hospital and recreational facilities. Overseeing and managing all this new construction to build Lago Colony was assigned to Bill. As Lago's production increased Standard Oil of Indiana's import of gasoline and other finished petroleum products into the United States increased and with this increase the price of petroleum products began to fall. This drop in price put pressure on US producer with refineries and oil fields in the United States and the U. S. Congress began talking about an embargo on foreign crude. This**

talk of an embargo worried the management of Standard of Indiana. Their retail outlets were all in the United States, they had never developed a market outside America and should the embargo be put in place they would have no place to sell the product that was being produced in Aruba. This fear prompted Standard of Indiana to begin searching for a buyer for Lago Petroleum Company of Venezuela and Lago Oil and Transport Company, Ltd. in Aruba. On June 6, 1932 the Congress passed a law which did place a tariff on imported petroleum products. Soon after the tariff was implemented Standard of Indiana sold their Venezuelan oil fields in Venezuela and the refinery in Aruba to Standard Oil of New Jersey. With the new owner Aruba's production found markets in Europe, South America and around the world through Esso Stations. When the refinery changed hands Bill had vacation time and decided it was best to take some time off before there was another boom in construction because of the new owner and he would not be able to take time off.

With the vacation drawing near Bill was looking forward to seeing his parents and baby sister. When he transferred to Aruba from Mexico there had not been enough time for a visit with his family. As Bill packed his things he came across a small box he had forgotten about. It was a box in which he had placed the coin he had found when he first arrived in Aruba. He had not thought about the coin since showing it to a Mr. Odor, an amateur coin collector who lived in Oranjestad. Bill had show the coin to him and been told it was a Quiripa, the money used for barter by the Indians of the area, long before the Spanish had arrived. Mr. Odor explained to Bill that he had a few Quiripa but he had never seen one with marking and he guessed that the markings were added by someone at a later date. Mr. Odor said that because of the strange marking scratched on the surface of the coin it really did not hold much value to a collector. Bill decided then no to even ask about value he would put it away and take it home with him the next time he went and give it to the Anthropology Department at the University of Colorado. His old Alma-Mata was the Colorado school of Mines but he knew that they did not have an Anthropology Department. Bill returned to the

United States on a tanker bound for New Jersey. There he purchased a new Ford car and because he had three months vacation time he decided he would drive to Colorado. Soon after arriving in Denver, Bill called his old geology professor at the Colorado School of Mines. After the normal formalities of reintroducing himself to Dr. Johnson Bill asked; "Tell me Dr. Johnson, do you know anyone on your facility or the University of Colorado's facility that would know about Caribbean Indian artifact?" "Yes I do as a matter of fact." Dr. Johnson told him. Dr. Roberts at the U of C is very knowledgeable." "Why do you ask?" he wanted to know. "In Aruba I found a small round object with a hole in it. It has some symbol scratched on the surface and I have wondered what it was and would like have it identified." Bill told his old Professor. Bill called Dr. Roberts and made an appointment to see him on Saturday at his home in the hill around Denver. On Saturday, after introduction Bill showed the coin to Dr. Roberts. He turned it over and over in his hand and told Bill he thought it was a Quiripa, Button Money used by the Indians of Venezuela sometime before the Spanish arrived. As to value Dr. Roberts told Bill he did not feel it had much value because it had been de-faced with the strange marking that had been scratched on its surface. Bill thanked Dr. Roberts for his time, pocketed the coin and started home. The trip back to Denver was along a two lane mountain road. Bill was tired and his eyes were getting heavy. His head began to nod, the curves were coming up fast but there were guardrails and Bill kept pushing the Ford V8. As he entered one of the curves his head fell forward, Bill was asleep and the car hit the guardrail, smashed through and plunged down the steep cliff and smashed into the river at the bottom. Bill Kishman was dead!

## COIN TWO

Junie was still on the phone with Mr. Odor. "Is that the only Quiripa with markings you have seen?" He asked Mr. Odor.

**“No, I have seen three Quiripa with markings. The second one was in Santo Domingo at a numismatic convention on Caribbean currency in nineteen fifty-seven. A gentleman by the name of Sosa showed me a Quiripa that that had been in his family for many-many generations. He was an engineer at a sugar mill and asked if I had ever seen other Quiripa with marking on them, I told him of the Quiripa Mr. Kishman had shown me.”**

**Junie was getting very interested in what Mr. Odor had to say. “And what marking did this coin have on it?” he asked.**

**The symbol was three O’s together and they were overlapping, very much like the Olympic logo, only they were not in color, as the Olympic logo, and there were only three O’s, in a straight line.” Mr. Odor told Junie.**

**“And the size of the coin, do you remember the size of the coin?” Junie asked.**

**“Yes, but of course, it was the size of an American Penny.” Mr. Odor told Junie.**

## **THE SECOND COIN**

**Tony’s friends were leaving Lago to take jobs with Hess Oil Virgin Island Corp. on St. Croix. Hess Oil had recruited in Aruba because of the experienced labor market that existed on the island. Many of Lago’s best employees had joined Hess Oil and moved to St. Croix. Job security at Lago was a thing of the past as the company cut personnel in an effort to become more profitable in the world market. Tony Oduber was an Aruban. He had grown up in Oranjestad. Tony attended Cornell University where he studied electrical engineer and played on the soccer team. After graduation he returned to Aruba. He was immediately hired by Lago to work in the Technical Services Department. He had worked for Lago during the summer of his junior year and made an impression, because of his showing during his summer job, employment, after graduation, had been assured. Within three years of joining Lago, he was the engineer in charge of**

**Number Two Power House, and he hated the job. He no longer practiced engineering; he was a manager, and the daily routines of dealing with personnel and making up schedules bored him. His dislike of his job was only made tolerable by the good times he had on the weekends sailing off Palm Beach. He had rented a company house in Sero Colorado where he spent the weekdays, but on the weekends he drove to Oranjestad to sail and party with his old friends. Hector, his childhood friend, had left Lago two years before and gone to St. Croix to work for Hess Oil and it was Hector who wrote Tony and told him about the opening for Chief Electrical Engineer at Hess. The job sounded interesting to Tony, it was more design and this was a new refinery just being built. He would be in on the ground floor. As Tony read Hector's letter he began to think about moving. He was bored with his present job. He was twenty-seven years old and single. Hess paid in U S Dollars and Lago was paying him in Guilders. As a Hess employee he would be covered under the American Social Security system, the pay was better and he needed a change.**

**There was also the problem with his parents. He was an only child and his father was now retired but led an active live. He still belonged to the Rotary Club, The Caribe Club and he was still Chairman of The Aruba Bank as well on its largest stock holder. His mother was in good health and kept busy looking after her husband and trying to find a wife for Tony. Tony loved his parents but together they were beginning to hound him about his future. His mother was always arranging dates or at least having girls over for dinner when Tony was home on the weekends. His father was trying to get him interested in Banking. It was time to leave Aruba so he sent his resume to Hess Oil in St. Croix.**

**A week after sending the resume his phone at the house in Sero Colorado rang at seven o'clock as he was sitting down to a TV dinner. As soon as he picked up the phone he could tell by the empty sound on the line that it was a long distance call, an American voice came on the line. "Mr. Oduber?" the voice asked.**

**"Yes, this is Tony Oduber." he answered.**

**“Mr. Oduber, my name is John Holcomb; I am the Personnel Director for Hess Oil Virgin Islands Corp. and I am in St. Croix. You sent us your resume and stated in your cover letter that you were interested in the position of Chief Electrical Engineer here at our St. Croix refiner.”**

**“Yes, that is correct.” Tony answered, trying not to show any excitement.**

**“Are you still interested in the job?” Mr. Holcomb asked.**

**“Yes, Yes I certainly am.” Tony answered.**

**“Well, I can tell you I am happy to hear that. You are our first choice and based on your resume, college transcript and past work experience we would like to invite you to come to St. Croix so we can meet and get to know each other.”**

**“I would like to do that.” Tony told him.**

**“Good, I will cable you tickets through American Airlines and you can fly up to San Juan and then over to St. Croix. If I make reservations for next Monday would that suite you?”**

**“Yes, I have some vacation time coming and I am sure I can get away.” Tony told him.**

**“Good, Plan to spend five days with us. We will send the tickets tomorrow, make hotel reservations for you here in St. Croix and have someone meet you at the airport.”**

**“Thank you, I look forward to meeting you.” Tony replied.**

**“Yes, I look forward to meeting you as well, good-by.” Mr. Holcomb hung up.**

First thing the next morning Tony submitted a leave request for two weeks, beginning next Monday. He had received the necessary signatures by that afternoon. Tony would go to St. Croix on Monday, interview with Hess, and then he would go on to Miami for a week of shopping. He was getting excited about the prospect of a new job and moving to St. Croix and he had not been off Aruba for two years. Tony cleared U S Immigrations and Customs in San Juan and then proceeded to locate the Prinair departure lounge. He had checked his bag through to St. Croix so he only had his briefcase to carry. The Prinair departure lounge was downstairs on ground level. As he opened the lounge door the heat hit him, it was not air conditioned. As all the molded plastic chairs were taken and people were sitting on the edges of the large flower pots that held plastic plants. At each counter people were lined up attempting to obtain information about their flight.

Tony got in the shortest line and waited his ticket in hand, the line moved rapidly and soon he was standing in front of the counter.

“I have a reservation on Flight 346 to St. Croix at 4:20.” he told the attendant behind the desk.

“Just take a seat and wait for the flight to be called.” The woman behind the counter replied without looking up from the list of passengers she was reading.

Tony did not have to wait long. The St. Croix flight was called; nine passengers left the hot building and stepped out onto the hotter asphalt apron. It was then that Tony saw the aircraft, a little four engine, propeller driven airplane that looked like a toy next to the jets that sat on the apron.

“My God, we are not going to fly in that.” He said out loud to himself. The man walking beside him laughed and said; “Don’t worry; it is a good safe aircraft.”

“Well, I don’t really like to fly and that thing looks awful small to me.” Tony answered.

**“Dehavilland Dove, used by the Queen of England to get around her kingdom, so it must be a good aircraft.” The man replied.**

**The interior of the aircraft was small with one seat on each side of the fuselage and a narrow isle between the seats. Tony was not a big man but he had to turn sideways to get between the passengers who were already seated in their seats. As soon as the nine passengers were seated the co-pilot walked down the aisle saying something about their seat cushion could be used for floatation in the event of an emergency. Without even turning around he entered the cockpit where the captain was already seated and closed the door behind him. The engines started and they were moving off the apron onto to runway and they were off. As the plane climbed into the low clouds, it began to bank hard to the left, as the pilot headed south across Puerto Rico. While still climbing to altitude, the plane started to drop and then be bushed back up, as it entered into very heavy turbulence caused by the hot air coming off the mountains they were crossing. Tony’s stomach went from groin to his throat, he looked out of the little window but all he could see was the first engine, the second engine on the wing was hidden in thick white cloud. Tony was beginning to wonder if any job was worth this experience. As he sat wondering if the wings would fall off the cloud broke, all he could see was blue sea and blue sky, the south coast of Puerto Rico was directly below him and the ride was smooth.**

**Now this is more like it, he thought to himself as he settled back to look at the sky and the sea.**

**Climbing down the three little steps built into the door of the aircraft Tony was struck by the wind, it blew just as hard here in St. Croix as it did in Aruba. This would be a great place for sailing he thought as he went through the steel turnstile that let him into the terminal.**

**A voice called out; “Mr. Oduber?” It was a black man standing just inside the turnstile.**

**“Yes, I am Tony Oduber.” Tony answered, turning to look at the man.**

**“Welcome to St. Croix, I am Gumbs, work with Hess Oil and I’m here to take you to your hotel.” The black man answered.**

**“We will get you baggage down here, if you will just follow me and point out your bags I will get them off the revolving belt.” Gumbs walked towards the end of the terminal and Tony followed.**

**As they stood waiting for the belt to begin moving Gumbs looked at Tony and said; “You must be Aruban, I lived in Aruba, San Nicholas, for eighteen years and worked for Lago.”**

**“Oh, really.” Tony said, “Where did you work when you were with Lago?”**

**“Lago Colony, at the Esso Club.” Gumbs told Tony. “I was the bartender in the cocktail lounge for eighteen years.”**

**“And how long have you lived in St. Croix?” Tony asked.**

**“Two years ago. When I was laid off from Lago I moved back to my island, Barbados, and worked there as a bartender at the Sandy Lane Hotel. My daughter moved here three years ago and asked me to come stay with her, she does not like living alone here in St. Croix, so I moved here two years ago, got a job driving for Hess, and here I am. My daughter also works for Hess in the accounting department.”**

**“And how do you like St. Croix?” Tony asked him.**

**“Like St. Croix, this is no place to like, it is lawless.” In Aruba the police kept the law and it was safe, same in Barbados but here the Cruzan’s them are a lawless bunch and the police are like them, they is all related to each other so no one get in trouble, except them who are not Cruzan.”**

**As he spoke Gumbs looked around to see that no one was listening to what he was saying. He went on; “It is not safe to go out in the streets at night in Christiansted or Fredericksted. The young native boys will beat you up. Steal your money and then the police do nothing.”**

The conveyor belt began to move and Tony's bag was one of the first to appear from behind the rubber flaps. Tony moved to pick up his bag but Gumbs was faster and picked it up and started walking towards the street and the parking lot. Tony followed with his briefcase.

"They drive on the left here in St. Croix, just like Barbados." Gumbs told Tony as he put his suitcase in the trunk of the car and opened the back door for Tony to get in. "That's why Hess gave me a job; they knew I could manage driving on the left."

"I think this driving on the left will get some getting used to." Tony said as he settled into the back seat of the car.

"No, it comes quick." Gumbs said; "If it don't you will surely mash up the car and yourself so it best come quick."

Tony laughed, Gumbs had a point.

"I will be taking you to the Holga Danske Hotel that is where you will be staying." Gumbs said as he started the car and left the parking lot. Gumbs turned serious. "Tomorrow morning I will pick up at seven-thirty, you will be having breakfast with Mr. Holcomb in the Hess cafeteria."

They drove along the edge of the runway and up ahead Tony could see a plant; it did not look like a refinery. "What is that up ahead?" he asked Gumbs.

"That's Martin Marietta Alumina, it is closed." Gumbs told him.

They turned at the end of the runway and then entered a four lane highway. As they crested the top of the first hill Gumbs pointed to the right, "That's Hess Oil." He said. "Nice and clean, Mr. Hess is all about keeping the refinery clean and clean it is."

"Your right about that." Tony said, looking at the green and yellow painted refinery. It was a showplace compared to what Lago looked like. Since the cutbacks at Lago began the maintenance of the refinery was contracted out and it was beginning to look shabby. Hess was a showplace!

**When they reached the Holga Dansk Hotel in Christiansted Gumbs took Tony's bag to the front desk. "I will pick you up right here, tomorrow morning at seven."**

**The next morning Tony locked his hotel room door and started down the path towards the hotel office. He looked at his watch, it was 7:28.**

**As he neared the hotel office he saw Gumbs standing at the door of the office, the car was parked in front of the office. "Good morning Mr. Oduber." Gumbs greeted him as he opened the back door of the company car for Tony.**

**"Good morning to you, Mr. Gumbs." Tony replied as he climbed into the backseat of the waiting car.**

**It was a fifteen minute ride to the Hess Refinery. Gumbs drove up the small hill to the main office and parked in front of the building. He got out and opened the door for Tony.**

**"Go inside and tell the receptionist you are here to see Mr. Holcomb." Gumbs instructed him.**

**"Thank for the ride." Tony said as he started towards the front door of the two story office building.**

**"Good luck." Gumbs called out as he closed the back door and got in to drive the car away.**

**Tony pulled the glass door open and cold air poured out of the building. "Damn, they keep it cold in the office." He thought as he entered the lobby of the building.**

**On the left he saw a glass window and behind the window was a young woman. Tony walked over to the window and through the round hole in the glass he told the girl who he was and that he had an appointment with Mr. Holcomb.**

**"Just one moment, I will ring Mr. Holcomb's office." The girl told him. She spoke into the phone and then told Tony to have a seat; Mr. Holcomb's assistant would be down to get him in a moment.**

**Tony had just sat down when a girl walked into the lobby. She was wearing a straight black skirt, white blouse and dark green blazer with simple pumps to match. Her straight, jet black hair hung to her shoulders and her big black eyes sparkled as she walked towards Tony.**

**“This is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.” He said as he watched her walk across the lobby. Tony noticed her left hand as she walked by him, no wedding ring. The girl with the olive skin went to the window, the girl behind the glass slid the glass aside and she handed a folder to the girl, then she turned and walked towards Tony, her hand outstretched as she said; “You must be Mr. Oduber, how nice to meet you, I am Jewel Sosa, Mr. Holcomb’s assistant.”**

**Tony stood and shook Ms. Jewel Sosa’s hand. “So nice to meet you Ms Sosa.” Tony said.**

**“Please, call me Jewel, everyone else does.” She had a firm, warm handshake. “Let’s go to the cafeteria and have some breakfast.” She said; Mr. Holcomb has been called the Marine Department, some type of emergency but he should be back shortly and will join us.”**

**Jewel turned and started back across the lobby with Tony at her side. Tony was six feet one inches tall and with Jewel beside him he guessed she was five foot six or seven. It felt good just to be walking next to such a beautiful creature. When they reached the cafeteria Tony held the door for her, the cafeteria was not very large, not as large as the Esso Dinning Hall at Lago which was now been closed because of the layoffs and cutbacks at the refinery. The serving line was at one end of the rectangular room and the south wall was made up of large glass windows which gave a view over the refinery and down onto the docks where Tony saw five tankers tied up at two long piers. Jewel took a tray and then handed a tray to Tony. As she walked down the serving line, she placed Danish and a cup of coffee on her tray. “Please help yourself to whatever you want.” She said To Tony.**

**Tony took two Danish, a cup of coffee and a glass of orange juice. The cashier rang up the two trays and Jewel took the cash register receipt, signed it and handed it back to the cashier.**

**“Lets sit over by the windows.” She said to Tony as she carried her tray to an empty table next to one of the large glass windows.**

**Before they could sit down Jewel said; “Here’s Mr. Holcomb now.” Tony turned to the door and saw a middle age man with a protruding belly come through the door, He saw Jewel and walked towards the table.**

**“You must be Mr. Oduber, I’m John Holcomb, and it’s so nice to meet you.”**

**As he shook hands with Tony he looked at Jewel and said; “Good morning Ms. Sosa, how are you today?”**

**Before either of them could answer he said; “You two go ahead and get started, I’ll just go through the line and get a cup of coffee.”**

**When John Holcomb returned with his coffee Jewel had half finished her Danish and coffee but she excused her self saying she had work to do and stood to leave. Tony and John both stood, Tony took Jewel’s hand and said good-by.**

**“I do hope you get the job Mr. Oduber.” Jewel said to herself.**

**To Tony she said; “good-by” as she left the cafeteria.**

**As she left the cafeteria John Holcomb said to Tony; “Have you ever seen a more beautiful woman?”**

**Tony did not answer, he just nodded, John Holcomb was right she was the most beautiful woman Tony had ever seen.**

**John went on; “You know she gets asked out at least three times a day but I don’t think she has ever gone out with anyone that I know of. She just doesn’t date.”**

John and Tony got down to the business of interviewing for the new job. The next three days were gruesome. Tony met new people and had to keep names and faces straight in his mind as he was shown around the refinery and met the top personnel. He visited the individual power generating units that supplied the electricity to the different sections of the refinery, he tried to ask intelligent questions and give intelligent answers to the numerous questions asked of him. At the end of each day Gumbs drove him back to the hotel, he ate a light dinner in the restaurant overlooking the harbor of Christiansted and went to bed early, exhausted. On Tuesday John Holcomb and Jack Anderson, Vice President in charge of operations invited him to dinner at the Buccaneer Hotel. They picked him up at 7:30 in front of the hotel and the three drove together through Christiansted and out to the Buccaneer. At dinner Tony was offered the job and he accepted. He would be reporting to work in a month, enough time to give his notice to Lago, get his things packed and say good-bye to friends and family in Aruba. When John and Jack left him at his hotel they told him Gumbs would pick him up Saturday morning and take him to the airport. He had Friday to himself which suited him fine. Tony had not told the people at Hess that he intended to go on to Miami from St. Croix so early Friday morning he stopped in at Crawford's Travel, next to the hotel and changed his reservations and paid the additional fare to go on to Miami and then back to Aruba on the following Tuesday, he would have two days in which to shop, not the week he had planned. After Crawford's Travel he went next door to the Town Wheel and had breakfast.

Then back to his hotel room, he had a phone call to make. He dialed the number and the operator said; "Hess Oil, may I help you?"

He recognized the voice of the girl behind the glass window on the day he walked into Hess. "Yes, will you please connect me with Ms. Sosa's office." He asked.

"One moment." Came the reply and then a click.

"Good morning, Jewel Sosa speaking, may I help you?" was the next voice he heard.

**“Hi, this is Tony Oduber, how are you?” “I’m fine.” Came the reply from Jewel. “I guess you know I got the job.” Tony said.**

**“Yes, I heard, actually, I knew before you did, welcome to Hess.”**

**“Well, I am excited and I feel like celebrating only I don’t really know anyone to celebrate with and that is why I am calling. I was wondering if you may consent to have dinner with me tonight and help me celebrate.”**

**“Actually I was going to call you.” Jewel said. “I have been invited to a party at one of our senator’s homes and was going to ask if you would like to come along, the senator told me to bring someone. The party does not start until later so we could have dinner and then go to the party.”**

**“Wonderful.” Tony said, “Why don’t I pick you up around seven?” Then Tony began to laugh, “I don’t know why I said that, I don’t have a car but if you give me your address I will get a taxi and pick you up.”**

**“I have a better idea, I will pick you up at seven at the hotel, we go for dinner then the senator’s party and I promise to have you home at a reasonable hour.”**

**“I accept your offer, see you at seven.” Tony said.**

**“See you at seven, good-by Tony.” Jewel had hung up**

**“Good-by Jewel.” Tony replied but there was no one at the end of the line. Tony went back to Crawford’s Travel to pick up his new tickets.**

**While in the travel office he asked the girl who had helped him with changing his tickets if she could recommend someplace nice for dinner. “Well, in my opinion I would say The Top Hat.” She told Tony.**

**“The Top Hat.” Tony repeated the name and thanked the girl for being most helpful with his reservations as well as her recommendations of dinner.**

**Tony sat on the American Airlines jet as it returned him to Aruba from Miami. All he could think about was Jewel. The dinner at The Top Hat had been superb. After dinner they had driven to Fredericksted and up into the hills behind town where they went to a party given by the Virgin Islands Senator. The party had been fun, the house and its surrounding vegetation was glorious, the Senator and his wife were charming and the guests a diverse mix of Cruzan, Puerto Rican and Continentals as Jewel had explained those from the US mainland were called in St. Croix. They stopped at Morning Star, an open air nightclub, where they danced until four am... A fitting name for the nightclub, as it was open to the stars and set among trees that were over one hundred years old. As they left Morning Star Jewel suggested they go by the house she was house-sitting for a family who were on vacation in the States and she would cook breakfast for Tony.**

**Sitting on the galley they could see the sun's rays shooting up from under the horizon, Christiansted was below them bathed in the early light of dawn.**

**"Let's go for a swim." Jewel suggested as she started to clear the table.**

**"Great, let's do it." Tony said as he got up to help with the dishes.**

**"Where is there a beach?"**

**"I have a key for the gate to Watch Ho Beach." It is the best beach on St. Croix and the family who own the beach gave me a key so I can go use the beach any time I want to.**

**Jewel left and returned in her bathing suit with a white cover-up along with a suit for Tony which she had found in the home-owners closet. "This should fit you." She said. "Change in there." And she pointed to another bedroom.**

Jewel was even more beautiful in the white, skin-tight bathing suit as Tony discovered as she dropped the cover-up and ran into the water. Tony removed the shirt he was wearing and followed her into the small waves that were breaking just off the beach. She swam out beyond the breaking waves and was bobbing in the water, just able to touch the sand bottom when the wave toughed after each wave crest passed. Tony reached her, took her hands and together they rode up and down as the waves lifted them up and then settled them back down on the hard sand.

It was then that Tony noticed the beautiful gold chain she was wearing with the round white pendant. The gold chain was like a twisted rope. The white pendent was made of what looked like conch shell and there was a hole in it where the gold chain passed through. "What a unique necklace you are wearing." Tony said.

"Oh, this is my key to a cave full of gold." Jewel said as she smiled.

"Really, what do you mean?" Tony asked her.

"When we get back to the beach I will tell you the story, it is too hard to try and talk and keep the waves out of my mouth."

She said as a wave went over her head. They played in the waves for another half hour and then Jewel suggested they go back to the beach. They spread the towels they had brought with them and lay down on the towels next to each other.

"So, are you going to tell me the story of your cave of gold?" Tony asked when they were settled on the sand.

"My father gave me this coral button on his death bed. He told me it had been in the family for over four hundred years and had always gone to the oldest son but since I was his only child he was passing it on to me. He told me there were five such coins, each a different size and each with a different marking. They were the key to finding the way to a cavern of gold on an island he said was known as Goat Island."

"That's funny." Tony interrupted, "Aruba was referred to as Goat Island by the Spanish because of the goats that they kept there."

**“I am sure there are a lot of islands called Goat Island.” Jewel said, “Anyway it is only a story and I only have one coin and my father said it took five to find the gold.” “Anyway, it makes a good story and a lovely pendent.”**

**Tony agreed that it indeed was a very good story and a lovely pendent. Jewel looked at her watch, “I need to get you back to the hotel if you are going to make your flight.” She said as she jumped up and began shaking the sand out of the towel before folding it.**

**They returned to the house, Tony showered, changed into the cloths he wore the night before and Jewel drove him to the hotel. Gumbs was waiting for him as they drove up. He only had time to grab his bag, say good-by to Jewel and he was off to the airport with Gumbs at the wheel.**

**As the Eastern Airlines 727 lifted off the end of the runway and banked northwest towards Miami Tony was going over the night before. “I am in love with her.” He said to himself, “I am in love with Jewel Sosa and I am going to ask her to marry me.” Tony felt rested even without getting any sleep; he was at peace with himself. But he was also very tired, the interviewing for his new job had not been easy, he put his head on the little pillow on the backrest of the seat and fell asleep.**

**The month in Aruba flew by. Tony turned in his resignation to Lago on the Monday morning he returned. He called his parents and asked if it was alright for him to come to dinner on Monday night, which of course it was, his mother was always happy to feed her son. After dinner he told his parents about his trip to St. Croix, the job offer from Hess and his resignation from Lago. They were not happy about the prospect of their son leaving Aruba but they said nothing. Tony them told his parents about Jewel, his mother was elated. His father asked where she was from but all Tony knew was she was born in the Dominican Republic, her father had been an engineer with one of the sugar refineries in the Dominican Republic and they had moved to Puerto Rico when he went to work for one of the large sugar producers with refineries on that island, Jewel had**

been seventeen when they moved, finished her last year of high school in Puerto Rico and then she attended the University of Puerto Rico and had a degree in Spanish Literature. What mattered was Tony was in love with her and was going to ask her to marry him.

Tony arrived back in St. Croix two days before he had to report to work. Jewel met him at the airport. They were married three months later in the little Catholic Church at Barren Spot. Only Jewel's maid of honor and Tony's best man, Hector, attended the wedding. Jewel's parents were both dead and she had no brothers or sisters; Tony's father was sick and could not travel so it was a very small wedding party. The newlyweds rented a house at Peppertree Hill, their honeymoon was spent moving Tony's things from the trailer provided to him by Hess and shared with Hector and Jewel's things from the house she was sitting. Marriage agreed with them both.

They enjoyed entertaining at home and had friends over for drinks and dinner at least once a week and they were out to parties at least three times a week. The rest of the time they enjoyed each other. After Tony had been with Hess for two years they were planning a trip to Aruba, Tony wanted Jewel to meet his parents and he wanted Aruba to meet Jewel, the trip was planned and they would leave St. Croix in the first week in August. A week before they were to leave they had dinner at a friend's house on the East End of St. Croix.

They left their friend's house at eleven-thirty and drove back to their house at Peppertree Hill. Rather than drive through Christiansted Tony drove the South Shore Road and avoided the town.

"I think I will wash the car tomorrow." He said to Jewel as they approached the house.

"I'll just leave it outside in the driveway tonight." Usually they kept the car in the garage which was attached to the house.

"Do you have your front door key?" He asked Jewel.

"Yes, it's right here in my bag." She told him. Jewel reached for her handbag and produced the key-ring with four keys.

**Tony did not open the garage door the remote control, he stopped in front of the house and Jewel got out, then he drove to the driveway and up to the garage door. Jewel got out of the car, walked up the path to the front door and opened it with her key. They had left a few lights on in the house and Jewel headed for the Master Bedroom, she needed to use the bathroom. Tony got out of the car, opened the back door of the car and retrieved his sport coat and then locked the car. As he walked towards the front door he stopped to make sure the hose he needed was connected to the spigot in the front of the house and not around the back where Jewel may have moved it to water some of the hibiscus she had planted. The hose was at the front of the house. "Good" he thought, "I am all set for tomorrow." Tony entered the front door and headed for the kitchen, he needed a drink of water.**

**"Can I bring you a glass of milk?" he called to Jewel from the kitchen.**

**"No, you are all I want." She answered from the bedroom. As she entered the bedroom she reached to turn on the light, before her hand reached the switch she was hit in the face with a fist and fell backwards. She wanted to scream but no sound seems to come from her mouth, she was aware of two black men, one had hit her, the other was catching her as she fell. She never reached the carpet; the black man caught her in his arms and carried her to the bed. Now she was seeing a slideshow, the men, her father, her mother, a birthday party when she was ten, Tony, the horse her father had bought for her when they arrived in Puerto Rico, a Paso Fino, and then a white light, the light was a spot but it kept getting larger, mover intense, soon it blocked out all the slides, there were not more pictures, all she saw was the light and then it was out, blackness, Jewel was dead.**

**"Shut the damn door." Mesha instructed the other black man in a low whisper. Mesha was the one who had hit Jewel in the face, it was his blow that had killed her but he did not know she was died, but it didn't matter, Mesha had killed before.**

Mesha looked down at the beautiful woman on the bed, her nose was bloodied but she was still beautiful, nice figure, small, well proportioned. "I going fuck da bitch." He said to the other man as he ripped open the front of Jewels' blouse, withdrew a six inch switch blade from the back pocket of his jeans, flipped open the knife, inserted the blade between her breast bone and bra and pulled up, cutting her bra free and the two halves of the bra fell to each side exposing her small firms breasts. Mesha liked this; he was beginning to feel like a man. Jewel was wearing a Java Wrap tied around her waist as a skirt, there were many ways to tie a Java Wrap but tonight she was using the tie-died fabric as a skirt. Mesha cut the knot and with a pull upward removed the single piece of material that had formed the skirt. Mesha then grabbed at the bikini panties she was wearing and using the same knife cut them on each side, like removing pins form a baby diaper and the panties were free.

"The husband coming." The other man said as he pulled a gun from under his tee shirt that was stuffed in the front of his pants. Mesha spread Jewels limp legs and climbed on the bed.

"We going let him watch." Mesha said, "hol da gun and shoot him if I say so."

The door opened and Tony dropped the water he was carrying. Mesha was on the bed, kneeling over Jewel's naked body and he was unbuttoning his fly.

"You Son-of-a-Bitch." Was all that Tony said.

The accomplice stood on the far side of the bedroom holding the gun on Tony. "Come, watch da fun." He said with a smirk.

Tony was enraged, he was too angry to be afraid, he took a couple of steps towards Mesha on the bed and the accomplice said; "Stay dare or I shoot you."

Tony looked at the gun, all he saw was the end of the barrel, it looked big and it was pointed at him. Then he noticed the hand of the man holding the gun, his right hand had a stub little finger, an extra finger on his right hand, Tony could see the extra little finger sticking down from the man's hand that was gripping the handle of the gun. The stub finger seemed to be growing out of the first joint on the man's little finger. Then Tony looked again at Mesha, they were both big men, they wore their hair in dreadlocks and Mesha's two front teeth were gold. Mesha was kneeling on the bed, between Jewel's legs and Tony saw his naked wife, he did not realize she was dead.

"How I going show you how to fuck!" Mesha said as he unbuttoned the top button of his tight jeans and pushed them down, he was wearing no underwear.

Tony forgot about the gun, he sprang towards Mesha knocking him off the bed and onto the floor, Tony on top of him.

"Shoot him, Shoot him." He was yelling to the other man.

A shot rang out and Tony felt the burning as the bullet hit him in the back, on his right side. The impact of the slug and a push from Mesha threw him off of Mesha and he fell on the carpet. Blood was pumping from the hole the bullet had had.

Mesha stood and pulled up his pants. "No pussy tonight." He said as he looked at Jewel. "I tink we bess kill her." As he held out his hand for the gun and the accomplice handed him the gun. Mesha took the gun and pointed it at Jewel's neck, it was then he saw the gold chain she was wearing. He grabbed the chain and pulled, it broke free but in doing so something Mesha did not see on the chain came off and sailed across the room, landing on the carpet without a sound. As Mesha stuffed the gold chain into his jean pocket he fired one shot into Jewel's neck, the body lunged from the impact, not muscle contractions as she was already dead.

Mesha looked at Tony, there was a pool of blood on the carpet where he lay and Mesha knew he was dead. "Come, we bess go." He said as he opened the sliding glass door out onto the patio.

**They ran from the house, across the green grass and through the flower bed were Jewel had recently planted the hibiscus, climbed the little wall and started down the hill behind the house. Tony's neighbors had heard the shots and called the Virgin Islands Police Department.**

**Tony awoke he did not know where he was. As he regained consciousness he realized he was in a hospital, he did not know where. As he opened his eyes the nurse sitting next to his bed stood. "Mr. Oduber, you are going to be alright, you were shot." She was saying. She placed her hand on Tony's forehead, it was a gesture of compassion, she already know his temperature as well as other vital signs, they were being monitored through all the wires and tubes that were connected to and inserted into Tony.**

**Tony tried to get his bearings, he could not think straight, the anesthetic still had not completely worn off and then like a shock wave it all came back. "My wife, how is she?" He asked the nurse.**

**"Don't you worry about her now." The nurse said, "It's you we have to get better." As she spoke she pushed the plunger on the syringe that was connected to one of the tubes going to Tony. The sedative entered the drip and was in Tony's veins and he was beginning to forget, couldn't think, he was tired, the nightmare he was having about two men was fading and he was asleep again.**

**Dr. Fernando, the Filipino doctor who had operated on Tony and saved his life insisted that he be kept under heavy sedation. When he began to regain consciousness he remembered the moment before he was shot and he went into a rage, it was best he remain sedated and let the wound heal, they could deal with his mental healing later, that healing would take much longer.**

Tony was sitting up in bed looking out of the window of his room on the second floor of the Charles Harwood Memorial Hospital. He looked across the low-cost housing project to the island's power plant, desalinization plant, the blue-green lagoon, the reef and then at the dark blue Caribbean sea. It had been twelve days since he had been shot. He knew Jewel was dead and that the two men had escaped and not been caught. He had given a description of the two men to the police. He remembered the man on top of his wife as tall, dark, had dreadlocks, a gold front tooth and his ear lobe was split. The other had a stubby sixth finger growing out of his little finger on his right hand. The police took notes but no arrests had been made, Tony knew there would be no arrest, this was the Virgin Islands! Tony's friends who came to visit told him they did not expect any arrest. "After all," they all said, "This is St. Croix."

Tony thought back to his first visit, when he interviewed for the job. It was something that Gumbs had said to him; "This place is too lawless." Gumbs was right. Gumbs had it right, Tony had been in St. Croix for three years, in that time he had read and heard about muggings, purse snatching, rape, and killings, but very few arrests. This was a lawless society. The crimes Tony remembered were all directed towards the tourist and non-islander, the people who were not; "born here," has they were so described by the locals.

As Tony lay in the hospital bed recouping, he decided on his future. He would leave St. Croix and return to Aruba. He did not want to return to work at Hess, he did not want to return to the house they lived in, he just wanted out. He asked Hector to have his letter of resignation typed, and for Hector to take care of packing a suitcase and getting rid of that which was left in the house, as soon as he was released from the hospital he would be on a plane and away from St. Croix.

When Hector came to take Tony to the airport he said before they left the hospital; "I have something for you, the police found it in the bedroom." He pressed the coral pendent Jewel had worn on the gold chain around her neck into Tony's hand.

**Tony looked at Hector; “Do you know why I am leaving St. Croix and my job at Hess?” tears beginning to well up in his eyes.**

**“I think that under the circumstances I would do the same.” Hector said.**

**“I am leaving because if I don’t I know I will kill the next Cruzan I see who looks like a Rastafarian.” Tony said as he burst into tears.**

**Tony had been back in Aruba for a month, it felt good to be home, he felt safe and protected. Jews and St. Croix were still foremost in his mind, he wished he could forget and put the past behind him and sitting pool-side at the Aruba Palm Beach Hotel all he could think about was the black man over Jewel. He still had nightmares. His anger towards the two burglary and killers was festering inside him. Why were they not caught? What could he do? Where was American justice? His wife was dead, killed in cold blood in their own home and no one, from the Attorney Generals Office of the Virgin Islands seemed to care.**

## **COIN THREE**

**“So, there must be one more coin.” Junie spoke into the telephone.**

**“Yes, the last coin I was belonged to Mr. Oduber who lives here in Aruba.”**

**“And the markings on that coin, do you remember what they were?” Junie asked.**

**“Yes, it was the smallest of the three Quiripa, but had the most elaborate symbol.”**

**“An what was that symbol?” Junie asked.**

**“In my notes I described it as an asterisks, three intersecting lines and each line had a small dot or circle at the end of each line.”**

**“Interesting, and you say it was the smallest of the coins?”**

**“Yes, I recorded the size as equal to that of the American dime, ten cent piece.” Mr. Odor told Junie. Mr. Odor went on; “Now, Mr. Crews, let me ask you a couple of questions.” “Why are you so interested in these Quiripa with the markings on them”**

**“Well Mr. Odor, it is because of a story I heard, a story of pirates treasure buried in Aruba and the key to finding the treasure were Quiripa that had symbols scratched on them, they were said to be the key to finding the treasure.”**

**“Sound like a myth to me.” Mr. Odor said; “like you are looking for a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.”**

**“Well, that may be so we will just have to see, I now have three coins, I just have to find the other two.” Junie said to Mr. Odor.**

**“Good luck Mr. Crews, you are going to need it.” Mr. Odor said with a laugh as he hung up the phone.**

## **THE THIRD COIN**

**Tony wanted revenge. He was so enthralled in his bitterness he had not noticed the waiter who walked up to him and spoke.**

**“Excuse me, Mr. Oduber, there is a phone call for you at the pool bar.” The waiter told him.**

**“Thank you.” Tony said as he came away from his thoughts and back to the present. The phone was off he hook, the handset lay on the bar and Tony picked it up and spoke; “This is Tony Oduber.”**

**“Tony, this is Rudy Hendricks.” The voice at the other end of the phone said. Rudy was the President of the Aruba Bank. He went on; “I am at the bank, they have just taken your father to the hospital in an ambulance, I think he has suffered a heart attack.”**

**Tony could not believe what he was hearing. His father was getting on in age but he was a very active man, only this morning he had gone to the Eagle Club for his game of double. He played tennis three times a week and his father enjoyed the game.**

**“I am on my way to the hospital.” Tony answered. As he hung up the phone he added; “Thank you for calling.” But Rudy did not hear, the phone was already hung up.**

**Tony arrived at the Dr. Horacio E Oduber Hospital within minutes of his father’s arrival in the ambulance. As he ran into the emergency entrance he was his father on a gurney, being wheeled into the cardiac arrest unit.**

**The young doctor on duty recognized Tony. He gestured for him to come up next to his father, who was trying to speak. “Atlanta,” his father said as Tony leaned over his father to better hear what he was saying. The doctor and nurses were removing his shirt and tie to enable them to attach wires to his arms and chest. “Atlanta.” His father said again in a voice that was barely audible. “You must go to the safe deposit box in Atlanta.” Tony knew of his father’s safe deposit boxes at the First American Bank in Atlanta, Georgia. He and his father had been there together many times and Tony’s name was on the card for being able to go into the boxes. He remembered signing the card when he was only 18 years old on one of the many trips he and his father had made to Atlanta however he had no idea what was inside the safe deposit boxes. His father had always instructed him to wait in the bank lobby while he went to the safe deposit vault deep below the banks lobby.**

**Tony’s father was gasping for breath, a nurse started to place a plastic mask over his face and before she could get the mask on his face he said; “Warirure, remember Warirure.”**

**Then the nurse covered his nose and face with the mask. “It would be better if you left him with us.” The young doctor said to Tony. “We have a lot to do and you can not be of much help; why don’t you wait outside in the waiting room for me, I will let you know how he is doing.”**

**Tony could see his father was having trouble breathing and now with the mask talk was impossible. There was no color in his face and with each breath he took the next seemed more difficult.**

**“I will be outside.” Tony said to the doctor as he squeezed his father’s hand and then left the room.**

**“Warirure.” Tony repeated the word to himself as he walked into the waiting room. What does he mean? He thought to himself as he sat down. Warirure was a section on the north coast of Aruba. Why would his father tell him to remember Warirure? Tony could not even remember going there, he was sure he had driven near to the area on trips to Bushirbana, the old gold smelter, or Boca Mahos, the cliffs on the north side where the government once dumped all the garbage and the sharks came to eat, but Warirure, Tony wasn’t even sure there was a road to the area. Tony’s mind flashed back to his youth. He remembered fishing for sharks at Boca Mahos which had been the island’s garbage dump. Sharks were numerous there, gorging themselves on the island’s leftovers. “Better the sharks eat the island’s garbage than they eat the islanders.” He had thought at the time. He wondered where the sharks fed now that the garbage was not longer dumped into the sea at Boca Mahos. Again he thought of his father’s words; “Remember Warirure,” but why Warirure. Why remember a place he could not even remember going to.**

**Tony knew as he sat in the waiting room that his father was dying. The rage he felt over Jewel’s death was returning and it was being compounded by the fact that now his father lay in the cardiac unit because of a heart attack, he was lying on his deathbed. “Why is this happening to me?” Was all he could think about.**

**The young doctor appeared within twenty minutes. “I’m sorry Mr. Oduber, there was nothing we could do, I am afraid he is gone.” Tony knew before the doctor spoke the words, inside he wanted to scream, not because his father was dead but because he wanted to scream at the world, a world that was taking away his loved ones. To the young doctor he said; “Thank you, I know you and the nurses did all you could for him, I am so thankful.”**

**As Tony left the hospital the full impact of his father's death began to sink in, his mother still did not know, she thought her husband was at the bank at a Board meeting. The first think he must do was go home and a tell his mother. Then the funeral arrangements would have to be made, family and friends had to be contacted, there was going to be a lot to do in the next week, there was no time for grief or anger, there were too many things that Tony had to do.**

**The funeral was Saturday afternoon and it was a very large funeral, people from Aruba as well as many off islanders attended, cablegrams and flowers arrived from all over the world offering the family condolences, some of the mans on the cards and flowers Tony recognized as prominent business leaders, 'other names Tony had nerve hear or see.**

**Sunday morning Tony and his mother had breakfast together and it was then that she insisted that Tony go to his father's study and look at the computer records. See seemed to be taking her husbands death in stride, better than Tony had expected and she was insistent that he begin to dwell into his father's affairs as soon as possible.**

**Tony sat at his father's desk and pushed the button that turned on his computer and as the computer began to come to lice he opened each desk draw, pens, staples, paperclips, file folders and all very neat, as he looked in the draws the screen asked in white letter on a blue background: "PLEASE ENTER PASSWORD". A red box with the white blinking curser waited for the password. Tony had no idea what the password was. He and has father had never discussed the computer. As a matter of fact he and his father had never really discussed much about his father's business, he had been the President of the Bank, retired and remained as the Chairman of the Board of the Bank and attended meeting only once in a while. When ever his father tried to bring up a conversation about the bank or his business Tony had turned a deaf ear and changed the subject. Tony was an engineer and finance and matters of money mattered little to him as long as he had enough money to live a comfortable live and his work as an engineer had afforded him a good living. Now he**

wished he had listened to his father. He began to type in letters and numbers, first name, date of birth, his name, his name spelled backward with his date of birth in numbers but each time he hit enter the screen blinked "INVALID PASSWORD, ACCESS DENIED." For half an hour Tony typed combination of words and numbers into his father computer and nothing worked. As he sat typing he thought of his father's dying words to him; "Remember Warirure." Tony typed WORIRURI, the screen blinked and a menu appeared. Tony looked at the menu selection and placed the flashing curser on SAFT-DEPOSIT BOXES and pushed the enter key. The screen read: First American Bank, 3190 Peachtree Street Atlanta, Georgia 30189 (404) 539-2396 Boxes number 134, 135, 136 ,137 & 138. Keys in rend envelope in wall safe, Aruba. Note: 9/12/87 Bank sold, Mr. William (Bill) Stanford (American, North Carolina) replaced Mr. Ricardo Gomes (Cuban). Tony turned and looked at the wall behind the desk, on the wall hung a very large oil painting of an Aruban sunset. A Dutch artist had painted it for his father from a photograph taken form the Palm Beach Club. The swimming/diving raft that had been anchored off the club was in the photograph and the artist had included it in the painting. Tony remembered the day he had found the courage to swim to the raft without having his father at his side. Now the raft and club were gone and a large hotel stood in place of the club house. Tony missed the Palm Beach Club but it was the hotel that replaced the club from which he had gotten the phone call about his father. Tony had always known the wall safe was behind the painting but he did not know the combination.

Maybe his mother knew the combination.

Tony knocked on the door of his mother's room and entered. She was seated by the window looking out into the enclosed back courtyard through sliding glass doors that were open. As he opened the door she turned to look at him.

"Come in Tony." She said as she dried her eyes, they were red from crying. "We need to have a little talk."

**“I know.” Tony said to her as he walked towards her and sat in the chair normally used by his father. Tony looked at his mother, she was a very strong willed woman, but still, she had taken the news of her husband’s death better than Tony would have expected.**

**“Are you going over your father’s paper?” she asked as she looked at him.**

**“Yes.” Tony replied.**

**“Your father always had an interest in finance. I think you need to look into you father’s business and try and take an interest, he has done much but there is still much to do and many things that need to be looked after.” As she spoke she stood, walked to the night stand, opened the top draw of her jewelry box, took out a gold disk on a gold bracelet and walked back and handed it to Tony. Tony took the bracelet and looked at it, on the one side of the round gold charm were engraved the words, “FOR EVER” on the other side there was the letter O-V with arrow around the O-V, the arrow was pointed in a clockwise direction.**

**“That is the combination to the wall safe in your father’s office.” She said. She went on, “Substitute numbers for the letters in FOR EVER, the F would be a 6, and the O would be 15 and so on. On the other side you see O-V, with the arrow around it in a clockwise direction, that means to start at 15 on the combination dial on the safe, begin in a clockwise direction, go to 6, then back to 15 and so on. The –V means the letter V does not have a number, there are only 6 numbers on the safe combination.”**

**She dried her eyes and went on; “After you have been through the wall safe papers you will need to make a trip to Atlanta, Georgia, I suggest you plan to make that trip as soon as possible.”**

**“What am I looking for in Atlanta?” Tony asked.**

**“When you look in the safe you will understand, I do not know much of your father’s business but I do know it was to do with finance and investments and you will have to carry on the business that he started.” She looked at him again and said; “Now go and look in the safe.”**

**“Will you be alright?” He asked his mother.**

**“Yes, of course I will be alright, my worry is that what you find may overwhelm you and not interest you.” She looked hard at Tony, “Understand there is no one else to carry on the business, and it is up to you.”**

**Tony left his mother, carrying the bracelet and returned to his father’s office.**

**After he worked out the combination he took down the painting from the wall and opened the safe. It soon became clear to Tony that his father had holdings all over the world. Based on what he was reading these holdings were worth millions, and the income they generated was in excess of three million dollars a year. Tony’s father also had numerous safe deposit boxes located at different banks around the world. The computer revealed their location, the safe held the keys to the different boxes in the numerous locations. Also in the safe with the key to the box he found an inventory of the content of each box. According to the inventory sheets the boxes seemed to contain deeds, stock certificates, bonds, promissory notes from individuals and cash, large amounts of cash in different currencies. Depending on the country in which the bank was located the cash differed but there was US dollars, Canadian Dollars, Australian Dollars, Hong Kong Dollars, Deutsch Marks, English Pounds, Japanese Yen and gold coins from South Africa, China and Canada. His father’s records seemed to be complete and very precise. Each safe deposit box had the content listed as well as the amount of each currency and its value of the currency, in US Dollars, based on the rates quoted on the world money marked, the date of the last reckoning was two weeks ago. Further examination showed that his father adjusted the amounts each month at the beginning of each month. Tony sat back and thought about his father. He was like the king in the counting house, counting all his money, but his father was not a King, the family did not live the live that the inventory suggested they could live, his parents lived a life of upper middle class people and in although they were considered wealth in Aruba they were not what Tony would have thought rich. They lived a good**

life, but if the inventory was correct they were wealthy, far wealthier than the family life style would suggest. The content of the safe deposit boxes in Atlanta fascinated Tony; apart from the money and gold coins there were three pages of promissory notes from people in almost every one of the Caribbean Islands. There was a page and a half of mortgages on hotels and resorts as wells as breweries, sugar mills, and manufacturing plants on all the larger islands. As Tony studies the list he noticed the box content of box 138, it was all jewelry, gold necklaces, rings, pins, and each with a description, weight, cost and estimated market value based on the world gold and diamond market.

As Tony read down the list he was struck by the last item: "One Quiripa, Indian coin made from shell, no value other than to collectors, never appraised." As Tony read the last item he thought of Jewel, her Indian coin made from shell and her story about the gold. Tony still had the coin from Jewel, now he wanted to go to Atlanta and look in the safe deposit boxes. The trip to Atlanta was uneventful.

Tony checked into the hotel and was at the bank at 9:00 a.m. where he met Mr. Stanford the President of the bank. After the formalities of the introduction Tony was shown to the safe deposit boxes vault where he and the bank employee unlocked each box. The bank employee had a cart and each box was placed on a cart and then Tony was shown into a private room where he was left with his boxes to examine. It really was not necessary to look in each of the boxes; Tony soon found that the inventory sheets from the wall safe in Aruba were accurate and exact. As Tony looked at the cash and jewels in the boxes and the deeds and notes he could not believe what he was seeing. It was the unfolding of an entire part of his father's life that he did not know existed, he had been completely unaware of the wealth his father controlled and now he was not sure he completely understood. In box 138 he found the Quiripa, it was in a small ring box from Spitzer and Fuhrmann, the jewelers who had stores in Aruba, and in the slot intended to hold a ring was the Quiripa. Folded and placed in the top of the ring box was a piece of

paper that Tony removed, unfolded and began to read. Aruba N.W.I. October 4, 1938 This Quiripa or button money was left to me by my father. He told me it was one of a set of five coins that could be used to locate a horde of gold that was hidden on the island by Indians many hundreds of years ago. The gold was said to be placed in a cave on the island. With the five coins the location of the cavern in the cave that held the gold could be found. My father said he had searched the caves of Aruba and never found any gold. I too have explored the caves of Aruba and never found any sign of any gold and feel the story may be a myth. I leave this coin to my son should the other four be found. Johanus G. Oduber.

Tony read the letter his father had written before Tony was born, he looked at the coin and thought of Jewel, he thought the story she had told him on the beach in St. Croix, the coin she wore around her neck on a gold chain, the coin he now had and wore around his neck on a gold chain. Now he had two of the coins, maybe it was not a myth, maybe the story was true and there was a cave of gold in Aruba. Tony thought to himself; "Now I have two of the coins, where are the other three?"

## COIN FOUR

Bostwick, Georgia is a small town sixty miles east of Atlanta, in what once was the cotton growing region of Georgia. Fred Carter was born there in 1939, and lived there until 1957.

At eighteen he enlisted in the United States Army and after six weeks of basic training and four months of field artillery school the Army sent Private Carter to Camp Blanding in Florida, there they gave him a tire gauge and a portable compressed air tank and assigned him to field maintenance.

His sergeant allocated him to a forty-acre section of a three hundred acre field which was covered with Howitzers. The Howitzers were all parked in rows with their barrels pointing south, his orders were to check tire pressure on each of the Howitzers in his forty acre section and keep the tires inflated to 75 pounds of pressure per square inch as shown on the tire gauge.

For the next two years Fred walked up and down the straight rows of Howitzers and checked tire pressure. Sometimes he would find a low tire and use the compressed air tank to bring it up to the required 75 psi. Some days he let air out of a few tires; this gave him something to do on his next round the following day. Aside from learning how to keep tires inflated Fred learned how to play Craps in the Army. This he learned in the barracks at night after a day of checking tires. Fred had been raised a Baptist, gambling was one of the sins the preacher spoke against on Sunday mornings back in Bostwick. Fred remembered his first night in boot camp. He saw other recruits playing Craps in the barracks floor and knew it was a sin. Young men throwing dice only to lose or win the money that was piled up on the floor. At first he avoided the man who played Craps, but after a time of endless rows of Howitzers and their tires with seventy-five pounds of air pressure were beginning to bore him. He tried reading, but reading did not come easy to Fred. He could hear the men in the hall calling out "seven come eleven", "Snake Eyes" and he heard the dice hitting the wall. For a lack of anything else to do Fred began watching the men play craps. The first night he watched he half expected not to awake the next morning because of the sin he had committed. He did however awake the next morning, God had not stuck him dead for watching the game. As he continued to watch the nightly games he began to wonder if maybe the preacher was wrong, maybe gambling was not that much of a sin. Fred watched this for over a month and then one evening he decided to try his luck. He took out his twenty dollars and got into the game.

**His first game of craps and he won, and he kept on winning. He could not place a bad bet and by 1:00 am that morning he had won over one hundred dollars.**

**What a game. He kept saying that to him self, over and over again as the rush, the thrill the high of winning was with him. It was the feeling of power, it was not the money, it was beating the others, and the money was only used to keep score.**

**The next day the thrill of the game was consuming Fred. He could not wait to get off duty and back into the crap game.**

**When he reached the barracks the game was already started. He forgot about dinner, playing was more important to him that eating. On his first throw of the dice he lost, and he kept on loosing but win or loose he was loving it, the feeling was the same, he was getting the same rush, the feeling of power even when he lost.**

**For the rest of his tour of duty Fred checked tire pressure by day and played craps all night long. Soon he learned to play poker and found he loved that game as much.**

**When his tour of duty was up he thought about reenlisting, only because he wanted to gamble and the Army allowed him to gamble. But then he had second thoughts, the tires all day long and other than the gambling he did not like Army life. He decided he would get out of the Army and go out West, he would go to Las Vegas.**

**When Fred reached Las Vegas it was not much of a town, it was really not much larger than the town where he grew up in Georgia, but there was gambling. There were only two hotels with large lobbies that were casinos but other than that there was not much in Las Vegas.**

**Within a week Fred was broke. He was more than broke, he owed the casino seven hundred dollars. He considered leaving town. As he sat in his hotel room trying to figure out what to do there was a knock at the hotel room door.**

**"Yes, who is it?" Fred called out as the knock persisted.**

**"We're with the casino, we would like to talk to you." came the reply from beyond the closed door.**

**Fred had no choice, he opened the door.**

**When he did two large, well dressed man pushed their way into his room, closed the door behind them and locked it.**

**"You have run up a pretty big bill at the tables." one of the men said.**

**"What sort of arrangements would you like to make to settle the debt?" the other asked before Fred could answer.**

**"I'm flat broke." Fred told the two men. "I need time to find a job, then I can square up with the casino."**

**"How about that ring on your finger?" the first man who spoke asked.**

**The diamond ring reminded Fred of a poker game at Camp Blanding. The game when he won the ring from a master sergeant, it was the same game he had won the coin from the young recruit from the Dominican Republic. The ring had covered the sergeant's seventy dollar loss. The coin had not covered the eight dollar loss suffered by the Dominican. Fred had accepted the ring and the coin in settlement.**

**The following week the man from the Dominican Republic had tried to purchase the coin back from Fred but Fred had refused to sell it back to him. The coin had a hole in it and Fred had put it on the gold chain he wore around his neck. After that Fred's luck seemed to change, now he wanted the coin as a good luck charm.**

**"That button coin has been in my family for over four hundred years." The young recruit had told Fred but Fred would not budge, he did not want the eighty dollars, and his new luck was worth more than eighty dollars.**

"That button coin has been in my family for over four hundred years." The young recruit had told Fred but Fred would not budge, he did not want the eighty dollars, and his new luck was worth more than eighty dollars.

When Fred got out of the Army he had put the coin in a box and forgot about it. The ring was different, a couple of times at Camp Blanding Fred had hocked the ring to pay his gambling debts. The pawn shop in town had always given Fred two hundred for the ring and it had gotten him out of trouble numerous times.

"How about the ring?" The man repeated the question. The question brought Fred back to the present.

"Yes," Fred said, "I could hock the ring tomorrow and pay off some of the debt."

"Good," the man said, "That would make the boss very happy."

"Let me have a look at the ring." the man said.

Fred held out his hand to let the man look at the ring.

The man took Fred's hand and held the finger as if he were examining the ring. Then without warning he bet Fred's finger back and there was a snap, the man had broken Fred's finger.

Fred let out a cry of pain and the man released Fred's hand.

"It will be your arm next if we don't get two hundred dollars by tomorrow." the second man said.

"You understand?" the first man asked Fred.

Before Fred could reply they turned, unlocked the room door and left the room.

Fred looked at his finger. The pain was excruciating. He went into the bathroom and ran cold water on his finger. Maybe the cold water would help the pain but it didn't. With great pain he managed to get the ring off of his finger before it began to swell.

Sleep that night was impossible. The pain in his finger coupled with the thought of the two men returning and the money still owed the casino kept him awake all night long.

By morning the finger and his hand were swollen to three times their normal size. The pain was worse but somehow he got up from the bed, managed to get dressed, and wrapped his hand in a cool wet towel and with the ring in his pants pocket he set out to find a pawn shop.

The pawn shop owner looked at Fred's towel-wrapped hand and shook his head. "You must have run up a bill at the casino." was all he said to Fred.

"Sure did." Fred replied. "They play rough when it comes to collecting money."

"The have to." The pawn shop owner answered. "Too many skip town." Then the shop owner turned serious, "What you got to hock?" he asked Fred.

"Got this diamond." Fred produced the ring from his pants pocket. With great care the pawn shop owner examined the diamond. Then he took out his loupe, examined the ring under the loupe and said; "I can give you one hundred fifty dollars for the ring."

"I need two hundred today or they are coming for my arm." Fred said.

"Most I can give you is one fifty for the ring, what else you got to hock?" the shop owner asked.

"I have a '50 Ford but if I get rid of the car I have no way out of town."

"So, you don't pay the two hundred dollars and you get a broken arm. Those boys mean business, better to sell the car, pay off what you owe and keep the arm in one piece. I got a friend who will give you top dollar for the car."

The pawn shop owner was making cense. "OK, give me the one fifty for the ring and the address of the guy who will by the car." Fred said.

In his mind Fred was thinking he would take the one fifty, get in the car and head back to Georgia.

**"Let me give you a bit of friendly advice." the owner spoke as he went to his safe to get the money for Fred. "Those guys who broke your finger are watching you. If you get in your car and head out of town you will not get twenty miles into the desert before they have you pulled over and you will be lucky if all they break is your arm."**

**The pawn shop owner returned with the money and went on; "Hell son, make things easy on yourself." He handed Fred the one hundred and fifty dollars and put the ring behind the counter. Then he wrote on a scrap of paper and handed it to Fred. "Go see this guy, sell your car and save your arm and even maybe your neck."**

**Why do I like to gamble? How could I have gotten myself into this mess? These were the questions Fred was asking himself as he walked back to the hotel after selling his car. Things had not worked out as he thought they would in Vegas. Instead of him taking Vegas as he had planned, Vegas had taken him.**

**The healing process on his finger took time and it gave Fred time to think about his gambling. He came to the conclusion it was a sickness and only he could overcome it. He had a plan. He would get a job in a casino. That way he could watch others loose and win money but he would still get the thrill, just by watching others. He would get his kicks by watching gamblers, not being a gambler.**

**Fred spent the next thirty-four years in Las Vegas working for the same casino. He started on the floor making change for the slots. With time he gained the confidence of the casino bosses and soon he was a pit boss. The he started to go on special assignments, collecting gambling debt. Sometimes he had to break a finger and he remembered how he had learned his lesson, he told him self that every finger the broke could be the beginning of the man's reform.**

**During the years Fred worked with the casino he never placed a bet. Fred was upstairs watching the baccarat table through the one way glass, making sure no one was cheating.**

**A messenger came up to him and said; "There is a phone call for you from New York."**

**Fred had received calls from New York before. He knew it would mean a trip, a trip to collect from someone who had skipped town. Fred left the window and walked to the office where he could talk on the phone in private.**

**"Hay, Freddie," It was Joe Genovese, Fred recognized the voice and only Joe called him Freddie. "We need you to get the next flight to New York. The big man wants to talk to you."**

**Fred knew this was an order, it was not a request.**

**"Sure Joe." Fred said; "I'll be on the red-eye and be at JFK in the morning."**

**"Good Freddie." Joe answered, "I'll have one of the boys meet you in front of the terminal. He will be driving a red Caddie convertible, his name is Mike."**

**In the past when there was a bill to be collected Joe called and gave Fred the address of the deadbeat. Fred would take one the other men from the casino and they would go and collect the money. Fred had never been told to go to New York to meet the big guy. Fred was not even sure who the big guy was although there were a lot of names that floated around as to who the big guy really was.**

**The bosses at the casino treated Fred well, they paid him well but they also expected his complete dedication to the casino. Joe had taken Freddie under his wing about fifteen years ago when they both worked at the casino. Fred had gone with Joe on his first collection trip and after going on about ten trips with Joe he suggested Fred take one of the other men from the casino and go on a collection on his own.**

**Soon after that Joe moved to New York City but every time there was a collection it was Joe who called Fred.**

Now Fred was instructed to go to New York, no name of a dead beat, no address, just catch a flight to New York to meet the big guy. It worried Fred a little but he also trusted Joe, still he remembered the nights his finger had been broken, had he done something wrong, why did they want him in New York?

Fred stood in the big man's office, it was plush, expensive and the view from the office overlooked Central Park.

"We want you to be a Maytag Man." the boss said from behind the large desk. There were seven men in the office the boss behind the desk, Joe, Fred and four others sitting in chairs in front of the desk. All eyes were on Fred who looked at the boss, then at Joe and then each of the other four men.

"What the hell is a Maytag Man?" It was the only think he could think to say and he was not addressing any one man, he was just asking the question for all to hear.

"It is simple and can be a lot of fun." It was Joe who spoke up to answer the question. "And unlike the real Maytag Repair Man you don't get lonely."

All the men in the office laughed, including the boss and Fred felt uneasy.

Joe continued; "In simple terms you are going to laundry some money for us by gambling." You should be able to laundry about one hundred thousand a week and all you have to do is gamble, but make sure you loose."

"But I don't play the table." Fred said.

He knew that Joe knew about his losses when he first went to Las Vegas, he knew about his finger and that after the finger was broken he never went to a table or machine to place a bet.

"We know you don't gamble and that's why you will make a good Maytag Man." You know how to gamble and when you did gamble you lost, that is the first requirement for being a good Maytag Man." All the men in the room laughed again but Fred still did not understand.

**"We have a casino in Aruba, the little island off the coast of Venezuela, we also have one in Puerto Rico, St. Martine and Freeport, Bahamas. We are going to give you one hundred thousand dollars a week in cash to take down to these islands and lose the money in our casinos." Joe went on. "That way we take the dirty money and turn it into legal winnings. It's washed clean by our own Maytag Man, and you should have fun doing it so I know you will not get lonely."**

**Joe finished speaking, the boss said; "Fred you have been with us for thirty-four years; we trust you and a fellow like you should enjoy this type of work. It's your reward for thirty-four years of faithful service to the family."**

**Fred sat in his hotel room in New York City, he did not know quite what to think. He had a large briefcase with one hundred thousand dollars in cash, he would be getting on an American Airlines flight tomorrow bound for Aruba. There he would lose the cash over a week's time. Then back to New York for another briefcase of cash and then off to San Juan, or maybe Freeport or St. Martine. It sounded simple and who knows, it may even be fun. Fred thought about it and decided it was good, he needed a change.**

**As Fred arrived in each island he began to gain a reputation as a big spender. The people in the casinos did not know that they and Fred both worked for the same company, to them was a big spender and a very big loser.**

**In each island Fred had use of a time share apartment owned by the family. His arrivals in Aruba or any of the other islands became routine.**

**Fred always arrived in Aruba on Saturday afternoon. Some times he flew direct from New York to Aruba, sometimes he went via Miami and sometimes he connected with an American flight out of San Juan. Upon clearing Aruba immigration we went directly to a pay phone in the baggage claim area and phoned Chez Mathilde for a 10:00 pm dinner reservation.**

He rented a car from Avis at the airport, drove to Pueblo Supermarket and stocked up on a weeks worth of food and then went to the time share he always used.

After settling into his time share unit he had a swim in the pool, a hot shower, a light snack for the groceries he had purchased and then to bed for a couple of hours sleep. He wanted to be rested when he arrived at the casino after a good meal at Chez Mathilde. He was up by 9:30 pm, shaved, and dressed in summer slacks, a white cotton shirt with a cravat, Gucci loafers and a light summer sport jacket. He then drove to Chez Mathilde and had a meal of whatever fish or lobster they had caught that day.

After a delightful dinner he drove to the casino to start work. He would stay in the casino until around 4:30 am, loosing the entire evening, and invariably meeting a single woman at the table who was vacationing in Aruba. Woman seemed to gravitate to Fred; he was good looking, charming, and from all outward appearances he was very wealthy.

After a night of heavy loosing at the tables he would ask his new found friend if she would like to go for an early morning swim. He would tell her about the Baby Beach on the east end of the island and they always said yes.

After picking up his companion's bathing suit at her hotel, he always carried his in the car they would drive to the old Lago Concession, go through the old abandoned gate and swim at Baby Beach and watch the sun come up.

Fred enjoyed swimming at Baby Beach. He was not a good swimmer and the warm shallow water appealed to him. He enjoyed bobbing in the water and always having the security of the sand under his feet. The sunrise, the pink sand, the warm water and seclusion was a good way to enter into a weeklong romance with a new companion. Fred had been making the rounds of the islands casinos for a year now, his routine was down pat. Each week the casino was the same but the players and his lovers were always different.

**Fred Carter loved his new job.**

## **THE BAJAN**

### **Chapter IV**

**Jim Brathwate was born in Speightown, Barbados in 1915. Jim was one of eleven children born to Mr. and Mrs. Brathwate. Jim's father, Hewett, was a cane cutter. His mother, Rona, also worked the cane fields during the harvest. She headed the cane from the valleys, where it was impossible to get the carts to haul the cane, up the steep hills to the waiting carts that would take the cane to the factory to be crushed.**

**His mother and father worked only during the cane harvest, the rest of the year his mother planted and tended the family garden plot with vegetables grown to feed the family. She also looked after the children while Jim's father fished. The family existed on flying fish his father caught fishing at night and the breadfruit, yams, eggplant, okra and tomatoes grown in the family garden. Rona Brathwate cooked on an open fire and made her own bread, baking it in a clay oven over a wood fire. The entire family lived in a small three room wood frame house on the plantation where the Brathwate's worked during the harvest.**

**Jim was a big boy at fourteen, he was also very strong which could be attributed to him starting work in the cane fields when he was very young. He started by helping in the fields by splitting the leaves of the sugar cane and braiding the leaves to make the lashing which the woman used to tie the bundles of cane they would carry out of the valleys on their heads.**

**Barbados is a small island and the landowners made use of as much of the land as possible, including planting the sugar cane on the sides of the hills and in the valleys that are only accessible by foot. In these remote places of fertile land the cane can only be removed on the heads of the women, thus the term "heading cane". It was hard work and always done by the woman, the men cut, cleaned, the leaves from the cane stalk and stacked the stalks ready for heading or loading directly on the carts.**

**As Jim grew older and stronger he was given a "bill", a large knife like a machete, but with a sharpened hook on the end which was used to cut the leaves from the stalks of the newly cut sugar cane. As the men cut the cane they would usually remove the leaves before dropping the stalk in the piles awaiting pickup by the carts. In Hewett's case he let his young sons remove the leaves and stack the cleaned stalks. This way he could cut more cane and thus make more money. The young girls of the family would help stack the cleaned stalks until they were strong enough to head cane from the valleys. Cane that was cut and headed was paid a higher price than cane that was cut in the flat fields and loaded directly on the carts.**

**This was Jim's life until 1929, when at the age of fourteen, he left Barbados on a schooner bound for Aruba; he had heard there was a refinery being built on the island of Aruba and the American company were paying above average wages to people would could work and speak English.**

**The trip to Aruba as a deck passenger on the small island schooner cost Jim three pounds. This was more money than Jim had and the family had paid most of the passage with the understanding that when Jim got a job he would send money home.**

There were twelve young men making the trip. The three pounds covered the passage, food was not included in the fare although the schooner did provide the passengers with water to drink. Jim's mother had packed dry flying fish, dates and bread for him to eat on the trip. He also carried stalks of sugar cane which he could chew and the juices from the hard sugar cane stalks was sweet and dulled the taste of the dry flying fish. Jim had food for a week, the captain had told him the trip would take five days.

They left the Careenage in Bridgetown early in the morning. The schooner was loaded with breadfruit, sugar cane and plantains which the captain would sell at the dockside market in Aruba. The trip did take five days, the weather was beautiful and the trade winds never shifted direction. As they sailed west through the islands that make up the Grenadines and into the Caribbean the captain, who had made the trip numerous times depended more on instinct for navigation than he did on the one chart he carried on board the schooner. On the morning of the fifth day the island of Aruba was in sight and by early afternoon the schooner was moored at the wharf in Oranjestad.

Jim and the rest of the passengers gathered their meager belongings, said good-bye to the captain and crew and left the boat. There were no immigration checks.

All the passengers on the schooner were young men and all were going to Aruba to look for work. They asked directions to the new refinery and were told to walk due east along the coral road that followed the island coast. They all began the long hot walk that would take them to a new life.

As they neared the site of the new refinery they could see smokestacks and towers ahead of them. It looked like a very large sugar cane factory to them. Around the new refinery were the tin shacks that housed the West Indians who had come before them. The road they were following led them past concrete buildings which housed shops and bars, then came the shacks, built of scraps of wood and five gallon lard cans that had been cut and flattened to make siding for the house. Some of the houses were covered with the remains of old metal signs that announced; Esso, Smoke Chesterfield, or Drink Heinekens. Anything that could be nailed to the side of the house to keep out the wind, dust and on not to frequent occasions, rain was used.

As they entered the shanty town of San Nicholas they passed a tin and sign covered house with a West Indian woman standing in the doorway.

"Where does you come from?" she asked as the men approached.

"We does be Bajan." Jim answered.

"You going need a place to sleep." She was making a statement not asking a question. She went on; "I does rent rooms, two guilders each week, six ah you in da room."

"We only got English money." Jim stated, he seemed to have become the spokesman for the group.

"No problem man." The woman said. "You pay me at da end of da week." Then she asked; "You going work for da Lago?"

"If we can get jobs." Jim told the woman who had not left the doorway of the house and the group of twelve men stood outside looking at her.

"Day got more work dan Aruba got people." She said. "Anyone who want work can work at Lago."

The twelve Bajans were tired, they needed a place to sleep, and the lady seemed nice so without further discussion she had twelve borders for her two small rooms built on the back of the three room house.

The following morning Jim was at the Lago gate by six am, he was signed up and on his way to work by seven. A truck took him to a large pit where a steam shovel was removing white dusty dirt from an open pit and loading dump truck to haul away the white dirt. A white man was standing by the steam shovel when the truck with the new employees pulled into the pit. He was dressed all in khaki, his shirt had long sleeves and he wore the shirt buttoned at the neck. He was wearing a pith helmet and smoking a pipe. The top pocket of his shirt was filled with pencils, pens, and would look like a small ruler to Jim. Next to the white man, laying on the track of the steam shovel was a clip board, the papers on the clip board were held in place by a large metal clip at the top of the board and rubber bands at the bottom. Jim could see the ends of the paper flapping in the strong breeze that was coming across the open coral from the sea.

As the truck pulled up next to the steam shovel the driver called out; "Brathwate, this is where you get out."

To the white man standing next to the steam shovel the driver of the truck yelled; "Mr. Bill, here is a new man for you."

Hearing his name, Jim had jumped up, climbed over the other man in the back of the truck and jumped off the back. As soon as his feet hit the ground the truck pulled away and was up the hill out of the pit. Jim stood there, looking at the white man the driver had called: Mr. Bill.

Bill Kishman had requested a man to help direct trucks. The drivers of the dump trucks were taking too long to back up the trucks so the steam shovel could fill the truck and this was keeping the shovel operator waiting and slowing delivery of the much needed caliche that was being dug from the pit and used to fill the coral in areas where new storage tanks were being built.

The white man spoke first. "Come over here young fellow, what's your name?"

Jim had never in his life been spoken to by a white man and he had never spoken to a white man. He had seen white men, plantation owners and sugar mill foreman but he had never spoken to any of them. They were always on the back of a horse or standing around the sugar mill when Jim had gone in the carts to deliver the cut cane but speak to one of them, never.

Even in school Jim's teachers had been black, in the schools in Bridgetown there were white teachers from England but in Speightstown the school was small and the two teachers were black.

Jim was taken back. He removed the straw hat he was wearing, clutched it to his chest with both hands, bowed his head and slowly approached the white man. As he came closer he said, almost in a whisper; "Jim Brathwate, Mister." Jim did not look at the white man.

"Well Jim, I am Bill Kishman." Bill extended his hand and Jim reluctantly released the grip he had on his straw hat and meekly shook the white mans hand. "The driver called you Brathwate, but I guess you go by the name of Jim."

"Yes Mister." Jim replied.

"Well Jim, can you read and write?" Bill asked.

"Yes." Jim replied, "I been to school for eight years in Barbados."

Actually Jim was an excellent reader. He loved to read and devoured any book, regardless of the subject, that he could get his hands on.

"Good" Bill said; "Your job will be two fold." "First, I want you to take this clip board and mark down the truck's number every time it gets filled with caliche." Bill reached over and picked up the clip board. A pencil was tied to the metal clip with a string and the pencil was clipped under the metal clip. Bill handed the clip board to Jim who took it with his free hand, the other was still clutching his straw hat.

"I also want you to direct the trucks when they back up to get loaded." "The faster they get into position and get loaded the more trips they can make." "Do you have any questions?"

"No, Mister" Jim replied.

"Good, let's get to work then. Here comes the first truck now."

Jim turned to see a large dump truck coming down the same road into the pit as the truck had used that brought him to his new job.

Jim had watched the man move and position the cane carts at the sugar factory so they could be unloaded without undue loss of time. "This could not be much different than getting the cane carts in to position." Jim thought to himself as the first truck approached. Jim laid down the clip board and placed his straw hat on his head. Then he surveyed the area within which the trucks had to maneuver. Then he looked at the location of the shovel, the truck would have to turn, stop and then backup to be in position for the shovel to load them. There was not enough room to maneuver the trucks in a circle.

As the truck drove up, Jim waved his arms in the direction he wanted the driver to turn and the driver responded. The driver stopped the truck at Jim's command and then Jim motioned for the driver to back the truck up.

Bill stood and watched the process, when the truck had backed so its box would be under the scoop of the steam shovel Jim put up both hands and the truck stopped. This was how they did it at the sugar mills and it seemed to be working here. Jim waved at the shovel operator who began to load the truck. Jim walked over, picked up the clipboard and wrote the truck number on the sheet.

Bill watched and he was impressed with the young man. Bill made a mental note to keep an eye on Jim, he was smart and would go a long way.

## THE HIGHLANDER

## Chapter V

Sergeant Iain McDonald sat in the shade of the Divi-Divi tree. He was singing; "Oh, you take the high road and I'll take the low road." He sang the song softly, to himself and as he sang he absently doodled in the sand with a stick.

It was hot and Iain was tired. "It is always hot in Aruba, even in the shade with the trade winds blowing." he thought to himself, Iain was missing Scotland, its damp cold weather and green hills.

He and his man had marched all morning, they were still caked with dust from the new parade grounds. Now there were standing look-out duty. The Battalion, under the command of Lt. Colonel C.M. Barber, D.S.O had issued standing orders; There was to be no idle time, the men were to be kept busy at all times. Barber felt that an idle soldier was a soldier who would get in trouble and he wanted no trouble in Aruba.

Iain stopped singing and thinking about Scotland, his thoughts returned to the matter at hand, look-out duty. "All along the south and west coast of this God forsaken island little groups of Scots Highlanders sat, looking out to sea and waiting for the Germans to arrive. In Europe there would be no trouble finding Germans and that was where Iain felt he should be, not here in Aruba.

Out loud he said; "Good God!"

A couple of the men turned to see who their Sergeant was talking to. "It's OK," he said, "Just doing a little thinking out loud."

Now he was embarrassed. To himself he thought; Been on this bloody island for a couple of months and already I am beginning to talk to myself.

Iain lowered his head to look down where he had rubbed the sand

**with the stick. He had dug a small hole in the sand and then he noticed the white disk. Iain bent over and picked up the small round object he had dug up. It had something scratched on one side. Using his thumb, he rubbed the disk, removing dirt and sand and then he saw the symbol. It looked like four of the signs used for numbers, ####.**

**The number marks had been scratched on the surface of one side of the disk and a hole had been put into the center of the small disk. Iain turned the disk over and over in his hand, wondering what it was. Then he remembered he was on look-out duty, he stood, put the disk in his pocket and looked out to sea, no Germans although the day was clear and he could see to the horizon.**

**The bright sun hurt Iain's soft blue eyes, he shaded his eyes with his hand and looked out to sea again, still no Germans, nothing but sea and then sky.**

**It did not take long for Iain's mind to wonder again, this time he began to try and understand why he and his regiment were in Aruba. It was 1940, Great Britain was at war with Germany and he and his men were sitting on a sandy beach in the Caribbean.**

**Iain had joined the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in 1934. He enlisted in the Scottish Regiment not out of patriotism, he enlisted because he needed a job. Great Britain was in a depression and there was no work and there was not war so joining the Regiment meant marching and shinning boots so it did not look like hard work.**

**Iain did work hard in the Army and he made sergeant by 1939. Soon after that things began to change. The German Army marched into Poland and on September 3, 1939 Great Brittan declared war on German. Now Great Britain was at war with Hitler. The marching kilts were put away and they were replaced with**

**battle dress. Iain was no longer a marching soldier parading behind the bagpipes, he was a fighting soldier, one of his countries warriors.**

**With the declaration of war, the young men of Inverness rushed to volunteer. All these young men had to be trained. They had to be turned into soldiers in the shortest length of time possible. This became Sergeant Mc Donald's responsibility. Training the young volunteer suited Iain. He was a few years older than the young volunteers but physically he was able to keep up and in most cases out run, jump and fight harder than the young men he was training. He set the example. Iain had grown up in a coal mining town, the son of a coal miner. He had learned at a young age how to take care of himself. Now he was teaching the young men how to take care of themselves.**

**Iain was not a big man, but what he lacked in size he made up for in speed and agility. His flaming red hair, large bushy mustache and piercing blue eyes mixed with the no-nonsense attitude made him a natural leader. The young men under his charge respected him, he was tough but fair and the men realized his only interest was in making them good soldiers so they would stay alive.**

**After a year as a drill sergeant Iain began to loath the training. What he hated most was having to stay behind. He trained men, they were packed into trains and off they went to fight, leaving Iain behind to train more young men. Iain wanted to get into the fight, he wanted to go to France and fight the Germans.**

**The first group Iain trained were members of the 1st Camerons. After their training they were shipped off and reached France in 1939. They advanced through Belgium and on to the River Dyle, where they confronted the invading Germans. The 1st Camerons took a position on the Escaut River. Then on May 27, 1940 they were attacked by one hundred German tanks. The Germans lost twenty-one tanks in the battle, but in the end the 1st Camerons**

were forced to withdraw. What few men were left from the 1st. Camerons made their way to Dunkirk, they were the lucky ones as they were taken off the beaches of Dunkirk and made it back to England.

The 4th Camerons fared much worse. They had gone to France in 1940 and moved to the Maginot Line in the Saar region. Under heavy attack at Abbeville many were killed. Those that survived were ordered to withdraw. They made their way to the seaport town of St. Valery-en-Caux. The British Navy, they were told, would be standing off shore to rescue them. Upon arrival in St. Valery-en-Caux the men could see the Navy's ships a mile off shore; but because of uncharted coast and heavy fog the British High Command decided not to attempt a rescue.

Hemmed in by the sea and the German Army, some of the 4th attempted to escape. They would skirt around the German lines and head south. Most who tried were captured and taken prisoner. Those that stayed in St. Valery-en-Caux were finally overrun and taken prisoner by the German Army. A few did manage to make their way to Veules-les-Roses, a small French fishing village where they were rescued by the flotilla of little British boats that took part in the evacuation of Dunkirk.

Iain was daydreaming, slowly he came back to reality, looked around and realized he was on Aruba, still on look-out duty. He felt his face, it was hot. The sun was burning his fair skin, even in the shade of the Divi-Divi tree the sun's rays reflected off the surface of the water and sand and burned his face. These reflected rays were as strong as the direct rays from the sun. Iain hated the sun, the sweating and the sunburn that on him never seemed to tan, he only turned red, his skin peeled and then he burned again. He longed for the cold, wet overcast weather of his native Scotland.

As the sun beat down on Iain he again began to drift back in time. He thought about the training and when he asked to be shipped out

with the group he was training. His request had been granted but he had no idea where they would be shipped.

Security and censorship with regard to ship and troop movements were very tight during World War II. There were those who were Nazi sympathizers, they may overhear something that would benefit the Germans and pass on the information. Billboards kept reminding the population: "A slip of the lip can sink a ship" so there was never any talk about where a group would be going. Iain and his newly trained men had no idea where they were going when they boarded the train in Inverness on August 9, 1940. Iain did not care, what was important was he was going to leave the training of new men to someone else, he was going to fight Germans.

The train took the men to Gourock. From there they boarded the Empress of Australia and as soon as the ship was loaded with men she put to sea. All the time they were at sea the rumors flew. They were going to France. No, they were bound for Norway. No the ship was going to North Africa. Iain did not pay attention to the rumors, but he did like the idea of North Africa, there were lots of Germans in North Africa.

The ship's captain also did not listen to the rumors, he steamed for Halifax, Nova Scotia. They arrived in Halifax on August 19, 1940. The Battalion spent three nights in Halifax and on August 23 they were split into two groups and were again boarded on to two ships. One of these ships sailed first for Bermuda, where she discharged one hundred and fifty of the men to guard the island of Bermuda. After discharging the men in Bermuda the first ship set sail again for Aruba. The second ship with the other half of the Battalion sailed directly to Aruba. Both ships reached Aruba on September 3, 1940.

The two groups disembarked from the ships and reformed on the docks. Together again as a Battalion they marched from the docks

**in Oranjestad to their new camp in Saveneta. Their purpose in being there; to defend the two oil refineries on the island in the event of German attack.**

**The camp at Saveneta that was to house the officers and men were wooden huts, the huts were in disrepair and inhabited by crabs, lizards and iguanas which had to be evicted when the Scots arrived.**

**Had the Germans chosen to torpedo or shell either of the refineries the Camerons could have done nothing to stop them. They lacked heavy guns. They had no aircraft. They had nothing with which to defend the island from a sea attack. However, should the Germans have decided to invade the island they would have encountered the Scots, and they were ready. They would have defended the Dutch soil from German invasion as if it were British, with hand to hand combat.**

**Iain again looked out to sea and scanned the horizon, nothing!**

**It was then that he came to the conclusion that he did not want to be in Aruba, an island thousands of miles away from the fighting.**

**Iain did not understand the vital role he and his men were playing by being in Aruba. The Cameron Highlanders were in Aruba at the request of Holland's Queen and were protecting vital British war supplies.**

**When Germany marched into Holland and occupied the country Queen Wilhelmina managed to escape. She made it to Britain and there she set up a government in exile. With the homeland occupied Holland's territories around the world were unprotected and there was a great fear that they would be subject to occupation by the Nazis.**

**At the request of Queen Wilhelmina the British War Office had dispatched the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders to defend the**

**Dutch territory and the vital oil refineries that were supplying the British Air Force with vital 100 octane gasoline that powered their fighter planes. Had Sergeant McDonald known a little about air power and gasoline supply he would have realized that he and his men were protecting the major source of Britain's aviation gasoline. Even the Houses of Parliament had made the statement: "Without the refinery in Aruba the Battle of Britain would have been lost."**

**It had all started in the early days of U.S. Naval aviation.**

**The United States Navy realized as early as 1924 that if they could raise the compression ratio of their aircraft engines the engine would develop more horsepower. The problem was not in raising the compression ratio, the problem was in the quality of gasoline available at the time. Gasoline in 1924 was refined for the low compression engines, the type found in the automobiles of the day.**

**The navy found that by using automotive type gasoline in their experimental engines the engines knocked and soon overheated.**

**Admiral E. S. Land of the United States Navy was one of the first to realize the problem. He advised Standard Oil of New Jersey that he was interested in obtaining a better grade of gasoline for their new aircraft. Esso recognized naval aviation as a large market for this new type of gasoline and based on this potentially large market Esso began many years of research to develop what was hoped would be the perfect gasoline.**

**In 1930 the Army Air Corps also looked for the perfect gasoline, adopting an octane-numbering system that rated gasoline. This new system to rate gasoline made 100 octane theoretically perfect. As a gauge to where gasoline quality was in 1930, the Army Air Corps was specifying 87 octane as fighter plane grade gasoline. Today 87 octane is considered a poor grade gasoline for the family car.**

**Shell Oil became the first oil company to supply the Army Air Corps with a limited supply of 100 octane gasoline, but soon all the major oil producers had the technology to produce the perfect gasoline.**

**By 1937 the United States, France and England all produced aircraft engines that required the 100 octane gasoline. Those new engines greatly increased the aircraft's power and speed as well as the aircraft's range. American services had no reservation about using the new high compression engines. The British and French however had some apprehension. The new gasoline was produced primarily by refineries in the United States. In the event of war Britain and France worried about depending on the United States for the new gasoline.**

**In 1936 the British Air Ministry began negotiations with Standard Oil of New Jersey for the purchase of large quantities of 100 octane gasoline. On May 24, 1937 a long term contract was signed, however the contract had a condition attached to it. The aviation gasoline that was to be sold could not be produced within the United States. There was good reason for this clause in the contract. The British realized that all aviation gasoline, regardless of the source would have to be shipped to Britain in tankers. This did not bother the British, they had complete confidence in the ability of their navy to keep command of the seas in the event of a war. The clause was in the contract because of the attitude of both the American public and their government. The British were uncomfortable over the isolationist movement within the United States and they could not predict what action the United States would take in the event of war. The British Air Ministry felt they could not depend on supplies produced within America reaching them. Should the United States decide to isolate itself from a war in Europe, Britain's supply of strategic gasoline could be cut off.**

**Thus Aruba, a Dutch territory where Standard Oil of New Jersey already had a large refinery became the site on which Standard Oil would build the hydrogenation and co-polymer plant necessary to produce Britain's 100 octane gasoline. Standard Oil of New Jersey began construction on the new plant in 1937, it came on line in late 1938. Britain did not depend solely on Aruba and the Standard Oil Company. The Air Ministry also had suppliers in the United States, Trinidad, Curacao, Palembang in the Netherlands East Indies and Abadan on the Persian Gulf.**

**On November 4, 1939, as the British had suspected, the United States enacted neutrality legislation that made 100 octane gasoline produced within the United State only available for export on a cash (US Dollar) and carry basis. Trying to finance the war effort on its own Britain was strapped for US Dollars. Thus they became more dependent on 100 octane gasoline produced outside the United States. Their supply was further restricted on June 10, 1940 when Italy entered the war on the side of the Germans and thus limited British shipping in the Mediterranean. Britain's supply of 100 octane gasoline from the Netherlands East Indies and Abadan were cut off because they were shipped via the Mediterranean. Now Britain's supply of 100 octane gasoline was from three refineries in the Caribbean. Lago on the island of Aruba had the largest capacity for producing the 100 octane gasoline. As the Battle of Britain raged, oil tankers crossed the Atlantic supplying the British aircraft with the necessary fuel.**

**The German High Command were quick to realize this fact and they took quick action to cut the supply of the vital gasoline, their answer was the dreaded U-Boat.**

**On September 4, 1941 German U-Boat U-156 was commissioned and under the command of Captain Hartenstein the boat left the Weser Shipbuilding Company in Bremen. Captain Hartenstein and his officers sailed to the North Sea and there they trained the boat's new crew. After a short training patrol in the North Sea and North**

**Atlantic the U-Boat turned south. They put into Lorient Harbor on the northwest coast of German occupied France. Here they spent their time preparing for a long sea journey. No one, not even the Captain knew what their new assignment would be.**

**On January 19, 1942 U-Boat 156 left Lorient and sailed southwest. After almost a month at sea the U-Boat and her tired crew entered the Caribbean Sea. Here they turned south and headed for Aruba. Other U-Boats on the mission also turned to Curacao. U-Boat 156 along with U-Boat 67; 161; and 502 were what made up the Neuland Group of U-Boats assigned to attack the refineries on Aruba and Curacao. The attack was to begin in the early morning hours of February 16, 1942. U-Boat 156 had been assigned the refinery on Aruba.**

**On February 15 the German High Command changed the procedure orders given to Captain Hartenstein. The new orders were radioed to all the U-Boats in the Group. They read:**

- 1) The principal assignment is to attack shipping targets.**
- 2) If attacks on shipping were successful, then the U-Boat commanders could surface and commence with artillery attack against the land targets.**

**Captain Hartenstein followed the new orders. He changed his plan of attack. U-156 remained submerged, two mile off the Lago refinery and looking through the periscope the Captain saw the activity of the refinery, it was operating under bright lights, the black-out that Europe had been under for over two years was still not instituted at the Lago refinery. Had the Captain not received new orders he would have surfaced and attacked the target, instead he waited for shipping targets. He did not have to wait long.**

**On February 16, 1942 at 0131 hours the Captain ordered: "Fire one."**

**U-Boat 156 fired its first torpedo. The North Sea training paid off. The first torpedo found its mark in 48 seconds after it was launched. The lake tanker Pedernales was struck in the side by the torpedo. The Pedernales exploded into a ball of fire. Two minutes later Captain Hartenstein ordered a second torpedo launched. It hit the lake tanker Oranjestad and it became an inferno.**

**The Captain had attacked ships first, he was following the new orders he had received but now it was time to attack the shore target. The German U-Boat surfaced, it was not three-quarters of a mile off the reef, directly in front of the refinery. The artillery attack on the will lit refinery would be over in minutes. The Captain and crew were ecstatic, the ships were their first kill, now they were going to destroy the world's largest refinery. Hatches were opened and men were on deck as soon as the U-Boat surfaced. The gunners loaded the deck cannon and the order was given to fire. There was an explosion on deck, the deck gunner was killed instantly, and the seaman assisting the gunner was thrown against the conning tower, his leg shredded by the explosion. The Lago refinery was spared because the over eager gunner had failed to remove the plug from the muzzle of the 10.5 cm deck cannon.**

**Without a deck cannon there could be no artillery attack on the refinery. Captain Hartenstein gave the order to proceed to Oranjestad on the surface.**

**On reaching Oranjestad U-156 fired three torpedoes. One hit the lake tanker Arkansas tied up empty at the Eagle (Shell) refinery pier. Without crude oil to catch fire the torpedo did little damage to the ship. The second torpedo missed its target and ran up on Eagle beach. The third also missed its target and went out to sea.**

**The torpedo that went on Eagle beach took its toll the next day when it exploded and killed four marines who were trying to disarm it.**

**Had Captain Hartenstein know the island was unprotected things might have been different. The Scots had left the island a couple of days before the attack. The American replacements were still not set up to defend the island and in the Lago harbor the Army supply ship, the Henry Gibbons, sat tied to the pier, still loaded with three thousand tons of TNT. Only the heavy guns, searchlights, communications equipment and other gear carried on the Henry Gibbons had been unloaded and most of it was still sitting on the pier. One shell from U-Boat 156 landing in the proper location would have destroyed the Lago refinery.**

**The Lago refinery in 1941 employed forty seven hundred men and refined two hundred twenty eight thousand barrels of crude a day. By the end of the war employment had reached over seven thousand and the refinery was processing three hundred thousand barrels of oil a day. Had the deck gunner not erred the refinery production would have been lost and the outcome of World War II could have been different.**

**Iain knew nothing of the attack on the island he had defended for almost two years. He was on a ship bound for New York, he was on his way to fight Germans. On February 13, 1942 American troops of the 498th Coastal Artillery Battalion arrived on Aruba and replaced the Cameron Highlanders. The Americans took up residence in the camp at Saveneta and there they remained until the end of the war. The troop transport that carried the Americans to the island carried the Cameron Highlanders out. Iain and his men arrived home on the 24 day of March, 1942, there was still time to fight Germans.**

**Iain took the coin he had found in the sand on the beach at Saveneta back to Scotland.**

# JAN

## Chapter VI

Jan Smith caught the Sunday mid-morning Delta flight out of Dulles and arrived in Miami two hours before her Air Aruba flight was scheduled to depart for Aruba.

She had checked her bags through, so she had only to walk to the international departure concourse of the Miami International Airport, clear security and wait for her Air Aruba flight. Jan did not drink so the thought of sitting in one of the many cocktail lounges at the airport never entered her mind.

She placed her over-the shoulder bag on the conveyer so it could be checked by X-Ray and walked through the metal detector that blocked the entrance to the international concourse. No bells or whistles sounded as she walked through the detector and retrieved her bag from the other end of the X-Ray machine and walked to the Air Aruba gate to await the departure of her flight. She had Tom Clancy's new book, *The Sum of All Fears*, in her handbag, she was determined to read at least one book on her vacation. Jan always carried a book, she liked to read and did so whenever she had a few free moments, which was not very often.

Jan was a very attractive woman, at thirty-one she had taken on the air of maturity but she still had the beauty of her youth. She was five-foot-seven, one hundred thirty pounds with natural blond hair, cut short, olive skin and deep blue eyes. Her mother was from Sweden, her father from Spain and Jan had inherited the best of each parent's genes. Bill Baker, an independent bank auditor who did work for the Federal Reserve told Jan her eyes were as blue and deep as Paul Newman's. Bill lived next door to the Newman's in Connecticut so he should know. Jan liked people to tell her things like that even if they were not always true.

Jan enjoyed her good looks. She worked hard to preserve her youthful complexion and always dressed so as to accent her almost perfect body. Even on the weekends when she stayed at home around her apartment complex she dressed so men turned their heads to look at her. On the weekends her dress was not business as it was on the weekdays, but casual, but always an outfit that complemented her good looks.

Her exceptional good looks were also a curse. She found that when she sat alone, without appearing to have something to do, men would approach her and try and begin a conversation. That was one of the reasons she always carried a book, with a book she could look engrossed and men sensed her preoccupation and left her alone.

It was not that Jan did not like men, she did. She just did not like to be approached by a man. She had a strict code with regard the men in her life and her rules were simple. When she worked she removed men completely from her life. This was why Bill Baker had made no progress with the advances he had made towards Jan. Vacations were different. Away from the office with nothing on her mind she sought the company of a man. She shunned any man who approached her, when there was time for a man in her life she would pick and choose and do the approaching.

Jan had been married, once, but it lasted only a year. It was right after she and William had graduated from college and both began to work at the Federal Reserve. She and William had been friends and then lovers in college and were engaged in their junior year. The week after graduation they were married and the next week they were in New York at work at the Federal Reserve. Their honeymoon had been spent loading and unloading a U-Haul truck.

It was not a good way to begin a marriage and then they both immersed themselves in their work and their individual careers became their number one priority. a life outside of work never

materialized. Her husband was the first to flitter. She called it flittering because although he cheater on her he never cheated with the same girl for more then a week, he just seemed to flitter from one new girl to the next. She never suspected his infidelity until after the divorce. It was then that she learned that her husband had been having affairs when she believed he was working late or off on business. Although they both worked for the Federal Reserve they worked in different departments and did not see each other at work.

It was their first vacation that brought the problem with their marriage to light. Jan and William had planned to spend two weeks in Bermuda. They were both tired , they had both put in a hard first year at work and they were ready for a vacation. The hotel reservations were made, the flights were booked and passports were obtained. A week before the scheduled vacation William announced he would be unable to make the trip. He said he was needed in Washington to attend meeting but he suggested Jan make the trip by her self. She argued and cried but in the end she went by her self to Bermuda. Her first night in the resort and she was approached by a young, wonderful attentive man and within two days they were lovers. She moved into his hotel room and they spent the next two weeks together.

Flying home the reality of her action hit her and she began to sink into a deep depression. When she landed in New York she did not think she could face her husband. She knew he would take one look at her and know that she had been unfaithful. William was waiting for her as she stepped out of the Jet way into the arrival lounge. He never even asked how the vacation was, they picked up her bags, walked to the car and on the drive back to their apartment William announced that he wanted a divorce. He told Jan he had found another woman, spent the past two weeks with her and now he wanted a divorce. She never told William about her romantic vacation and within a week she had moved out, they were divorced and William faded from her life.

**Jan became more involved with her job as an auditor with the Federal Reserve. Her job involved auditing and tracking money transfers into and out of the United States, by both United States and foreign banks. These investigations were mainly routine, however with all the offshore subsidiaries of U. S. banks and the larger amounts to cash circulating in the hands of drug dealers the investigations sometimes got interesting. Many different governments were often involved and it was Jan's responsibility to ensure that all fund transfers were legitimate.**

**Jan enjoyed her work and was good at what she did. She had been with the Federal reserve for nine years and last year she was promoted to Senior Auditor. With the new promotion and added responsibility she usually worked ten or more hours a day and always took work home with her. Only on the weekends could she rest and attend to the necessities of living and catching up on sleep and reading.**

**She had no hobbies outside of work and reading, and no friends outside the people she worked with. After the breakup of her marriage she had become a loner. Both her parents were dead, she had been an only child, so there was no immediate family.**

**After the divorce Jan tried, but soon became tired of dating. She put all her energy and effort into her work.**

**Vacation were different, each year she made a point of getting away for two weeks and every vacation, like the first, and she found a lover. Men and sex were her vacation. It had started with her first vacation alone, while still married to William and it continued only now she was the one who picked up and seduced her partner.**

**As Jan sat reading in the Air Aruba departure lounge the other passengers began to slowly arrive and take seats around the room. The level of noise from the conversations increased as the room filled with passengers. The Jan noticed a slight lull in the decrease**

of the noise level. A man had entered the lounge. He was in his early fifties, well dressed, tanned with an athletic build and he carried an expensive looking briefcase and had an air of self-confidence that wealth seemed to bring to men.

Jan, like most of the other passengers watched the man as he took a seat and Jan decided that was her lover for this vacation.

Jan checked into her hotel in Aruba, had a shower and then went down to the lobby for something to eat. After a light supper of boiled native fish she returned to her room for a nap. She had read that things did not begin to happen in the casinos of Aruba until after midnight.

When Jan waked into the casino it was packed with tourists and islanders alike, everyone hoping to strike it rich. She wandered past the slot machines, then started around the circle of tables where craps, roulette and blackjack were being played. There were no empty seats and every table was full.

Walking slowly past the crap table she looked at everyone who was playing and then she saw him, the man from the Miami airport.

Jan moved into the ring of gamblers and watched the game. The she was behind the man, she took chips she had purchased when entering the casino out of her purse and leaned over the man's shoulder and asked; "Would you mind putting this on number 32 for me?" She handed the man ten dollars in chips as he turned to look at Jan.

"Thank you." she said as he took her money and placed it on number 32. She stood behind him and watched the croupier spin the wheel. As the wheel slowed the ball bounced and then it settled into the pocked marked 32.

Jan jumped as she saw the ball fall into the slot by number 32.

**"That's my number." she said as she placed her hand on the man's shoulder.**

**"Your lucky." Fred said as he turned and looked at Jan.**

**The croupier pushed her winnings towards Fred and he rearranged his chips and made room for her chips. "Here, have my chair, with your luck you may be here all night and break the bank." he said as he slid of the stool.**

**Jan thanked him and took the stool.**

**The croupier spun the wheel and flicked the ball and called for bets. Jan took another ten dollar chip and placed it on 18. Fred took a pile of his chips and spread them around the table as the ball settled into bouncing as the wheel slowed.**

**Fred was leaning over her as he spread his chips and she could smell his cologne, she liked what he was wearing.**

**As the ball settled into the number 18 slot she let out a little cry of glee and began stacking her winnings in a neat little pile in front of her, Fred watched as all his chips were swept off the table.**

**As Fred leaned over to place more bets the lady sitting next to Jan got up and left the table and Fred took her stool.**

**Jan and Fred played without much talk, but each was appraising the other. Fred approved of what he saws, a stunning, mature woman who knew her own mind and looked like she was enjoying life. Jan watched as Fred kept placing bets and kept loosing without the least sign of remorse.**

**Within the next two hours Fred had lost all of his chips, he nodded to the pit boss that produced a new tray of chips for Fred to pay as Fred removed an envelope from his coat pocket and handed it to the**

**pit boss.**

**"Thank you Mr. Carter." The pit boss said to Fred.**

**Fred nodded.**

**Jan had not paid much attention to what Fred was playing until the new tray arrived and then she noticed he was playing with one hundred dollar chips. Looking at the chips she thought to herself, "either this good looking man is filthy rich, a damn fool or maybe both." She was going to find out.**

**They kept playing and Fred lost much more than he won. Jan held her own.**

**As Fred placed the last of the chips from the second tray he had purchased he looked at Jan, it was the first time she felt he had really looked at her he seemed so engrossed in his gambling. Fred smiled and said; "After a night of loosing I always go for a swim, how would you like to join me?"**

**Jan placed her hand on the small pile of chips she had managed to hold on to while Fred had lost all of his chips and said; "Yes, I would like that."**

**The drive to the east end of the island did not take long and as they passed through the old gate that once protected Lago Colony Jan looked at the coral and sea and the sun just beginning to break over the horizon. "Just look at that beautiful sunrise." she said as Fred parked the car on the side of the road so they could both look at the wonderful colors that were radiating up from the rising sun.**

**After looking at the sunrise for a few minutes Fred started the car. As they drove off he said; "The beach is just over down the road and the sunrise is also great from Baby Beach."**

**As they drove to Baby Beach Jan looked at Fred and it was then that she noticed the gold chain and white coral disk he was wearing around his neck.**

**"That's a nice chain." she said. "What is that white disk on the chair?"**

**"Oh, it's a trinket I won in a poker game a long time ago." Fred said. "I have always worn it for good luck but it just does not seem to help when I play the crap table."**

**Jan laughed; "If what happened tonight is any indication it is not much help at all."**

**They arrived at Baby Beach, it was just sunrise and no one else was swimming. Two men were on the reef fishing and Fred parked next to the truck that probably belonged to the two fisherman.**

**"Oh, what a beautiful beach." Jan said as they got out of the car. Together they walked the short distance to the pink sand and laid their towels down on the sand. They sat on the towels and removed their shoes and then their shirts before walking into the warm clear water for Baby Beach. The fine sand on the bottom of the lagoon felt good on their bare feet, the water was shallow and they walked out a long way before the water was waist deep.**

**"The water gets deeper out near the opening in the reef." Fred said as he pointed to the reef where the two men were fishing. Jan submerged into the shallow water and began to swim towards the reef. Fred followed.**

**When they reached the channel they could not stand and the current entering the lagoon through the cut in the reef was cooler than the water in the lagoon. They held hands and faced each other as they tread water as the cooler water from the ocean flowed into the channel.**

**"Oh my God!" Fred's face took on a look of panic, he let go of Jan's hand and grabbed his chest.**

**"Oh my G...!" Fred did not finish the sentence, he was going under and his was open and he was gasping for breath but water was filling his lungs.**

**Jan was beginning to panic, she was not a strong swimmer, she could not pull Fred to the surface and she did not know what to do.**

**"He's having a hear attack." she thought to her self as she called his name.**

**Fred kicked and still clutching his chest he broke the surface and she could see he was trying to call of help but his lungs were full of water, no sound came from him and he again sank beneath the surface.**

**Jan panicked. She started swimming in the direction of the reef. The two men were still fishing and had not seen what was happening. As she swam she was calling to the men but with the wind and the ocean waves on the reef the man could not hear her.**

**As she got into the shallow water she half ran and then swam and then stood and ran again still calling to the men on the reef. She had to reach the men, she needed to get help for Fred.**

**One of the men turned to pick up a piece of bait from a bucket and he saw the crazy woman thrashing through the water yelling at them. She would stand, she was yelling something, then she dove into the shallow water and swam a little distance, then stood again and tried to run but the water was above her knees and it made running very hard.**

**"Another tourist playing in the lagoon." he thought as he reached into the bucket for a piece of bait.**

**Then he realized she was trying to get his attention.**

**"Junie!" he said to his fishing friend, "I think that lady is trying to tell us something."**

**Junie turned and looked at Jan coming towards them. "Your right." he said, "she needs help."**

**Both men put down their fishing poles and starting running into the water towards Jan.**

**"Help me, my friend is drowning." she cried as they approached her.**

**"Where is he?" Junie asked as he scanned the lagoon for any sign of a drowning person but the lagoon was flat, no one was thrashing in the water.**

**"We were swimming in the channel by the reef." Jan said; "He clutched his chest and went under and I have not seen him again."**

**Jan was half drowned and near collapse herself. The swim to the men, the water she had swallowed while trying to call for help and the trauma of seeing Fred go under was all she could take.**

**"You take care of her." Junie said to his friend; "I'll go and see if I can find her friend."**

**Junie took off his tennis shoes and began leaping through the shallow water until it was deep enough to swim, then he dove and began swimming towards the canal cut in the reef.**

**As the water deepened at the edge of the channel Junie dove, his eyes open. There was Fred, sitting upright at the bottom of the channel, he looked so peaceful, his hair waving back and forth in rhythm with the waves as the current past by him. His arms were**

limp, suspended in front of him and they also moved in rhythm with the waves. He looked as though he was conducting an orchestra with both hands and without a baton.

Junie grabbed the body around the chest and pulled the man to the surface. Getting him in a cross chest carry he began swimming for the beach.

As Junie pulled the body up on the sand Jan asked; "Is he alive?"

Junie did not answer, he turned the man over on his back, checked his mouth for any obstruction and then got down on his knees and began to give the man mouth to mouth resuscitation.

After what seemed an eternity to Jan Junie stopped. He looked at Jan and said; "I think he is dead."

"Oh my God!" What was all Jan could say as she sat down on the sand and put her head in her hands.

"Is he your husband?" Junie asked.

"No, we were just friends, we met last night at the casino." Jan answered, her face still buried in her hands.

Junie spoke to his friend in Papiamentu. His friend nodded and ran off and got in the truck.

"I have sent my friend to call the police." Junie said. "There is not much we can do before they arrive."

Junie looked around and saw the towels, shoes and shirts on the beach, he walked over and picked up one of the large beach towels.

"I will cover him." Junie said as he spread the towel over Fred's face and upper body, his legs were not covered, the towel was not larger

**enough.**

**As he picked up the towel the gold chain with the white disk fell from the towel, Fred had removed it before going into the water. Junie picked it up and looked at it, the minute he saw it he knew what it was. Before he covered Fred with the towel Junie placed the gold necklace and coin in his pocket.**

**"Are you going to be alright?" Junie asked Jan after he had covered Fred.**

**Jan lifted her head from her hands. "Oh yes, I will be OK." She said. "I did not know what to do, thank God you and your friend were here to help."**

**"How did it happen?" Junie asked.**

**"We were in the channel, floating and holding hands when he got a strange look on his face, I could tell he was in pain and then he grabbed his chest." "The only thing he said before he sank was, "Oh my God", then he went under and I panicked."**

**"Sounds to me like he had a heart attack." Junie said. "The coroner will be able to tell." "All we can do now is wait for the police." Then he looked at Jan and went on, "Let me introduce myself, I am Junie Cruz."**

**"I am so glad to meet you Junie, my name is Jan, Jan Smith." "I am here on vacation and this is the first day of what was to be a two week vacation."**

**"Junie and Jan sat on the beach, away from Fred's body and waited for the police to arrive.**

## **THE ATTORNEY**

## Chapter VII

The phone rang. Tony was sitting at his father's desk, his father had been dead for six months and Tony was only just beginning to understand some of his father's affairs. It had taken six months of hard work to begin to understand the magnitude of his father's holdings, which he had now inherited. Tony was also beginning to appreciate the influence these holding afforded him and he realized the responsibility this type of inheritance placed on him. He also found himself wishing he had paid more attention when his father had wanted to talk about money and what he did.

Tony sat back in the large chair, closed his eyes and let the phone ring again.

On the third ring Tony picked up the phone. "Hello, Tony Oduber speaking." he said as he put the phone to his ear.

"Ah, Mr. Oduber, so nice to hear your voice." My name is James, James Brathwate, I am a banister, or as you may say an attorney here in Bridgetown, Barbados." I am an old friend of your fathers."

There was a slight pause and Mr. Brathwate went on; "I offer my condolences on your father's death, he was a great man and I am sorry I could not get to Aruba for the funeral."

Tony had received numerous calls such as this. "What can I do for you Mr. Brathwate?" Tony asked. Tony had learned that some of the people calling were friends of his fathers, others were only looking for something.

"Yes Mr. Oduber, before you father died he sent me a description of two men, along with a newspaper clipping from the St. Croix Avis concerning your loss in St. Croix."

Tony was taken back. The wound was still open, it always would be,

**and the loss of Jewel, the first person he had really loved was still with him.**

**"Yes, go on Mr. Brathwate." Tony said, still not knowing what to expect or if he should trust the voice at the end of the phone line.**

**"I have two photographs of two men here on my desk, I would like to fax them to you so you can look at them." Mr. Brathwate said to Tony. "Is your fax machine on?" he asked.**

**"Yes, its on." Tony replied.**

**Within a few minutes the first photograph began to print on Tony's fax. As soon as it finished printing and fell on the tray Tony picked it up, it was he man with the gun, the man who had shot Tony. Then the second photograph fell in the tray, it was the man on top of Jewel.**

**As he looked at the photographs he spoke into the phone, "Mr. Brathwate, are you still there?"**

**"Yes, yes I am still here. Are those the men who shot you and killed your wife?" He asked.**

**"Yes, that is them, but now did you get the photographs?" Tony's mind was racing, just who was this Mr. Brathwate?**

**"How I got the photographs is not important, what is important is that you are absolutely positive that these are the men who killed your wife.**

**"Yes, I am sure." Tony said. "One had a split ear lobe, just like the first man in the first photograph you sent and even without the split ear lobe I would recognize the face, it is him."**

**"What about the second man, are you sure about him?" Mr.**

**Brathwate waited for an answer.**

**"Yes, that is also the other man, again I got a good look at both of them before I was shot and I would not forget those faces."**

**"Thank you Mr. Oduber. You will be hearing from me." The phone went dead. Mr. Brathwate had hung up.**

**Ton sat at the desk, he was dumbfounded. He looked at the fax photos laying on his desk. Who in the world was that he wondered and what is going on? Was it some kind of a bad joke, the man said he was in Barbados but he knew no one in Barbados.**

**The Tony remembered Mr. Brathwate had said he was a friend of his father's.**

**Tony searched the computer data base for Barbados and Brathwate, his father kept complete and detailed records. There it was, James (Jim) Brathwate, as well as an address, phone number and a fax number.**

**Tony picked up the phone and dialed the number in Barbados.**

**"Mr. Brathwate, this is Tony Oduber, what is going on?" Jim Brathwate had answered on the first ring.**

**"Yes Mr. Oduber, I called you but as I said you will be hearing from me, right now I have nothing to tell you."**

**"How did you get photographs of those two men?" Tony asked.**

**"I told you that was not important, you will be hearing from me very soon. I can tell you their names, the man with the split ear is Mesha, Mesha Williams. The other man's name is Ronald Roach. As I said I will be getting back to you so now you will have to excuse me I must ring off." With that Mr. Brathwate again hung up.**

**Tony sat in the chair behind the desk and wondered when he would hear from Mr. Brathwate. He had learned in the past six months that some of the firms and people his father had dealing with were always formal, courteous, prompt and always very exact and followed through on what they said they were going to do. They were the most business like group of people Tony had ever dealt with. He was beginning to understand a little about finance, and investments, he was also beginning to understand the network his father had established because of his business dealings. He knew Mr. Brathwate would get back to him. He just had to wait.**

**Tony did not have to wait long. On the following Thursday a registered letter arrived from Barbados. It was marked personal, so, although Tony's secretary had signed for the letter he had not opened it. The man had been Tony's father's secretary and was most helpful to Tony as he learned what it was his father did.**

**Tony opened the letter and removed the contents, a folded newspaper clipping from the Barbados Advocate, the island's newspaper. Tony unfolded the clipping from the previous week's front page and read the headline: BLACKHEART MAN KILLS TWO IN THIS YEARS ATTACK.**

**Tony went on reading the article.**

**"For the first time since anyone can remember the Blackheart Man of Barbados has cut the hearts from two victims. The coroner has determined that the cause of death was the removal, by knife of the two men found on the road to Animal Flower Cave. As in all past Blackheart killing no one saw or heard any noise, screams or witnessed a thing. As with former Blackheart killings the hearts of the victims were not found by the bodies and the native population believe the killer is in the habit of eating the hearts of his victims."**

**"This year's dual victims were Mr. Mesha Williams and Mr. Ronald Roach. Mr. Williams was born in Antigua and resided in St. Croix, U.**

**S. Virgin Islands. Both men were reported to be in Barbados to obtain United States residency status from the U. S. Counsel in Bridgetown. The homicide department of the Barbados Police Department is inquiring with the Virgin Island Police Department to see if they can shed any light on the case.**

**"Each year since anyone in Barbados can remember the Blackheart Man strikes. He is considered by many to be a spirit who dwells in the sugar fields. Each year he ventures out to remove the heart from a black man. There has never been a case of the Blackheart man striking a white man and he always strikes when there is no moon. Many natives will not venture out of their homes on nights when there is no moon in fear of the Blackheart Man."**

**Tony could not believe what he was reading. The two men who killed Jewel and shot him wee both dead. Their hears cut from their chest's. As he sat reading the clippings a strange feeling came over him, he was feeling good, somehow Jewel's death had in some small way been vindicated.**

**But who the hell is Mr. Brathwate? Is he the Blackheart Man? These were questions Tony asked himself as he thought about calling Mr. Brathwate. No, he would not call, Tony decided he needed to make a trip, Tony needed to visit Mr. Brathwate in Barbados.**

## **THE MEETING**

### **Chapter VIII**

**Jan was sitting at the pool bar drinking a Virgin Mary, she had thought about ordering the real thing but decided against it. She did not drink and Fred's death was no reason to start. She had been inebriated only once in her life, it was in her freshman year at college**

at Georgetown and she did not like the feeling. The loss of her self control frightened her and she had not drunk alcohol since.

But today, today was different. After Fred's drowning the police arrive and there were questions, photographs and more questions. The police required that she and Junie come to the police station and after they had given their statements they were asked more questions. finally the police detective offered to drive her back to her hotel and he took Junie in the car with her and after she was dropped at the hotel Junie was taken home.

After a cold shower, a nap and something to eat she felt better. She dressed in silk slacks and a loose fitting silk blouse and as she dressed she decided she was not going to let Fred's death spoil her vacation. She had only know him a few hours, he really did not mean anything to her.

As she sipped her Virgin Mary through a straw she caught sight of a man walking across the hotel courtyard. The thought of Fred left her and she thought, "Now there is a man I would like to meet."

Tony Oduber waked across the hotel courtyard towards the pool bar. He had not been out "on the town" since Jewel's death and his return to Aruba. The newspaper clipping from Mr. Brathwate he had received that morning had given him reason to want to celebrate. He felt Jewel's death had been revenged, he felt good, better than he had felt since returning to Aruba and he decided it was time to go out, have a few drinks and than a nice dinner at Valentino's.

The mourning was over, Jewel was laid to rest in his mind.

As he strolled across the courtyard he caught the site of the woman seated at the bar drinking by her self. Their eyes met, she smiled and he smiled back.

"Are you alone?" he asked as he walked up to her.

**"Yes, I am alone, would you like to join me for a drink?" Jan answered.**

**"Direct", thought Tony as he eased into the bar stool beside Jan.**

**"Hi, I'm Tony, Tony Oduber." He extended his hand to Jan.**

**"Hi Tony, I'm Jan, Jan Smith." Jan shook Tony's hand, he had a firm handshake.**

**"May I buy you another Bloody Mary?" Tony asked.**

**"No, this one is still got a long way to go." Jan replied.**

**Tony ordered himself a martini on the rocks and it was then that Jan saw Junie walking towards her.**

**Junie Crews had checked the front desk for Ms. Smith and had been told she was at the pool bar. As Junie entered the bar and pool area he saw Jan and Tony sitting at the bar.**

**As Junie walked up to Jan he said; "Excuse me, Ms Smith, I just wanted to return a necklace that I pick up when I saw you at the beach this morning." With that he handed Jan the gold chain and with the white disk that Fred had been wearing.**

**Jan took the necklace and looked at it, she knew it was Fred's. "Its really not mine, it belonged to Fred." she said to Junie.**

**Tony saw the necklace and the coin and said; "That is an interesting charm, what is it?" Tony had recognized the disk as a Quiripa the moment he saw it in Jan's hand.**

**Then Tony looked at Junie, "Hi, my name is Tony Oduber." he said as he extended his hand to Junie.**

**"Hi, I'm Tony Crews, I know you by reputation." he said.**

The stood and talked for a moment and then Junie said he must be going, Jan thanked him for bringing her the necklace and he and Tony shook hands again and said goodbye, Junie turned and left the bar.

Tony and Jan finished their drinks, Tony asked Jan for dinner and they went to Valentino's and had a wonderful dinner. After dinner they stayed and danced and then after a wonderful evening Tony took Jan back to her hotel and they sat in the lobby until the sun came up and talked.

As Jan went back to her room she know this was not a vacation fantasy, she had a very special attraction for Tony. She felt a closeness with him from the moment they met, a closeness she had never felt before. She liked being with him, they got along well, shared ideas, thoughts and she just wanted to be near to him to have him and give herself to him.

Driving home from Jan's hotel Tony realized this woman he had just met was having a very strong effect on him. He felt comfortable with her, like the feeling he had had with Jewel. Tony thought about Jewel, her death had been avenged and now he had met someone who in only a few hours seem to be taking her place. The emptiness he felt within himself was gone, he was falling in love.

For the next week they were constantly together. Eating, dancing, playing tennis at Eagle Club, sailing, swimming at Dos Playes and Palm Beach and making love.

The week was interrupted only once, when Jan was asked to go to the police station and answer questions about money that was found in Fred's room. The police had searched his apartment and found one-hundred thousand dollars in cash in a briefcase. The police had also checked with the Federal Reserve in New York and confirmed that Jan was one of their employees. After learning what Jan did the police

**began wondering if maybe Jan was investigating Fred.**

**Jan assured the Aruba police that she only investigated from behind a desk, she was not a field agent and she had only met Fred that night and knew nothing about the large amount of cash he was carrying, although it did interest Jan as to why Fred had that large amount of cash, although it was not illegal. She did confirm to the Aruba Police that Fred had lost a large amount of cash that night at the casino.**

**After a couple of hours of questioning the police thanked her for her time and patience and let her go.**

**As she and Tony drove back to the hotel she explained what it was she did for the Federal Reserve and about the money the police had found in Fred's room. Cases of money laundering had come across Jan's desk on several occasions and it made her feel jumpy that maybe that was the business Fred was in. She snuggled beside Tony, she felt safe with him.**

**The following Sunday evening while they were at dinner Tony told Jan how happy he was with her and that he was in love with her. Jan said she felt the same and as they were drinking coffee Tony produced a ring and asked Jan to marry him. She accepted, she knew this was the man she loved. It was not an island romance, it was not a vacation fling, this was true love and Jan wanted to spend the rest of her life with Tony Oduber.**

**The second week of Jan's vacation they made plans for the wedding. Jan would return to New York, resign her job, give up her apartment, have the movers in and pack up her things and then she would return to Aruba. They would be married within the month.**

**A month later they were married in a small civil ceremony. They were both Catholic but Jan was divorced so they did not even think about a church wedding. After the civil ceremony there was a large reception at the Aruba Caribe Hotel and after the reception Tony had arranged**

for a private jet to fly them to Barbados for their honeymoon where he had booked the best suite at the Sandy Lane Hotel.

## THE HONEYMOON

### Chapter IX

The hotel in Barbados was perfect. The suite was large, lavish and on the beach. The food was gourmet, the weather perfect and the hotel staff attentive, everything was flawless, as it should be for their honeymoon.

Tony had told Jan about the telephone call from Mr. Brathwate and the fax of the men who had killed his first wife and then the article about the Blackheart Man. There were no secrets between them.

On the fifth day of their honeymoon Tony called Mr. Brathwate. Jan was not thrilled with the idea of Tony meeting with anyone who may have anything to do with cutting peoples hearts out of their chest but she understood that this was something that Tony had to do. She would take a taxi into Bridgetown and shop while Tony went and met with Mr. Brathwate.

Mr. Brathwate was surprised when he received the call from Tony and more surprised to hear he was in Barbados and a newly married man, but he agreed to meet with Tony and set the time for the following morning.

Tony was met at the door to Mr. Brathwate by a large, powerful soft spoken black man dressed in expensive slacks, and white shirt. He wore sandals on his feet.

"Mr. Oduber, so nice to meet you, I am Jim Brathwate, come in and sit

**down." Jim Brathwate directed Tony to a large caned chair in the far corner of the large living room.**

**"May I offer you coffee or tea, or if you prefer, a drink?"**

**"Yes, a cup of coffee would be nice." Tony told his host.**

**Jim Brathwate sat in the other caned chair next to Tony. Between the chairs was a mahogany table from which Jim Brathwate pick up a small silver bell and rang it. On the far side of the room a door opened and a large elderly black woman appeared wearing a white starched uniform, a white starched apron over the skirt and a white hat. She also wore white shoes and white stockings, all were spotless.**

**"You ran sir?" It was more of a statement than a question.**

**"Yes, please Gumbs, will you bring two cups of coffee." Mr. Brathwate said to her.**

**"Certainly sir." She spoke as she turned and retraced her steps to the door.**

**"Now Mr. Oduber, may I call you Tony?" Mr. Brathwate began. "And please call me Jim, you father always called me Jim, I think I know why you are here."**

**"Yes, I am sure you do." Tone said. "It is about the two men who killed my first wife and shot me and now I see from the newspaper they to are dead, their hearts cut from their chest." Tony looked straight at Jim Brathwate as he spoke, but he could not read anything into the man's face.**

**"Well Tony." Jim began. "Let me first assure you I am not the Blackheart Man nor am I a person who would contract for someone's death." "I assume you think I had these men killed?"**

**"Yes, the thought crossed my mind." Tony told him.**

**"I am a respected Banister here in Barbados and a long time friend of your fathers. When your wife was shot your father asked me to keep my eyes and ears open and he also gave me a description of the men. It was after they were found killed, by whom I, nor probably anyone else will ever know, but for arguments sake let us just say it was Blackheart Man, it really does not matter, they are dead. Well it was then that I suspected these were the same two who had killed your wife and it was then that I called you."**

**Just as Jim stopped speaking the door opened and Gumbs appeared carryi9ng a tray with coffee, cups, sugar and cream. She walked over and placed the tray on the mahogany table between the two men. Then she poured the coffee.**

**With the coffee poured Jim said; "That will be all Gumbs, I will take it from here."**

**"Yes Sir." Gumbs replied as she turned and walked out of the room.**

**"Your father always drank his coffee black, how do you like your coffee Tony?"**

**"Black also." Tony replied.**

**"Good." Jim answered as he handed the cup of black coffee to Tony.**

**"I myself use sugar, a lot of sugar, it comes from eating the cane as a boy, when you eat cane all your life you become accustom to liking everything sweet." Jim placed three teaspoons of sugar into his coffee and stir.**

**"You seem to know a lot about my father." Tony said. "Where did you meet?"**

**"In Aruba, in the late thirties." I went to Aruba as a boy to look for work and found a job with Lago. On each payday I would go to your father's bank and buy a money draft to send back to my parents here in Barbados, that is how we first met." Jim took a sip of the coffee and looked at Tony.**

**"Well, I am sure my father sold many money drafts to many West Indians who worked for Lago but he did not drink coffee with all of them." "There must be more to the story."**

**"Well, as a matter of fact there is." Jim said and he smiled as he said it. "There is gold, lots of gold, but I suspect you may know something about that yourself." "You must realize by now that your father did not make the fortune you inherited by working his way up within the Aruba Bank. Your father made money is gold, gold that a Mr. Bill Kishman and I found, smelted and then passed on to your father who sold it for us on the Venezuelan market after smuggling into Venezuela." Jim was smiling and took another sip of his coffee.**

**Tony smiled back, he liked Jim and he had seen checks and receipts between his father and Bill Kishman but he had not understood their full meaning. "I know about my inheritance but maybe you better fill me in on the gold and this Bill Kishman." Tony said.**

**Jim placed the coffee cup on the tray, leaned back in his chair, looked at the ceiling for a long time, then he closed his eyes, then he began. "It was a long time ago. I was a young boy, with no future there than being a cane cutter and I knew I did not want to do that all my life. I had heard that there was work in Aruba so I saved a little and my parents helped and I was able to buy passage on a schooner to Aruba. We arrived in Oranjestad, myself and eleven other boys from Barbados, and we walked the entire length of Aruba until we reached San Nicholas and the Lago refinery. Because we could speak English and had strong backs we were hired immediately. The refinery was being built by Americans and none of them could speak Papiamento or Dutch so they preferred to hire English speaking labor. I went to work for Mr. Bill, my**

first job was to direct trucks being loaded with fill dirt, or as they called it, caliche. After that Mr. Bill had me working with him as they built houses in the Colony, roads, an hospital for the oil camp and ball parks, tennis courts and even swimming docks. During those first few years Mr. Bill was the supervisor over the building of the Colony and I was his helper. As the Colony grew they were a need for more brackish water and the well that supplied the brackish water was not producing enough. The original brackish water well was hang dug on to the east of the colony, on the coral cliff above where they built a picnic stand to have parties. Mr. Bill decided that the well had to be expanded and we set to work digging tunnels to get to the source of the brackish water. As we dug the tunnels we found brackish water flowing from lots of cracks in the corral and the well production increased. We installed large electric pumps and the Maga Cora wells, that is what they called the well system was able to keep up with the demand from the new Colony. At some time Mr. Bill and I were in the tunnel examining the wall and Mr. Bill had a face mask with him and said he wanted to go into the water to explosion the tunnel wall under the water. He stripped to his underwear, put on the face mask and slipped into the brackish water. He also had an explosion proof flashlight with him, the type they use in the refinery and it was waterproof. He would dive under the water and swim along the tunnel walls and then come up for a breath of air. I stood by the opening, we had built a shed over the well to protect the pumps and watched as Mr. Bill swam around in the water. The he went down and did not come up. I thought he was dead, there were no bubbles and I could not see him, I did not know what to do when suddenly he appeared and said he had found another cavern. He said it was a short swim under a rock ledge and then you came up in this large cavern. He told me to strip and follow him. I did as I was told and together we swam underwater and came up in a dark, black cavern. The only light was from the flashlight Mr. Bill had. There was water in the cavern but there was also dry places where the water did not reach and we walked up onto the dry area. It was very large and we shone the light around and it all seemed to sparkle. There were piles of rocks that seem to catch the light from the flashlight and sparkle."

**Jim opened his eyes, looked at Tony, sat up and picked up the coffee cup and took a sip.**

**Tony was looking at Jim, he was not sure weather or not to believe him. Was the gold his father said the Indians had hidden?**

**Jim put down the coffee cup, again leaned back in the caned chair, looked at the ceiling and closed his eyes, then he began again. "The cavern was full of piles of yellow rocks and Mr. Bill went over and told me it was gold. Mr. Bill would know these things because he was a geologist but to me it looked like yellow rocks. While we were in the cavern Mr. Bill told me we were to tell no one about this, he then explained how we would come back with gas tanks, a small furnace used by the plumbers to melt lead and gas light and he and I would smelt the gold. We left the cavern and Mr. Bill assigned me to work at the brackish water well every day. I would go to work and he would drop off a tank of gas, a furnace and other supplies and then in he evening he and I would go into the cavern and melt the rock over the furnace and pour the hot golden liquid into molds that Mr. Bill had made at the foundry. All the time we were melting the rocks Mr. Bill kept saying; "How we going to get rid of this stuff, it is illegal for an American to own gold." and it was then that I told Mr. Bill about your father and how I purchased money drafts from him and maybe he could sell the gold for us. When I took Mr. Bill to the bank to meet your father we did not tell him about the gold. Mr. Bill purchased a money draft to sent to his family in Colorado and then after we had been back to the bank four time we talked to your father in private about the gold. Your father, Mr. Bill and I became partners. Every day Mr. Bill assigned me to work at the well, he told his supervisors that I was working on the pipes but I was in the cavern melting the rocks. All this time I was on Lago's payroll and we were mining gold for ourselves. As we accumulated the bars from the melted rocks we would take them to your father. He somehow got them into Venezuela and sold them and then Mr. Bill and your father would decide how to invest the cash we got from the sale of the gold. This went on for two years in which time we managed to remove all the gold rocks from the cavern."**

**Tony spoke, interrupting Jim; "How much gold do you think you got out of the cavern?"**

**Jim looked at him and said; "Lots." "And when the gold was gone we explored and found other caverns but no more gold. We explored until we found our self outside in the daylight, in a hole below the coral. Mr. Bill said he had been there before, when he first came to the island and he knew where the cave was. When we told your father there was no more gold he told us about the story of the coins and how Indians had hidden the gold on the island, but he thought there was more, but we never found it. By now we were wealthy but we all wanted more. Mr. Bill and I explored that cave until it was time for Mr. Bill to go on vacation and we never found any more gold. While on vacation in Colorado Mr. Bill was killed when his car, he was driving, ran off he road. Soon after that England went to war with Germany and your father advised me to leave Lago and go back to Barbados. He told me that he and Mr. Bill had invested the money and I had a third of the money. With the death of Mr. Bill your father made arrangements that his sister in Colorado get his third. Your father was a shrewd investor and he invested money for me and I could go and do as I pleased. It was your father who suggested I return to school and I took his advise, when I returned to Barbados I attended Codrington College on the island and hen after the war I went to England and enrolled at Oxford and got my law degree."**

**"But I have found no mention of investments for you in any of my father's papers." Tony again interrupted Jim.**

**"No, after I graduated from Oxford I returned to Barbados, you father came to see me and told me I should look after my own money and turned over what share of he investments he had made on my behalf to me." Jim looked a little sad as he went on; "Now I am not the investor your father was so I am sure he did much better with his share than Mr. Bill's sister or I did with mine. Mind you, I am not broke, far from it, but I do not follow my money and sometimes things do not work out as**

**they should so as I say, I think you are probably in a much better position than I am."**

**Jim reached over and pick up the coffee cup, the coffee was cold so he put it down, rang the bell and Gumbs appeared soon after.**

**"Will you please bring a fresh pot." He asked as she entered the room.**

**When Gumbs had left the room Jim looked at Tony and said; "I think you can now understand that your father and I had a very close relationship."**

**"Yes, yes, I can see that." Tony said. "I am so glad I came and met you and that you told me the story."**

**Gumbs returned with a fresh pot of coffee from which she filled the two empty cups. Jim put his three teaspoons of sugar in his cup, stirred and coffee and then went on. "When your wife was killed in St. Croix you father was very upset. That was when he called me to see what I could find out, I do have a couple of connections in St. Thomas."**

**"And that led you to the two men?" Tony asked.**

**"No not exactly, the Virgin Island's police are of no help."**

**"Then how did you find them?" Tony was sitting on the edge of the cane chair.**

**"A lucky break, a very lucky break." Jim said; "I put out inquires to the different business partners I have in St. Croix and a Puerto Rican, he and I are partners in a beer distributorship on the island, he heard a rumor that the two men were bragging about the killing. He hired a man to watch them and we learned they were coming to Barbados to get their permanent residences. He had them photographed before they left St. Croix, those were the photos I faxed to you. When you confirmed that they were the men I let it be know around the island of**

**Barbados that they were coming and well, the rest your know."**

**"Did you tell this Blackheart Man?" Tony asked.**

**Jim smiled; "No, I told you before I am a respected banister here on this island but I did let it be know that these two men were no good, somehow who ever this Blackheart fellow is he got the message."**

**Tony watched Jim, his head was back, he was leaning back in the chair, his eyes were closed and his face revealed not a thing.**

**"I owe you a great deal Mr. Brathwate." Was all Tony said.**

**"No, it is I who owe your family a great deal." Jim said. "And you know, we are also business partners, it just does not show on any papers."**

**With that Jim sat up, looked at his watch and said, "Good, it is after twelve, now we can have a rum punch." Again he leaned over and rang the silver bell.**

**"Two rum punches." was all he said to Gumbs as she opened the door.**

**When Gumbs brought the two cocktails Jim raised his glass and said; "To all those how have gone and to the future and whatever it may bring."**

**He and Tony drank.**

**When the drinks were finished Jim walked Tony to the door, they had arranged to met the following day for lunch so Jim could meet Tony's new wife.**

**The Odubers and Jim Brathwate met for lunch and again Tony thanked Jim for all he had done.**

**Back at the Sandy Lane Hotel he and Jan discussed the talk Tony and**

**Jim had about the gold, the coins and the story of the Indians. It did not take long from them to agree, Tony was wealthy, they did not need additional wealth and if there was additional gold hidden someplace in Aruba, so be it they were not interested in finding it, they were happy with each other and want they had.**

## **THE FIFTH COIN**

### **Chapter X**

**Iain McDonald passed away on March 1, 1992 in Inverness, Scotland, he was eighty years old. His obituary stated he was survived by his son, Murdo, his only child who also resided in Inverness.**

**Murdo McDonald, son of Iain and Margaret McDonald was indeed the last remaining member of that branch of the McDonald family. He was forty eight years old and packing his father's belongings. As soon as his father had died Murdo had sold the house, his mother Margaret had died two years before her husband, now, with the house sold Murdo had to remove all of the personal belonging, he had promised the new owners to have the house vacated by the weekend.**

**Murdo removed a small box from his father's bureau draw and sat on the bed going through the content of the box. The box was full of trinkets. He dumped the content of the box on the bed and spread it out. There was the odd single cuff link who's mate had long since been lost. All of the single cuff links were either solid silver or gold so Murdo set them aside. There was a couple of gold tie tacks, the sort that are no longer used.**

As he was sorting through the things from the box he found the white disk. He remembered his father showing it to him when he was a boy and explaining how he had found it in the sand while standing look out duty on the island of Aruba. Murdo laid the coin to the side and made a note, he would write a letter to the Aruba Chamber of Commerce and inquire weather there was a museum on the island that may be interested in the white disk, Murdo had no use for it and he felt it really needed to be returned to where it was found.

It was a couple of weeks before Murdo got around to writing to the Aruba Chamber of Commerce and several weeks after that before a reply came. The Chamber stated that there was two museums on Aruba, the Archaeological Museum operated by the government and the Aruba Museo Mumismatico started by a Mr. Odor and still in operation and owned by Mr. J. Mario Odor.

Murdo decided that since the disk was probably some sort of a coin he would send it to the Museo Numismatico. He packaged the coin in a small box and wrote a letter explaining that his father had found the disk on the south coast of the island in 1940 while being stationed there with the Scotts Highlanders. Murdo went on to explain that the coin had been a box until his father had died and now Murdo, the son, felt the disk needed to be returned from where it came and he hopped that Mr. Odor would accept the disk and maybe put it on display.

Mr. Odor was at the post office picking up the mail and in his days mail was the box from Murdo McDonald. The package was insured and Mr. Odor had to sign for it. Mr. Odor had signed for many boxes in the past, people and collectors were always sending him coins and he ordered many coins from other dealers and collectors so it was not unusual for him to receive such a package.

When Mr. Odor returned home he opened the small package and found the note. As he read he said to him self, it must be a Quiripa. After reading the letter he looked in the box and found the Quiripa. It was smaller than any he had seen before and as he turned it over he was the mark. The mark looked like the number symbol, #.

**Mr. Odor went to the case that held the other Quiripa in his collection and unlocked the case. He slid open the glass door and placed his new Quiripa in among the other on display and re-locked the case. Then he sat down and wrote a letter to Mr. Murdo McDonald thanking him for the Quiripa, explained to him that it was a form of money used by the Indians in by gone days and assured Mr. McDonald that the coin would indeed be displayed and that there would be a card next to it explaining that it was found by Mr. Iain McDonald, a Scott Highlander on duty in Aruba during World War II.**

**Then Mr. Odor thought about Junie Cruz, he had been interested in Quiripa with marks and now Junie was in Aruba, running his own construction company. Mr. Odor made a note to call Junie Cruz and tell him of his new Quiripa.**

**In 1985 Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd. closed the refinery. As outlined in the terms of the lease they began to dismantle the refinery and tank farm. Junie Cruz got a lot of the work.**

**On April 1, 1992 the Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd. and the Aruba Government came to an agreement and dissolved the lease before the refinery was completely removed. The Aruba Government had found a buyer for the refinery, Coastal Petroleum would purchase what was left of the old refinery and begin production.**

**The gate blocking the entrance to the old oil camp, Lago Colony, was removed, it was considered by many to be a symbol of American Colonialism and now it was gone and the island was whole, it residences could freely travel to that part of the island.**

**Junie Cruz's crane was used to lift the two large steel gates off the hinges and open Sero Colorado to the island. There were speeches and a ceremony with the removal of the gates and Mr. Odor was a guest. It was there he saw Junie Cruz, he had forgotten to call him about the Quiripa.**

**"Mr. Cruz, it is so nice to see your." Mr. Odor was walking over to greet Junie. "I just want to tell you that some time back I received another Quiripa, it will be of interest to you as it has marking on it."**

**Junie shook hands with Mr. Odor and then said; "Thank you so mach, I will come by the museum tomorrow to look at it."**

**To himself Junie that, what a day, now I have the five coins, Lago has no claim to the cave and the gold will be mine.**

**It never entered Junie's mind that someone may have been there already.**

**THE END**

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