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Seeds in the Wind - Book 3

by James D. Gutierrez

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Seeds in the Wind

Book 3



An Entirety by

James D. Gutierrez

(as Jahthra)

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Some of the characters and events in this book are fictitious.
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2017

First Edition

Part Four

THE PLAN

(Brood, Bottled, and Souled)

PREFACE

As the saga-like exploits of our characters continue, Jahthra opens **THE PLAN** by asking you a question, still being assisted by Sprout in her role as Editor. Time-machine travel has now transported you to August, 1997 . . .

CHAPTER 1

When's the last time you pooped your pants? (How's that for a famous first line! Eat your heart out Victor Hugo and Company.) Oh-oh, wait a minute. Little Miss Lost-a-Tooth is scrunching up her nose and making a face like she just swallowed a skunk. I'd better see what's up...

Okay, Sprout, what's the matter?

That's no way to start a book.

Well, I don't know . . . I mean, I thought it had possibilities.

Besides, you *promised*.

Promised? Promised what?

Promised you wouldn't tell. Not EVER! NEVER EVER NEVER EVER EVER!

Slow down, Sprout. I still don't understand. Promised you I wouldn't tell about what?

You know, Fuzzy Wuzzy.

The bear? What does he have to do with this? Oh! You mean the first time you saw the bear? Is that it? Don't worry, no way would I tell about what happened to you then. I gave you my word and I'll keep it. I wasn't thinking about that at all.

Well what then?

I was thinking about how everyone, no matter who they are or what they do or what they have, they all start out in life with poopy diapers.

It still stinks!

But I had to begin someplace.

What's wrong with beginning with the truth?

Nothing's wrong with that, nothing at all. But there's more to it. You have to consider it from the Reader's point of view. You do remember Mr. and Mrs. Reader, don't you?

Yeah, sure. Red and Emma.

Right. And although Red and Emma will want to hear about these facts, I just can't hit them in the face with it as soon as they open the book. I learned that lesson with Deuteronomy. So I'm going to have to ease into this, sort of give them a warm-up opening number like the advance group at a rock concert does before the main attraction. We don't know where the Readers are right now or what they've been doing. So it's going to take them some time to get situated, get acclimated to the world we create for them. They have to get comfortable, forget what's going on in their own lives and become a part of ours. Are you with me so far?

Sure, Jahthra, that's okay. But I still think the first line stinks.

It's too late to change it now. What do you want me to do, tell the Readers to wait while we go back and start all over again? I don't think so. But I'll admit I have been procrastinating. Do you realize how big, the enormity of what I'm about to reveal? It's going to shake the Reader's socks off. So I need to find a presentable format, something that won't be like pushing them off a cliff without any warning.

Okay then, how's this: Let's do it like a bedtime story. Red and Emma are probably in bed anyway, or lounging on the beach, or they're someplace comfortable at least, so let's tell them a story.

You know, Miss Cumberland, that might work.

Cumberland?

Sure, you know, like Cumberland Gap.

Cut the missing tooth jokes, Jahthra, and start the story.

That's what I'd like to do, but now we're back to first lines again, and I need one.

How about, "Once upon a time"?

You're kidding, right?

No I'm not. You wanted a famous first line, well "Once upon a time" is the most famous first line of all. Nobody will ever forget that one.

You're the greatest, you know that? I like it! Yeah, once upon a time. Why not? Okay, are you ready for this, Miss Jack-O'-Lantern?

Oh *you!*

Here goes: Once upon a time, in the Mahoning River Valley, just south of what was at that time the steel mill town of Youngstown, Ohio, there lived three bears---

Jahthra! Get serious.

I was just seeing if you were paying attention.

I'm okay, but the Readers are probably falling asleep. Let's do it!

Okay, but you have to understand something. This is going to be worse for me than the first time I jumped off the high dive. I know I shouldn't be scared to tell the story, but I am, and I don't know why. Or maybe it's just that I'm so excited it feels like being scared. Or maybe---

Jahthra, are you going to tell the story, or what?

Okay, White Fang, here goes: Once---

Wait a minute, I forgot something.

You? Forgot something? My-oh-My, I almost hate to ask.

Is this story going to have a title?

I don't know. Do you have any ideas?

Nope.

Gee thanks. How about waiting until the end before deciding on a title. That's the way I usually work. It's always easier to name something after you already know what it is.

That sounds like it should be a Proverb.

Look, Spike, are you ready for the story? Because ready or not, here it comes:

Once upon a time, I was born. There's no getting around it, that's a fact of life. I had a mom and a dad and then a brother, and we lived in a nice cozy home on the good side of town. I had an upstairs bedroom with a southern exposure, and in front of the double bedroom windows sat a large cast iron radiator. It was low and long and wide, sort of like a bench, and I spent many peaceful hours sitting there looking out the window.

The imprint on my mind is still so vivid that I can picture the houses as they were across the street, and I can see the wires and utility poles, the sidewalks and driveways and the storm sewers in the street. And I can still see my favorite tree. It was a huge maple tree and the branches were such that they resembled a lion's head – with or without leaves, it didn't matter, I could still see the lion.

But what I liked to see best of all was the sky, especially on winter nights. That warm radiator was a wonderful place to snuggle on, and after Mom or Pop would tuck me in bed, I'd sneak over to the window and watch the sky until I couldn't hold my eyes open any longer.

I really liked looking at the Moon. My mom must have been interested in the sky too, because I can remember the first time I saw an eclipse of the Moon. Mom woke me up that night, and we kept watch from my bedroom window. I became so captivated by lunar eclipses that when I was older I would sleep outside on the ground, just so I could look up and watch the sky show. But I never really studied the stars, never took courses in astronomy or anything like that. Oh sure, I knew the Big Dipper, but that was about it. I just watched, letting myself become transfixed by the MAGIC in the universe.

I was out of school (both high school and college) and had finished my two-year hitch in the Army before having my first genuine adventure with the stars. My brother was still in college and we traveled together during his Christmas break in 1971, having fun in the sun on the beach in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

There was a beach party one night, and for some reason we became the central attraction. I can't remember what we were talking about, but everyone was listening to us. It was a moonless night, so the sky was dark and the stars were so vivid they seemed within jumping distance away. The constellation of Orion was dominant then, and it suddenly drew our attention. But it more than just attracted us, it took us away!

We both underwent what we tongue-in-cheekingly called a "religious experience". Whatever it was, it was powerful, and although I still can't define it, I've never forgotten the feeling I had.

The early part of the 1970's were the days when it seemed like everybody was into astrology. Wherever I went I was asked my sign, and although everyone knew what their sign was, no one knew where it was in the sky, including me.

I spent most of my time traveling and camping, and as a result, my nights were usually filled with star gazing. The skies of British Columbia come to mind, along with the endless stars over southwestern Mexico, and who could ever forget the Pacific sunsets in Puerto Escondito!

But it wasn't until I spent two years camping in the Allegheny National Forest of Pennsylvania that I finally focused on the stars and decided to learn the names and locations of the various constellations and was able to recognize those twelve seemingly all-important biggies: the signs of the Zodiac.

But in order to continue my exploration of space (so to speak) I had to unlearn the constellations. Seeing various shapes in the sky ruined the total effect it always held for me in the days of childhood innocence and so-called ignorance. I never was very good at playing connect-the-dots-in-the-sky anyway, and the various animals and people who were supposedly pictured there would forever be a mystery to me. I've always been able to see faces and whatever in the clouds, but in the stars? No way! So although I never did see the actual likenesses for the twelve signs of the Zodiac, I could recognize their related star groups. But these too I had to disassociate before I could once again view the sky as a complete entity.

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So now the story goes back to Florida again, and it's the winter and early spring of 1978. This is when the MAGIC in the sky opened its door and let me in.

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Rather than buy a blank musical composition book, I made my own by drawing the five parallel lines on sheets of blank white semitransparent paper. No special reason for using that type of paper, it's what I had on hand so I used it.

Coming into the picture now is that great boon known to scientists everywhere, that wonderful phenomenon known as serendipity. As I finished lining my first page, I set it aside, right on top of one of my star maps. Hey, well what do you know (I thought), the dots of stars make it look like there are notes on my blank music sheet. WOW, far out! (That's what things were in those days – “far out”.) Only in this case, it's literally true.

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When I told you the story about writing the song called “The Fool Moon”, I didn't tell you everything (Spenser saw to that). I did more than just hear the melody in my mind on the beach that night, I saw it in the sky.

And you know what? I'm not the only one to have done something like this. As I've played around with it over the years I've come across themes from some of the greatest composers of all time. And... Try to

take a breath here, folks, because the fact that various star groups are actually musical compositions, this unique happenstance is known as The Cinnabar. And I lived happily ever after. The End.

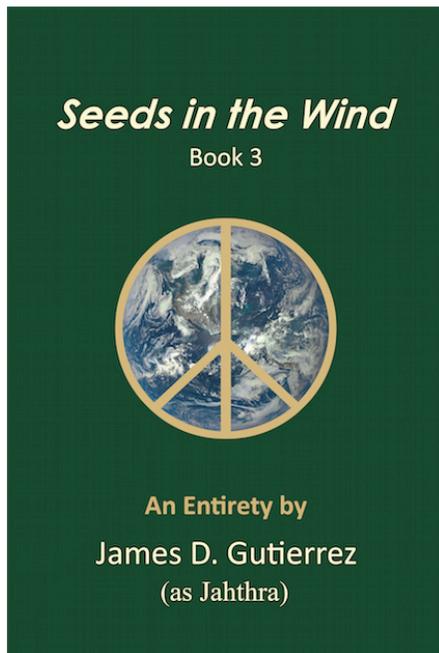
WHAT!?! Jahthra, you can't end it like that!

Why not, Sprout? You got your famous first line, now I gave you the most famous last one.

Yes but . . . but think about the Readers. You just---

Hold it! I know what you're going to say. Believe me, this way is best. Besides, Spenser would have me recycled or slap me with another moratorium or something. I've given the Readers more than enough to spark their imaginations. And it's late and Red probably has to get up for work tomorrow, and for all I know they're no longer paying any attention to this. I mean, they're probably outside right now looking at the sky and trying to find the notes for "White Christmas" or "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" or whatever. Hey, WOW! Wouldn't that be something! What if that little song is up there too! And since you were wondering about a name for this story, well, there it is:

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What's wrong with beginning with the truth?

Nothing's wrong with that, nothing at all. But there's more to it. You have to consider it from the Reader's point of view. You do remember Mr. and Mrs. Reader, don't you?

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