

# **Secret of Treasure Mountain**

**by  
Dr. Dave Oester**

Secret of Treasure Mountain  
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ONE

*Long Valley  
North Central Nevada*

Fate had decided James Akins destiny three days before when he had completed the final section of the seismic survey. His crew had laid out the last string of seismic geophones. The seismic thumper truck with its mounted hydraulic vibrator discharged its powerful shock wave deep into the earth. After the discharge of the shock wave, the geophones would record the corresponding times of the shock waves reflected from various subsurface structures. The shock waves traveled at different velocities depending on the density of the material and the corresponding time would indicate the type of lithology located in the subsurface strata's. The purpose for the seismic survey was to discover any subsurface faults or fractures that would disqualify this lease for the Toxic Waste Depository Station Site.

The analog data log chart generated from the compilation of times recorded at each geophone revealed massive fractures and several major down-dip fault blocks. Unfortunately, these major down-dip fault blocks disqualified this lease.

This site was geologically unstable, a time bomb ready to explode. Any major earthquake could trigger a down-dip fault expansion that would penetrate into the basement rock, shattering the older and brittle Precambrian rock.

After the survey was completed and his crew had departed, Akins had remained behind at his campsite so he could take in some fishing in the nearby lake. He had heard that fishing was good this time of year.

"Fresh trout would taste good for dinner," Akins smiled as he looked at his rod and reel hanging on the pegs in his trailer.

Akins had heard about Ruby Lake when he conducted his initial terrain inspection of the lease to decide how many crew members he would need to assign for the job. He thought back to the local chatter he heard at the cafe,

"Yes sir, Ruby lake has some of the biggest cutthroat trout around here." A tall man with a lean hard look swallowed another sip of black coffee and said, "No body has ever been skunked at Ruby!

An older weather worn rancher sitting a few tables away added, "Good time of the year to do a little fishing."

The relentless heat rippled across the barren desert as Akins remembered his annoying sensation that someone had been watching him but he never saw anyone or anything. Even after his crew had departed and Akins had returned to his trailer, he had felt uneasy. Damn, the papers have been rearranged! Akins said.

Someone had shuffled through his papers on his desk as if searching for something. Akins had leaned back in his chair and tried to recall the exact position he had left his papers hours earlier. He wondered if it had to do with the man named Watson that he met yesterday at the tavern. Watson had strongly suggested that he file his geological report recommending the site despite the outcome of his investigation.

"File that geology report recommending the site and your Reno checking account will grow by \$25,000.00." Watson said with a false smile void of warmth and concern.

"I will not doctor my report to reflect a favorable position unless the lease shows negative geological instability." Akins said as his voice raised an octave.

Watson looked at Akins with a frown and said, "What can it hurt to recommend the site?"

"Are you insane! This site is for a toxic waste depository. Don't you realize the potential repercussions if they build a toxic waste depository site on active seismic fault structures? I would be taken to court with so many lawsuits!" Akins yelled, his cheeks getting red as he choked back the bile from Watson snide remarks about falsifying his report.

Watson's eyes narrowed as his lips curled, transforming the face into a harsh mean stare as he said, "Hell, it makes no difference to us. One way or another, we will get what we want!"

Akins had shaken his head as he sat at his desk. Now was not the time to worry about Watson and his threats. The survey job was completed and he was going to take a few days off and do a little fishing for rainbow trout. Outside the trailer, the sun blazed down without relief, the heat gently rising off the desert floor like shimmering aspens in a gentle breeze.

Akins stepped outside his trailer and looked at his watch, then wiped the sweat from his brow. He thought of the six-pack of beer in the cold icy stream next to his trailer.

"It's a good time for a cold beer." Akins said.

The ravine was thirty yards from his trailer. At the bottom of that ravine flowed an iccold mountain stream that chilled his six-pack of beer.

He climbed down the ravine and retrieved an ice-cold can of beer. He popped the tab and took a long swallow. Suddenly, he heard an explosion that shook the ground, knocking him off his feet, spilling his can of beer. Metal debris fell like hot irons into the ravine.

"Shit, what was that?" Akins said as he got to his feet.

He recognized part of the debris as coming from his fifth-wheel trailer. He slowly climbed up the ravine and cautiously stuck his head over the top of the ravine, staring in the direction of his trailer.

The explosion had demolished the trailer and scattered burning fragment about the ground. His truck was in flames as thick black clouds of smoke churned from the cab. The shock of seeing his truck and fifth-wheel destroyed was nothing compared to the nauseating feeling that assailed him as he realized that only moments before he was in that trailer.

Someone was trying to kill him.

Suddenly, an angry bullet impacted the ground next to his head, knocking up dust. Akins realized with a horror that someone was shooting at him. He threw himself to the bottom of the ravine as several more bullets battered the spot he had moved from just seconds earlier. He ran upstream, away from burning debris and the sniper.

Now, three days later he was still running. He had thought he lost his pursuer but each time he discovered someone was still on his trail. Survival was the only thing on Akins mind. He knew why they were trying to kill him.

"It was my damn report!" Akins muttered to himself.

"Well, to hell with them, I am going to survive and file that damn report or people are going to die." Akins said to himself.

"Perhaps not today or tomorrow but surely people would die." Akins said as the thought echoed through his mind. Although Akins felt tired, he had to keep moving. He had hiked to the barren ridge summit in the final twilight of the setting sun. Exhausted and weary, he slouched in the dim light against a rocky outcrop of limestone, glancing at the next ridge several miles away. He would rest for a few hours before attempting the next ridge.

His tattered and torn clothes, ripped by the jagged rocks as dried blood encrusted his hands and knees. The wind was picking up from the West. Akins pulled his jacket collar up over his ears. This was going to be another cold night.

The barren bleak Nevada landscape reflected an alien world in the cold harsh light of late September as James Akins nervously glanced over his shoulder.

The sounds of phantom boots scraping across jagged rocks echoed in the distant. The sounds were coming nearer, Akins slid down into the arroyo, and ran silently along the bottom, praying that he had gained sufficient distance to provide a safe margin between the killer and himself, but he could not shake the nagging doubt in the back of his mind.

Twenty minutes later, Akins climbed out of the arroyo and made his way up the butte overlooking the valley. He hid behind a rocky outcropping and searched for any movement in

the valley below. Not seeing anyone, Akins slumped to the ground and put his hands to his head.

“God, this can’t be happening,” said Akins as he rubbed his forehead slowly, leaving dark brown smudges on his forehead. *I have to keep moving or I am dead!*

He was still suffering from the shock that someone was trying to kill him.

He knew his odds of surviving the next twenty-four hours were between slim to none. Tired, hungry, and fearful for his life, his mind failed to focus on the threat, and instead regress back to his childhood nightmare. His nightmarish demon had glowing red eyes, a gaping mouth with protruding blood soaked fangs. Long narrow bony fingers would reach out and impale his shoulder, pulling him closer to that gaping mouth.

It was at this point in the dream that he would awaken in a cold sweat, drenched to the skin. He had hated the nights and the evil that lurked therein. He again shook his head as he attempted to gain control over his fears, both real and imagined.

*“Shit, I got to stay focused,”* thought Akins.

Twilight was rapidly descending; the rugged peaks became lost in the sea of shadows. If he could lose himself in those shadows, he might gain freedom. He slowly arose from behind the rocky outcropping, lingered for a moment to study his back trail before forcing himself to struggle over more jagged rocks, desperately maneuvering toward the crest, trying to put as much distance between him and the killer. Perhaps over this next ridge he would find a paved highway and help from a passing motorist. His mind drifted back to the stranger that had changed his life for the worst. *He had offered me \$25,000 and I told him to take a hike.*

He remembered the stranger eyes, they were cold and void of emotions. He had been sitting at the bar enjoying a bottle of Coors when a stranger had bellied up to the bar and ordered a Bud. The stranger looked at him and said, You can walk away with 25 big ones for filing a favorable report with the EPA.

It had taken Akins by surprise.

It had been only three days, but it seemed like a lifetime ago. He should have listened. Now he was exhausted and weary. He slouched in the dim light against a rocky outcrop of limestone, glancing at the next ridge several miles away. He would rest for a few minutes before attempting the next ridge. His unseen killer was tracking him would not rest. It was funny how fate had turned his life into a living nightmare.

He wondered if he would survive the night. The cold wind was picking up from the west as he pulled his jacket collar up over his ears. Akins heard a sound and spun around. The night air was still.

*“Shit!”*

The killer smiled as he watched Akins look around. A small red dot shot out and moved back and forth across Akins head until it stopped between his eyes. A single shot echoed across the valley.

TWO

*Black Rock Desert  
Northwest Corner of Nevada*

Three years after Akins death, Little Mountain Waste Depository Station became a part of the Black Rock Desert. The station stood outlined against the cold morbid landscape of Nevada's rugged northwestern barren desert. The construction cost of Little Mountain Waste Depository Station topped three billion dollars. The subsurface storage chambers were excavating by digging deep vertical shaft into the Precambrian age bedrock or basement rock and then carving massive horizontal tunnels out of the solid granite. Finally, chambers hewed out of the solid rock that ran at right angles to the horizontal tunnel provided gigantic storage rooms. These dark, dreary underground chambers would hold the deadliest assortment of chemicals, toxins, poisons, and bio compounds ever conceived by man.

The facilities had incorporated hi-tech security; each chamber had wall and ceiling mounted video cameras'. In addition, olfactory sensors placed at ground level and at ceiling height tested for gaseous emissions. The designers, fearful of contamination between chambers installed airtight titanium doors six feet thick and twelve feet tall, and operated on a time lock to insure against unauthorized entrance.

The Waste Depository Station complex employed the latest in computer technology. The processor received data-feeds directly from all video cams, temperature, olfactory and door sensors. The designers, aware of the Murphy's Law installed backup systems and redundancy in the construction of the security system. The computer system was designed to be one hundred percent automated; the complete operational management of the station without any need for human intervention.

The primary mainframe computer automatically updated the backup computer via a wireless LAN network. In the event that the primary computer mainframe should go off-line for any reason, the backup computer mainframe would automatically kick in and assume the primary control of the network.

It was no wonder that technicians were bored, after all, sitting at the control panels monitoring each of the computer monitors from inside the control station was like watching a lifeless scene on a two dozen television sets, all at the same time.

Perimeter security was the state of the art with 3-CCD video cameras, pressure plates, thermal and infrared sensors and olfactory sensors placed along the high voltage fence and at critical locations throughout the Station. Since 9/11, Homeland Security issued regular updates and guidelines for increased security at sensitive areas. The Waste Depository Station, classified as a potential site for terrorism, was serious about its security.

If terrorist breached the security and gained access to the inner storage area of the Station, the master computer issue two commands.

The first command would issue a lock down order locking all titanium doors in the subterranean chambers for 72 hours. After the 72 hours, the only way to unlock the massive titanium doors was by entering a twenty-two digit encrypted password.

The second command issued by the computer would immediately uplink an emergency signal to a satellite in geosyn orbit that would downlink to a Counterinsurgent Response Team on standby in Reno, Nevada.

According to the Little Mountain Waste Depository Station News Releases, the Little Mountain site was the safest containment site in North America. Fail safe procedures guaranteed absolute containment of toxic waste products. The computers guaranteed that no human intervention, either accidental or intentional, could breach the safe guards. The News Release further stated that no terrorist attack could breach the containment of the subsurface chambers.

The solitary Little Mountain Depository Station was maintaining a busy schedule of around the clock deliveries. Beyond the underground vault monitoring, the Station used the mainframe computer system for all above ground duties. The computer analyzed the video data and automatically routed the various incoming shipments to proper docking bays to speed the off-loading of the toxic waste products.

Routinely, the maintenance crew had little to do because of the computerization of the Station. In time, they became dependent upon the computerized safeguard alarms and failed to notice small fractures developing in the rock floors of certain chambers caused by small earthquake tremors.

## THREE

### *Los Angeles Basin Southern California*

The San Andreas Fault meanders in a north-south direction through the Los Angeles Basin. The northern end of the San Andreas Fault was a mere five hundred miles, as the crow flies, from the Little Mountain Waste Depository Station. The Basin contained hundreds if not thousands of smaller fault and fracture lines, most still hidden from seismology scientists who attempt to study them. The entire Los Angeles Basin is a myriad of subsurface fault lines interwoven like a giant dream catcher's web. This insidious netting of fault lines and fractures was primed like a pistol with a cocked hammer with the hammer being the charged dormant subsurface faults blocks because of prolonged aggravated tension stress generated by movement in the tectonic plates.

Historically, this geological region has the most active fault lines in the United States with tens of thousands of minor earthquakes occur each year. Californians, saturated by the media concerning the potential threats of living in an earthquake zone, become deaf to the message. The most talked about future events was the Coming of the Big Quake. Radio and television station would air special reports about the potential Big Quake each time a minor quake occurred. However, for the most part, Californians tended to ignore the potential hazards of living on top of active faults. After all, why worry about something that may never happen.

However, today, the doom and gloom of the soothsayers had arrived!

It started on a sunny afternoon. A day like most other days, the temperature was in the low seventies, the sky was brown with smog and other pollutants, and the traffic heavy on the freeways. Suddenly, the paved streets started shaking and swaying with horrible violence. Then a deafening roar, louder than the roar of freight trains, lacerated the normal traffic sounds of the day. Slowly the ground vibrations increased as glass-and-steel office towers and high-rise buildings began to rock and sway as palm trees in a gale force storm. Soon power lines snapped from downed poles and buildings started to crumble; lights blink out across the city like dominos' tumbling down. This was the beginning of the Big Quake that Californians had dreaded for years.

Old brick buildings collapsed onto parked cars, blood, carnage, and chaos everywhere. Stupendous fires erupted from broken gas mains shooting flames' hundred's of feet into the air, spreading liquid fire into adjacent buildings. Broken water mains spewed precious water into the air as flooded streets hampering the fire fighters and cars alike. Suddenly there was no water to put out thousands of fires. What the earthquake left standing the pursuing fires destroyed in the aftermath. Substantial destruction occurred along the freeway system as cement overpasses crumpled and plummeted to the ground amid broken cars and overturned buses filled with screaming cries for help

Wailing cries for loved ones, killed or missing among the rumbles of homes, cars and buildings, infused amid clouds of dust, ash, and black smoke. The big Quake had arrived and the grim reaper was walking the land with determination. Older and less protected building's smashed flat as if a giant hand had knocked over a house of cards. The seismic recorders registered eight point seven on the Richter scale during the morning rush traffic. This was the largest and by far the strongest quake to hit the inhabitants of Southern California. Later, FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, would assess untold billions of dollars in damages. However, the most significant incident beyond death and destruction was the immense subsurface shock wave generated and propelled along an undiscovered fault line in a north northeast bearing, focusing directly toward the northwest Nevada desert. The super-shock waves amplified along its journey, as the amplitude and magnitude of the "L" Wave grow to be ten times more powerful then at the epicenter. This subsurface fault line intersected other faults

and fractures acting like railroad tracks propelling the shock wave along its path directly toward Little Mountain Waste Depository Station.

The sudden friction caused by the dynamic and critical shock wave superheated the limestone stratum generating intense strain on the subsurface formations. The softer limestone cracked as the brittle limestone yields to the hammering induced by pressure waves and superheated temperatures. Newly evolved fractures and fissures become wider and expanded without restraint, buckling under the terrible and acute pressure of the murderous shock waves. Fractures and fissures continued expanding downward into the Precambrian basement rock. The older and brittle Precambrian age rock allowed the newly formed fractures to penetrate into the basement rock, intersecting the burial vaults of Little Mountain Toxic Waste Burial Station. The newly hewed chambers, constructed within the basement rock, vibrated severely from the pressure shock wave. Alarm sensors went off as enormous chunks of rock fell from the ceiling, crashing into the special constructed containers labeled 0-2-45-196 and 7-6-46-385 causing cracks to appear in both containers.

Slowly a clear chemical substance, cultured as a deadly level-four virus, oozes from 0-2-45-196 sluggishly onto the stone floor, trickling between fragmented rocks and a newly formed break in the stone floor. At the same time, the cracks in broken container 7-6-46-385 allowed an experimental bio compound to flow onto the stone floor and into the newly fracture break in the stone floor. The toxic virus and the experimental bio compound found mutual chemical compatibility within moments of contact with each other.

Slowly, the deadly blend seeps down into the fractures and fissures of the earth. The toxic level-four virus-compound trickles along the fissures until it reached a down-dip fault-block angling deep into the earth. The fault-block ended over a small underground reservoir filled with stale brackish water. Sluggishly, the deadly toxic-compound mixture forms small beads on the ceiling over the brackish water. As gravity exertion on the beads overcomes the surface tension, the bead drops into the brackish water far below, one drop at a time.

The intense shock waves had stressed faults that passed through the energy force into surrounding rocks resulting in substantial fractures like a rock hitting a vehicle's windshield. Massive lines of fractured rocks spread in all directions. The infested brackish water slowly migrated downward, following the laws of gravity and the fractured rocks. Finally, the tainted water seeps into a small underground river. The underground river slowly flowed through shattered faults and fractures until just a trickle remains, terminating in the rock ceiling above a subterranean cavern along the Oregon coast.

The deadly trickle of water slowly seeps from the ceiling crack into a pristine pool of water, drop by drop. Later, a bipedal apelike creature covered with long body hair walks to the pool of pristine water and drinks from it. All of a sudden, the apelike creature stands upright as blood stream quickly assimilates the toxic-bio-compound. The creature shakes its hairy head as if to stabilize himself, swaying as if drunk. Minutes later, the creature collapses to the ground, falling into a deep genetic-altering state of unconsciousness. Upon awakening, the genetic altering toxic-bio-compound had reacted with the basic cellular structure of the creature. The awakened mutated beast has had its memories altered, replaced with images and emotions induced by the toxic-bio-compound.

As if opening the door into the blackness of Hell and releasing imprisoned demons, the toxic-compound reconfigured the mentality of this once peaceful and harmless Sasquatch. The transformation was complete, red eyes flared brightly, long sharp fangs suddenly protruded from its large mouth. The Sasquatch had awakened to the dark side of its primeval existence as intense hatred flared inside its mind; it hungered for human food! The mutated demon from Hell stood up and arched its back toward the ceiling of the cavern, then released a gut-retching shriek that echoed in the darkness of the gigantic cavern. The beast emerged from the cavern would now fulfill the ancient curse uttered so long ago by the Indians of this land.

## FOUR

### *Town of Seaside Northern Oregon Coast*

Dr. Dave Starr, age thirty-eight, was five foot nine-inches, medium built with blue eyes, brown hair, and a distinguish beard. He had two loves, his first love was working as an exploration geologist, and his second love was solving mysteries.

He owned a geophysical consulting business that specialized in subsurface geoimaging for the petroleum industry. His patent technology could evaluate, correlate, and map subsurface lithographic formations employing proprietary Fast Fourier Transform software designed for subsurface geo-magnetic spectral analysis. This Fourier Transform analyzes the periodic and nonperiodic wave-shapes; each wave-shape having a unique spectral frequency. The geo-imaging system recognizes the naturally extremely low frequencies associated with the earth geomagnetic fields, separating the individual frequencies of the subsurface stratum's formations.

Starr had started out in the oil and gas patch ten years earlier when he leased a used air rotary rig capable of shadow drilling of depths under 1,000 feet. His drilling venture did not last long; the shallow oil became a flash in the pan. He wanted to play in the big boy s league, drilling to six thousand feet deep for huge oil reserves, but at a million dollars a well he would need to find someone with deep pockets. For him to find those deep pockets, he would have to put on his dog and pony shows to attract them. In the end, the dog and pony shows only attracted con artist and hustlers looking for easy money using his dog and pony shows. He woke up one morning and decided that his life had taken a wrong turn and he needed to get back on the road again. His love was not the drilling of oil wells, but in the search for them. His technology allowed him to venture away from off-set drilling prospects and focus on wildcat leases that were outside of existing oil fields, found on virgin leases never tested before by seismic survey teams.

Starr had become addicted to the oil and gas patch; the excitement of discovering crude oil was like an elixir that gave him vitality. He racked up remarkable success using his technology to find oil in the shallow formations of central Kentucky and the deeper formations found in Texas before he was ready to venture to the land of camels and turbans, subcontracting to Standard of Texas who held major concessions in Saudi Arabia.

The arid desert of Saudi Arabia did more to change Starr then just the experience, the long hot hours running geo-imaging scans started to eat away at his soul, chewing out small chucks and spitting them out to bleach in the hot desert sand. In time, he came to lose his yearning to trek the world for crude oil. The shimmering beauty of black gold no longer energized him, the desert heat that leached the last drop from his soul. One night as he sat out on the sands looking at the stars, he wondered what it would be like to walk along the sands of a beach bordered by the wide expanse of blue water. *Maybe one day I will walk along the beach picking up sand dollars.*

Starr labored for the next two months completing his contract with Standard of Texas, and at the end of the contract period, he did not renew. He gave his notice to Standard of Texas and boarded the next flight back to Houston.

When he arrived in Houston, he stowed his geo-imaging equipment in storage, paying for a years lease. Houston was hot, humid and layered with smog, no place to find the peace and quiet his soul demanded. He needed a change of pace and a change of geography, a place far away from drilling platforms and oil wells. *Where should I settle, the Atlantic or the Pacific Ocean?*

Starr flipped a coin and the Pacific Ocean won. He would find a town along the coast to

park his tired body and walk on the sandy beaches until he got tired of them. He found the perfect town, not too big and not too small and it bordered the Pacific Ocean. He moved into a small cottage next to the Twelfth Street Bridge and the Necanicum River. His cottage was only a few blocks from the beach and each morning as he sat at his dining room table, he would watch the fishermen and crabbers fishing from the bridge.

Starr stood on the sand dunes watching the evening sunset. The wind was coming in from the ocean, carrying the strong scent of salt, as the wind rippled through his hair. He closed his eyes and simply experienced the moment. The coastal atmosphere was much slower pace than the oil patch; here the beachcombers walked the beaches after a storm looking for Japanese glass floats washed ashore. Maybe he would become a beach bum, collecting for the lost treasures from the sea.

The sunset faded away to dark angry clouds hanging in a cloud bank low on the horizon. The lone lighthouse built upon a rocky outcropping stood a mile west of the large basaltic promontory known as Tillamook Head. The strong winds that always preceded the southwest to northeast storm patterns had arrived. He could feel the moisture in the air now and the wind gusts getting stronger.

*I love a stormy night.* Starr thought as he walked toward his cottage.

## FIVE

*Gearhart, Oregon*

*A few miles north of Seaside*

Sitting cross-legged next to the campfire, the old Indian stared into the flames, his eyes locked in a trance like state. His mind drifted back to the times of Wahanta, the grandson of Chief Wahanna of the Clatsop Indian tribe. He remembered the times well, for he was preparing to become a medicine man. He recalled sitting around the camp fires listening to Wahanta tell of a time to come when a great evil would befall the White Man and force him from the land of the Clatsop Indians. It would come when his tribe had all but vanished leaving only a few tribal members to witness the coming of this evil.

Wahanta stare into the flames.

The present merged with the past and the past became today.

The ancient legends told of a time when the Great Fire Spirit named Ekahni had banished the deity, Neakarny, from the coastal region to protect the Indian people from his damaging influence. Neakarny was punished for creating the Wild Man Beast and for encouraging the Wild Man Beast to kill the Indian People. The Great Fire Spirit, Ekahni, had prevented Neakarny from committing more treachery by transforming him into a pillar of stone that would rest upon the face of Neahkahnne Mountain, south of Cannon Beach. Ekahni had proclaimed his eternal curse that Neakarny could only escape from his prison when hatred and bitterness filled the hearts of the White Man. When the time of change occurred, the Wild Man Beast would then become the avenging demon of death.

Wahanta faded back to another time and place. As a young brave, he was in training to become a Medicine Man. He remembered sitting around a campfire and asking his mentor about the Wild Man Beast.

The Wild Man Beast was an angry spirit who dwells in the body of a nine-foot giant and weights more than a horse, said his mentor.

"Why is the spirit angry?"

"The Great Fire Spirit made the Wild Man Beast evil and dangerous.

"What makes the spirit evil?"

"The Wild Man Beast is evil because he steals our women and children and consumes their flesh and drinks their blood. He lives in the haunts of the underworld."

"Where are the haunts of the underworld?" Wahanta asked.

"The 'haunts of the underworld' are the hidden lava tunnels that are home to this evil. Wild Man Beast, deep inside the mountain of the Great Eagle Spirit who has kept this evil demon a prisoner."

"How did the Great Eagle Spirit imprison this evil demon?"

"The Great Eagle Spirit had special magic stones that prevent the evil demon from returning to this world.

Later Wahanta had accepted this sacred task of teaching the young braves of his tribe during their rites of passage. He would take the young men to the sacred mountain and there under the fullness of the moon, he would reenact the story of the Great Fire Spirit, the evil Neakarny, and the terrible Wild Man Beast.

The memories faded away as he stared into the coals. He lifted his head as the pallid smoke of the cedar campfire drifted upward, filtering through the branches of the alders and firs as it twisted and turned slowly skyward. An aroma of cedar smoke permeating the green needles of the firs like fresh baked bread. His fire had burned down to the soft blood-red coals silently signaling the ending of one phase and the beginning of another.

The old Indian could sense a change in the affairs of men as emotions associated with anger and hatred kindled the fires of hostilities in men and women as it spread across the land.

The Fox News and CNN Headline News seem to be dedicated to airing stories of death and terrorism since 9/11. The government was eroding individual freedoms under the Patriot Act and people were feeling the injustices as if the angry sting of a whip hit their backs. Anger and negativity spread like wildfire. The time of the evil Neakarny prophecy was at hand. Slowly Wahanta got to his feet, kicked sand unto the few glowing coals.

*"It is time for a vision quest."*

End of the Five Free Chapters.