

This is a fictionalized autobiographical odyssey that's basically a memoir.

Seeds in the Wind - Book 1

by James D. Gutierrez

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Seeds in the Wind

Book 1



An Entirety by
James D. Gutierrez
(as Jahthra)

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First Edition

Part One

FROM "THE LEGENDS OF CINNABAR"
(Hooked, Lined, and Sinkered)

PREFACE

The man known as Jahthra was brought into this world as James Delmar Gutierrez on December 13, 1944 in Youngstown, Ohio. Important personal landmarks are documented throughout his text. Jahthra never cuts his hair or shaves, eats only natural foods, and doesn't use any alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, drugs, sugars, or people.

What you are about to read is an autobiographical odyssey which begins with a series of letters that have been edited in order to delete personal references to the children for whom they were written. The time is summer's end, 1991, when Jahthra was living alone in the Allegheny National Forest region of Forest County, Pennsylvania. His one-room rustic cabin is without electricity, telephone, or indoor plumbing; and he must carry his water from a nearby spring. Simplicity is his maxim; peace and quiet, his solace.

The stage is now set . . .

Act I

HOOKED

LETTER #1 -- Follow The Path

When she walked - she was like a rainbow.
When she smiled - she was like a star.
When she talked - she was like a songbird.
When she touched you - she was like the wind.
And people came from near and far
To hear the songs by Cinnabar.

- from "The Legends of Cinnabar"

ATTENTION: Follow THE PATH.

It was a misty morning, the kind that looks like smoke, and the trees were breaking the early Sun into solid beams of light. I'd been walking all night long, and now I needed to find a suitable place to rest. But *that's* when I heard the horses. I couldn't believe my ears because no one around here had horses, at least no one that I knew. And even if someone did, I couldn't figure out what they were doing in that part of the woods so early in the day. And from the sound of things they were coming my way - fast!

But it didn't start with the horses (not by a long shot!). I know that this may sound a little crazy to you, because that's the way I felt about it at first. For there I was: living my happy hermit's life; minding my own business (monkey-business mostly); feeling safe and secure in my cabin; spending my days working on the book that's been one of my life's major projects, day after day, year after year. So one afternoon when I walked to the spring where I get my water every

day and I found a strange kind of jar with a note inside, well, you might imagine my curiosity and also my initial mistrust.

The note was written in a way that I can only describe as being painted. It wasn't very long, and it wasn't very complicated, but was it ever mysterious! I began this letter by giving you a copy, so if it had you wondering what it was all about when you read it, just think how I felt when I discovered it. My mind was off to the races with questions:

(Cinnabar?? Cinnabar? Who's Cinnabar? I've never heard of her. Follow THE PATH? Path? What path? Am I supposed to follow a path? Why? Where does it go? Okay, who's the wise-guy? YOU CAN COME OUT NOW!)

But no one came out. No one answered my call. I was all alone. And although I basically mistrusted the note, I . . . was . . . hooked. That exotic name! Cinnabar! The very sound of it was enough to keep it popping up in my mind throughout the rest of the day. In fact, for some reason, whenever I read the note (especially if I read it out loud - which I did, over and over), I'd get a goose-pimply feeling on my insides.

But it was a good kind of feeling: a lot like when you know something good is going to happen the next day and you can hardly wait, and you get so excited that it's hard to fall asleep that night, and you keep trying to wish yourself to sleep so the good surprise of tomorrow will come along sooner, and the more you wish and think about it, the more wide awake you become. And although you somehow finally do manage to fall asleep, you're up and ready to go earlier than just any old ordinary day (like a school day).

Well, that's the way that note took a hold of me. I could hardly sleep at all. Those words would run through my mind, over and over and over, all night long. And then during the day, I would just sit and look at that strange jar.

The jar was perfectly round, about the size of a grapefruit, and was made out of something like glass (but it wasn't glass). It was sort of frosty, but I could see inside. There was a circular crack in the jar,

and in the center of that area was a small hole, a hole just big enough to stick one of my fingertips in. It took me awhile when I first found it to realize this section was the lid, for it popped off when I inserted my finger. I spent two days playing around with that jar, and then as if I wasn't already having trouble sleeping, I began to hear singing in the night. I started to doubt my sanity at this point.

The singing had such a faraway sound, such an unfamiliar quality, that at first I thought it was the wind. At least that's what I kept telling myself. But after a while I could hear a growing chanting kind of a chorus, and it eventually sounded like people shouting Cinnabar! Cinnabar!

I ran outside and stood on the porch to listen, but the sounds seemed to be moving away, heading farther into the big woods, and I couldn't tell for sure exactly what I'd heard, but it wasn't the wind, no way.

Finding notes in a jar was one thing, even if the writing was something like I'd never seen before and that old jar was such a mystery. But hearing people singing in the forest and hearing chanting in the night, that was a different ballgame. So I planned to stay dressed the next night, and if I heard any singing or chanting again, I'd be ready to track it down. Even if it turned out to be some camper's radio, I had to know about it.

Fortunately, there was a Full-Moon the next night and the sky was clear, a beautiful warm summer night. The Moon had just come up over the treetops in the east when the singing began, and I took off after it like I was the one who was *IT* in a game of Hide and Seek.

At first I followed the regular trail I always use when gathering firewood, and it wasn't long before something caught my eye: a flash of moonlight reflected off a piece of glass. Maybe it was some hunter's old beer bottle but I was drawn to it like a magnet, and my heart almost stopped when I realized that it was another one of those strange jars. And this one sort of glowed in the dark! There was something inside, and when I opened it I found another note. This one simply said "THE PATH". As I stood there holding that note up in the moonlight, my thoughts went wild and I realized I was beginning to feel a little bit scared.

The singing brought me back into focus, and as I turned from my thoughts I could see what looked to be a path leading through the woods. I'd spent a lot of time back there, but this was a path I'd never noticed before.

So off I went, following THE PATH, and every once in a while I'd hear the singing up ahead, so I knew that at least THE PATH was going in the right direction. And the singing was always followed by that Cinnabar! Cinnabar! chorus, and I'd get that feeling all over again that I told you about before.

Then, after I'd been walking for about an hour I found another one of those old jars. There wasn't any note inside, but this clearly signified that I was still on THE PATH. I even began laughing when that second one appeared because this was just like in one of those classic fairy tales. But instead of following a trail of bread crumbs, I was following one of round jars.

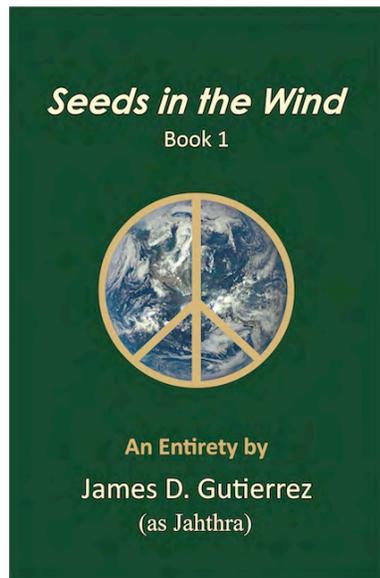
The moon was high in the sky by the time I'd discovered the third jar, so I knew the time was at least midnight. And the reality of *that* suddenly put the fear of my possible craziness back in my mind . . .

(Okay, it's the middle of the night and I'm way down someplace deep in the woods where I've never been before. I'm following a bunch of old jars that glow in the dark and hear singing that never gets any louder no matter how much farther I go. And maybe I won't even be able to find my way back home!)

And while all this was running through my mind, I knew that I had to go on, I knew I had to find out what this was all about, had to know where THE PATH would lead me and who was singing that captivating song.

So on I walked, following THE PATH that was occasionally marked by those strange-round-glowing jars, listening to the sounds of singing that never quite became distinct, except for that Cinnabar! Cinnabar! chant that kept my heart beating like an Indian drum.

I walked all night, and now I'm finally back to where I began this letter, back to when the horses came. At least I *think* they were horses.



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