

# Chaordia - A Novel of Transformation Ch. 20

By Sisyphus

Published on Stories Space on 02 Feb 2016

Because of climate change a man wants to transform an old farm into a new colony in Vermont

<https://www.storiesspace.com/stories/adventure/chaordia-a-novel-of-transformation--6.aspx>

Tim and Gabe moved the round table back to the center of the room and placed the chairs around it. Tammy placed the oil lamp in the center for lighting it later when it got dark. Dan brought in several arm loads of wood, while Liz and Atticus followed with a box filled with kindling. Tammy filled a pot with water from her five gallon jug and measured out rice. Several unopened cans of black beans sat on the counter. "I'm going to put the rice and beans on the fire to cook and they'll be ready just in time for dinner." Tammy looked out the front door at Glenn getting a fire going and talking to my dad. "It will be nice to sit out by the fire tonight...I have marshmallows and hot chocolate." "You sure take care of everything, don't you," Dan said. Tammy smiled. "Well, I love to cook and it's the least I can do." Gabe and Tim decided to go outside and left Alice and me. "See you later," Tim said. "We're going to check out the barn." That's when Grace came over to us. "Please, come upstairs with me. I want to show you my room." We knew she wanted to talk to us about something important and followed her up the narrow stairs. Alice glanced back at me as if to say, I wonder what's so important. Grace led us down a narrow hall, past the bathroom and stopped at an open door, "That was Derrick's room." It was bare except for an old wool hooked rug in the middle that had several holes and was shredded. I wondered why it was still there after all of these years. She pointed to an empty room at the other end of the hall. "That was my parent's room. We used to crawl into their bed on Sunday mornings after Dad came back from milking and got back into bed with all of us because he didn't work on Sundays. It was so cozy being there with my parents." She stared at the door and smiled, then took a deep breath as if breathing in memories. When she opened her door, we saw an old bed with puffy pillows and a green and orange covering. "That's the bed I had when I was a child. I kept it all these years. That's where I had it because I could see the moon at night and the sunlight pouring in on sunny mornings. I loved this room." On the opposite wall was an old oak bureau with several drawers. Two small photographs sat on top next to a small vase of yellow flowers. "That was my bureau." "What happened to all of the furniture when your parents died?" Alice asked, while I went over to see the photo of an a small boy of about eight and wondered if that was Glenn when he was a boy in Ireland. The other was a photo a little girl with long blonde hair, wearing jeans, sitting on a wooden swinging bench between her parents on the front porch. So that's what her parents looked like. The man had a

dark beard, shaggy hair and wore a flannel shirt, the woman had her brown hair tied in a bun and held a straw hat on her lap. "Neither of us wanted the furniture," Grace said, "But I kept the bed and bureau in storage for over fifty years and now it's back where it belongs. We kept a few things, but most of it went to Goodwill." Again, Grace closed her eyes, remembering, then sighed before continuing. "They both died in this house. Derrick and I were here when my mom was going and seven months later when my dad died. Dad had a bad heart and had slowed down quite a bit even before my mom died, but after she was gone, he just stopped taking his medication. We didn't speak about it, but I knew why he had stopped. I was here for the last six weeks, but Derrick was in Germany working on a project. He was a scientist, but came home near the end. It was during that time that we both learned of our Mohegan blood." "How come your father didn't leave the farm to Derrick and left it to Glenn?" I asked, "I was wondering about that." Grace nodded, before answering. "My dad had a two hundred and fifty thousand dollar life insurance policy that expired when he was eighty, so when he died at seventy six, Derrick and I split the insurance and Glenn got the farm. Derrick knew my dad didn't want to sell it and agreed it would be best to leave it to Glenn, and now you know the reason why." Grace went to the window and looked out, then waved us over. "I told you how I used to sit out on the porch roof." "I remember," Alice said. "You used to look at the stars." Grace nodded then chuckled, "Remember George, the apprentice I told you I was crazy about. He used to climb up onto the roof and sneak into my room and make out. It was so romantic. My parents had no idea." It surprised me that she told us that, but shouldn't have been. I could tell she liked adventure, but while I was listening, I wanted to know what she wanted to tell us. Alice smiled at Grace, "This is such a nice room, but I want to know what you wanted to talk to us about. You said it was important." Grace nodded and took a deep breath. "There are a few things I want to say to you. Some of it's personal and some of it's about you." "I'm anxious to hear," I said. "I am too," Alice said. "What is it?" Grace looked out the window before speaking, then turned and faced us. "I'm sure Glenn told you I'm not well and that's why I wanted to give him his inheritance for his project here." "He did say something but not much. My dad said it was unusual to do that." "Maybe, but I had my reasons. It's not just that my dad wanted to see something special happen here. I had no idea what that would be until Glenn told me his idea, and then I knew this was the right thing to do." "So is it true, you're not well," Alice said. "Glenn told us that, but you seem so well. You don't act like you're sick or anything." "I have Leukemia. I've had it for six years. It was in remission until last year and now it's come back. I found out a month before Glenn told me his idea." I didn't know what to say, but Alice gasped, "That's horrible." "I'm okay now, but that's why I have the medication you might have seen in my bag." "I noticed it, but I didn't know what was wrong," I said. "I saw it too," Alice said. "So what's going to happen?" "I'm going to die. They think I have a year, maybe a little more, but I'm going to die, that's what's going to happen. The medicine helps slow it down but will not stop it." "Does Glenn know that?" Alice asked. "Yes, he knows everything and knows why I'm giving all of my money to him now and not waiting until I die like most people. I have saved quite a bit plus the insurance and I hope it will make a difference." "So that's why he's so determined to turn this farm into a colony or whatever," I said. "He wants to move fast, I can tell." I said. "Yes, it's pretty urgent. I'm fine now, but

who knows when I won't be. Glenn knows I want to die in this room and that's why I brought back my bed and bureau." "Now I understand," Alice said. "That's so beautiful." When I heard that, I choked up and felt a shiver go through me, but didn't say anything. Instead, I took a deep breath and stared at the bed. "It's great that it worked out with the Indians like it did," I said. "It could have been the opposite with a legal battle and all of that." "Yes, that was not anticipated. No one knew they were here, but now I think it will work out. It won't be easy. Everyone will have to really work together to build this new way of living here." "Right and now the Bendula, I mean the FBI are going to try to stop him," I said. "And it sounds like there are a lot of people around here who hate the idea," Alice added. "Yes, there are lots of obstacles," Grace said, "but obstacles are tests of determination. We need obstacles." "These are pretty big ones," I said. "It's scary." "Remember that quote from Victor Hugo, 'Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come.' Well, I think this is the right time. It's critical that we learn to live differently or we won't survive." "But you said it might not make a difference." "I know what I said, but I also said that doesn't mean you shouldn't fight with all your heart to make a difference. It might be heartbreaking, but it's important to give it your best shot. That's what it means to be a warrior." Grace's blue eyes narrowed behind her wired rimmed glasses, her long white hair fell over her shoulders, and the way she looked at Alice and me made me understand what was meant by being a warrior. I glanced at Alice and wondered if she was thinking the same thing. I swallowed and thought. I hope I can be a warrior. "I want this for my father and I want to die here and be buried next to them, but I want to know we made his farm special. This is what he wanted and why he left it to Glenn. That would make me happy." When she said that, she sat down on the bed. We were quiet, thinking about what she was saying. I walked over to the window and looked out and saw Tammy with a wooden spoon stirring the rice and black beans. Atticus was on the ground playing. Liz sat on a log talking with Tammy. Gabe and Tim came out of the barn and walked over to their tent. Dan and my dad were carrying armloads of wood. Glenn stood in the knee high grass next to an apple tree in the orchard with his arms folded over his chest as he looked around. I wondered if he was trying to visualize what it would be like to have his dream become a reality. While looking at him and thinking about Grace's words, this wave of fierce determination rose in me and I knew what it must feel like to be a warrior, someone who fights with all his heart to survive whatever battle he is in. Glenn was becoming a warrior ready to fight. I remembered Sun Dancer saying, "There are many ways to fight." My thoughts were interrupted when Grace said, "There's something else I wanted to talk to you about." When I turned around, Grace looked up at me, her eyes urging me to sit with her and Alice. I went over and sat on the other side of Grace. "I want to talk to you about your education." "What about our education?" Alice asked. "What are your plans for after high school? You're graduating in June, aren't you?" "I don't have any plans," I said. "I'm barely graduating." "I'm working on my applications for a few colleges," Alice said. "I'm torn between being a dancer or a doctor and working with Doctors without Borders." "Oh, I didn't know you were a dancer." She smiled. "That's delightful." "I started when I was ten and love it." "Being a doctor and serving in that way would be wonderful," Grace said. "But there are other ways of healing than the way medicine is practiced today." "I know," Alice said. "I have been reading about other ways and we met Catherine at your place a few

weeks ago, she's studying to be an acupuncturist." "Glenn said she's interested in being part of what's happening here," I said. "That would be great," Grace said. "We will need healers, but I want to talk about your education and tell you what I have been thinking about you two." "What?" Alice asked. "College can be wonderful. I loved it and after homeschooling, it was good to be around other serious students. I was lucky to get a full scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, then a fellowship to the University of Dublin and got my doctorate in Classics." Grace laughed, "And a baby a year later." Grace laughed again. "But times are different now. It's a different world and I'm not convinced college is the only way to get a good education. I know that sounds strange from a Classics professor, but I think a lot of what is being taught is irrelevant to what is happening in the world." "That's interesting," I said. "That's what I feel about high school. I ask myself, why am I learning this? I'm so bored. But I love to read and my dad and I have great talks." "It's up to you," Grace said, "but I want you to consider moving here when you graduate and being part of what we're building here. Your dad's ideas are brilliant and the opportunity to learn from the Abeneki people might be more relevant than what you would be getting in college," Grace said. "You would be learning new ideas along with the old ways." "On Atlantis, there were no schools. Kids learned by working along with the adults," I said. "When I read that in those Atlantis books, I wished I could have learned that way." Grace nodded, understanding, then continued. "I want to suggest you tell other young people and they could come here and learn new ways, then take what they learn and go anywhere they want, but they would be prepared for their futures in a way they would not be in college and so could you. You young people have to learn to adapt to the changes in climate or you may not survive. You will need a different consciousness." "I know you're right," Alice said. "But so many of the kids we know at school are so programmed, I doubt they will listen to us." "Alice is right," I said. "Eighty or ninety percent of the kids from my school go to college without questioning why they're doing it. They think it's the only way they will have a future and be successful. They want to have cars and go shopping." "I wish others would read the Atlantis books like Gabe and Tim did, but that seems impossible." While we were talking, I noticed it was getting dark and could hear voices down stairs. "Dinner's ready," Tammy shouted up the steps. "We should get going," Alice said. "Just a minute," Grace said, taking both of our hands and holding them. "It's not my intention to tell you what you should do. You have to decide. I remember something my former husband said to me many years ago." "What was that?" Alice asked. "You have to be the driver of your car. Keep your hands on the wheel and go where you want to go. Be in charge of your life. That's what he said," Grace paused and we stood up. "He broke my heart, but I learned a lot from him." When we left the next day, I didn't know when we would return. Glenn said he was going to live on the farm through the winter and get things organized, so that they could start building in the spring. He would have a few more meetings at his mom's apartment with people he knew who were interested. He also had a meeting at Tammy's house which was a good idea because people could see what a cool house my dad had designed. My dad worked hard on the plans for the farm and made sure Glenn had a copy to show to people. Glenn said he wanted to start small and have it grow organically. My dad flew up to the farm a few times during the winter and early spring. There was an airport in Burlington and Glenn picked him up.

I knew he also wanted to spend time with Morning Star. When he came back he told Alice and me everything that was happening. Glenn had a cell phone and was able to have internet through a satellite company. My dad said Glenn realized there was no way he could be completely independent, but was determined to be careful and to live alongside of society like my dad said, but not in it. What was important was being as energy efficient and as frugal as possible. He said it was important to have only what you need, not everything you may want. He had invested in solar both for electricity and hot water and had the farmhouse better insulated and replaced most of the windows. He was lucky to have the money his mom saved from all of her years teaching and living frugally. My dad also gave him good ideas about the house. Alice had been working hard getting her college applications out, writing the essays, getting recommendations, but we talked a lot about what Grace said. I could tell Alice really didn't want to go to college, but was feeling pressure from her mom and dad. I could barely get up to go to school, but did, so that I could be with Alice during breaks and with Gabe and Tim and we hung out after school. They also wanted to move to the farm after graduation which surprised me because I knew Tim wanted to be a musician and Gabe wanted to travel. When we told other kids what we were planning to do after high school, only one or two thought it sounded like fun, but most of the kids thought we were nuts to want to live on a farm in Vermont. They really didn't get it. Some were concerned about climate change, especially after Sandy devastated the Jersey Shore and wondered what their lives would be like, but most tuned out how serious it was or said, "We'll just deal with it." My dad said the hardest thing was how we lived in such consumer-oriented society and that our economy was so dependent on people buying stuff and way more than they needed. He mentioned how the storage container business had grown into a two billion dollar a year business because people had so much stuff to store. He said, "This way of living is unsustainable and now countries like India and China want to be like our society. Alice and I read Allen Bigalow's, *The Worst is Yet to Come* and knew we were on a collision course with our way of living and climate change. I knew he was right. It was hard to imagine what the future would be like. I wondered how many people would be able to adapt to living the old ways after being used to the comforts of modern living, having anything they wanted by buying it. How would people live? What would it be like if they couldn't shop? Would alternative energy technology make it possible to adapt to climate change? What would happen if it didn't make a difference, and there was a lot of suffering, hunger and disease, people dying? There were already droughts and huge wildfires and mass migrations. People trying to escape wars, disease and poverty. I didn't have a clue what would happen, but those thoughts haunted me. There was one teacher at school that I really liked. His name was Mr. Winston, but he let me call him Henry. He was in his thirties and taught English. I knew he was a writer. I had him for creative writing when I was in eleventh grade and he really encouraged me to write. He said I had an original voice. I didn't know what he meant by that, but then I learned it was my style and point of view. I pretty much wrote the way I talked and felt like I was just telling a story to someone over a cup of coffee or a pizza at Charley's. Anyway, though I didn't have him for a teacher in my senior year, he was always willing to see what I was writing. That's when he said to call him Henry. One time I showed him what I had been writing about Glenn's farm and his vision and the

whole story of meeting Sun Dancer and White Elk, and he thought I had the beginning of a good book. He said I had a good eye for details and how important that was for a writer. I told him about the Atlantis books and he said he had never heard of them but seemed fascinated. He even said he wondered if there really was an Atlantis and didn't dismiss it like most people. He told me about someone named Edgar Cayce, who was a psychic and would go into a trance and talk in detail about Atlantis and said it might rise again. I told Alice about him and we looked him up on Google, and then we read about him on Wikipedia. I told my dad about him and what we had read. My dad listened to what we said and seemed to be taking it seriously. He said he thought it was interesting and wanted to check it out. When I told Henry about meeting Elizabeth and Arianna and their memories of Atlantis, he just said, "Wow, something weird is going on." He also thought Alice and I should forget about college for the time being and move to the farm after high school. I told him what Grace said and he agreed with her. He told me how he traveled for several years before going to college and how valuable that was. We visited Elizabeth a few times and told her what was happening at the farm. She said that even though Glenn didn't know anything about Atlantis that by learning from the Indians he was bringing back the old ways. At the same time, she was really worried about the Bendula and the danger we would all be in. She said, "You must never stop fighting the Bendula or the same thing that happened to Atlantis could happen again." Another good thing happened. I started taking guitar lessons from Lou. I was amazed how good he was and he taught me a lot of great old blues songs. I spent hours in my room practicing. He showed me how to play slide guitar using a butter knife. I loved it and was happy to know I would be able to share my playing at the farm, and I really wanted to show Grey Fox. One night in April, Alice, Tim and Gabe were over my house for dinner. My dad had just come back from the farm the day before and told us how Dan, Liz and Atticus were camping there and that Tammy had put her house on the market because she was moving there. Also, the farmer she knew, Paul Kaiser moved there in March to start preparing for the growing season. He said that on Saturday night Tammy made a great dinner for Sun Dancer, Grey Fox, Wolf and Strong Eagle. Alice asked about Morning Star and my dad smiled and confessed, "She's good," he said, pausing. "We've grown very close." "I'm not surprised," Alice said. "She's really wonderful." We also found out that Grace would be moving there at the end of May after teaching her last seminar. She was retired and was made Professor Emeritus. After dinner, my dad said he just read a new article in the New Yorker written by Alan Bigalow, the guy we heard speak at the library over a year ago and he wanted to read a section of it to us. The article was called, "Innovation or Annihilation." He said there was a chart that showed how global surface temperature changes have changed between 1884 and 2012 and that things are changing much more rapidly than anticipated. "Listen to this," he said and started reading, "The Arctic ice is melting rapidly and the methane being released from under centuries-old ice is going to dramatically speed up the warming trend over the foreseeable future and that we must adapt to our new warmer environment quickly." We listened but didn't say anything. "There's just a little more," he said, clearing his throat and finding his place. "There will be collapses of biodiversity, population surges of species like ticks, mosquitoes, jellyfish and bacteria. There will be food shortages as croplands dry up or are flooded out. Our Twentieth

Century electrical grid will be battered over and over by intense storms, which will also wipe out roads and bridges and eat away at the coastlines. There will be violence, as people start hoarding and fighting each other over increasingly scarce resources." "Suppose there are droughts at the farm," I said. "And the river isn't that far away." "I don't know. We might need alternative ways of growing food like hydroponics, but that's risky, too." "What does that writer think can be done?" Gabe asked. My dad moved his finger down the page to a spot and read, "Our government has to stop bickering and start focusing on the real challenge at hand and begin re-engineering human civilization to survive the drastic changes. We need to be funding innovation. It's a choice between innovation and annihilation." When he finished, he threw the magazine on the table and looked at each of us. "What we'll be doing at the farm is only part of the solution. Not everyone is going to be able to do that. Unless something changes radically in cities, there will be a lot of casualties. Already, many people have died in cities during heat waves and out west in wildfires. Like Allan Bigalow says, it's only going to get worse." "Well, I know Alice and I want to move to the farm after school is over," I said. "I do, too," Gabe said. "I loved it there and I can see how beautiful it can be living there with the Indians and interesting people." "It won't be easy," my dad said. "So what?" Tim said. "Sounds like it won't be easy living anywhere." I was excited to hear how much they wanted to be part of Glenn's vision and knew a lot of it was because of what was happening there, but also because of the impact the Atlantis books had had on them. While Gabe and Tim were talking, I was disturbed about something else. "You look upset, Alex," my dad said, looking over at me. "what's wrong?" "Mom. What about Mom?" My dad didn't say anything. Alice looked over at me, then at my dad. "My parents too," she said. "What will happen to them?" I could not believe the transformation that had taken place on the farm when my dad, Alice, Gabe, Tim and I arrived the Saturday after graduation. I didn't know where to look first. It was bustling with activity. The grass had all been cut; the farmhouse had been painted a warm yellow and glowed in the afternoon sun. The shutters were now dark green and I saw the solar panels for hot water on the roof and two solar panels on the ground sitting on posts facing the sun at some angle I didn't know. Alice stood next to me, "This is amazing. I don't believe so much has already been done." "There's a cow in the pasture and sheep," I said, noticing how the fencing was all fixed and it looked like there was another fenced in pasture next to it. Nearby was a chicken house and there must have been fifty hens pecking at stuff on the ground. My dad stood next to me. "The gardens are over there," he said pointing to several long wide beds with paths between them. One of the beds had lots of greens growing--lettuce, broccoli, peas climbing up a trellis. The other bed had small tomato plants, but there was something I didn't recognize growing between each plant. "That's one gardening zone and there will be lots of beds there. But there will be other growing areas. "Wow, looks like all the apple trees got pruned," Gabe said. "Yes, about two months ago at the end of March, but we've been planting more fruit trees in the zone in back of it--pear, peach, plums, cherries--but a lot of things grow together, the way they do in nature. It will take a few years before they bear fruit, but one day we will have plenty of fruit." The place where we had our fires in the fall was still there, but with a larger circle of logs and rocks and my dad said that's where they have their meetings in the morning and late afternoon Sunset Gatherings where people share their day. I was surprised

when I saw Glenn with a gray beard come out of the farmhouse. He was on the porch talking to a tall man with brown curly hair. "That's Paul Kaiser," my dad said, "He's the farm manager and really knows his stuff and is really into permaculture. He's perfect for this place. His daughter, Abby will be moving here next month." I could hear my dad's excitement because he saw his designs becoming a reality. Then I saw Dan, Wolf, a young Indian boy with long dark hair I thought might be around my age and two barefooted women, stomping in a large pile of mud. I couldn't imagine what they were doing. Several wheelbarrows were next to them and the boy was mixing something with a shovel, but I didn't know what. "What's that they're building?" I asked, looking at a partially built mud covered wall. "That's going to be Dan and Liz's home. I told you about the Cob houses. They're made from mud, clay, and straw. They will be a modern version of the wigwam. They're heated with a Rocket Stove made like the house from mud and straw and it heats the house much more efficiently than regular wood stoves. We're experimenting and learning how to build them, but I know they will be what we need. Sun Dancer loved the concept and might do the same thing with their wigwams." "Wow. I've never seen anything like that," Alice said. "It's like a sculpture." "Right," my dad said, "They can be very original like art, and they can grow a lot of different plants on the roof." "And they're made entirely from the earth," I said. "Almost," my dad said. "We're recycling fifty-five gallon drums and we still need stove pipe for chimneys, but most of it's covered with the clay, mud and straw and becomes a thermal mass. They stay warm for many hours and use very little wood." "They're like Hobbit houses," Gabe said. My dad chuckled. "It's actually an ancient technique which we are modernizing, but there are Cob houses in England that are over five hundred years old." "Wow," Alice said. "I never heard of anything like that." He pointed to an area on the other side. "We're planning to build a much larger, longer Cob building over there using the same method. That will be the Common Building where we can eat together, have entertainment, also showers with a sauna attached. This will be our version of the Indian Long House and sweat lodge in one." He paused. "It will take quite awhile to build and tons of mud, straw and clay, but it will be perfect for harsh winters and hot summers." He chuckled, "Rome wasn't built in a day." My dad pointed to two people building something much smaller, but using the same method, "That's Jenny and Max and they're making an oven. Jenny's a baker and they'll be making all of the bread for the community." "That's an oven? Wow, that's amazing," Alice said. I glanced at Tim and Gabe behind me and could tell by their wide eyes that they were as blown away as I was. "I'd love to learn how to bake bread and use that oven," Gabe said. While we were talking, Grace and Tammy came out of the farmhouse and waved at us. Tammy was wearing jeans, a yellow sweatshirt and an apron. Next to her, Grace looked much thinner and was leaning on a cane, but she waved and smiled. Alice ran up to her. My dad and I walked behind just as Morning Star came out of the house and beamed when she saw my dad. Her dark hair had one long braid halfway down her back. She was barefooted. "Isn't she beautiful," my dad said as we got closer. Alice and I put our backpacks down on the ground and hugged Tammy and Grace. My dad embraced Morning Star. Glenn hugged us, then introduced us to Paul. "I've heard a lot about you," Paul said. "Really, you did?" Alice blushed, letting me see how shy she really was behind her assertive personality. Paul smiled at me, "So, you're Eric's son?" "I guess." I shrugged and glanced at

my dad with his arm around Morning Star, but then she gave Alice a big hug. "So you're here, at last," she said. "I'm so happy you will be with us now." "Yes, at last," Alice said. "I can't believe the changes, already. This is going to work. It's awesome." When I turned towards the pasture and saw the cow and a dozen sheep, Liz came out of the red chicken house on the other side of the barn. Her reddish hair was in short pig tails. Atticus had gotten taller and looked so cute in overall jeans and green boots. He carried a straw basket in one hand and held Liz's hand with the other. Liz waved as they walked towards us. "Look! Eggs," Atticus said, showing me the basket of white and brown eggs. "This is my job, getting eggs, right, Mommy." He glanced up at her. "Back to work," Paul said, then turned to me. "I'll show you how to milk Gladys tomorrow. She gets milked twice a day, six in the morning and six at night." "How about us?" Gabe asked. "There's plenty to do," he said, "Shoveling manure, taking it to the compost pile then digging more beds, helping with the Cob houses. You'll earn your keep, that's for sure." When we went into the farmhouse, I was amazed. The bookcase by the couch was filled with books piled every which way. Glenn's laptop was on a cluttered desk in the corner. The walls were painted white with blue trim. Paintings and photographs were on all of the walls. We walked into the kitchen and saw pots and pans hanging from the ceiling and the cupboard had plates, cups and glasses. I could smell onions and saw a big pot on the stove with what smelled like a stew or soup. Two round, crusty loaves of were on the counter, one had already been sliced. When I went back into the dining room, the newspaper was open on the round oak table with the headline in bold letters: PLANNING BOARD REJECTS CHAORDIA FARM PLAN FOR VIOLATION OF BUILDING CODES. "What's this all about?" I asked, leaning over to read. "They made Glenn come before the Planning Board last week." Grace said. "It was a very contentious meeting. It was packed. We're very controversial around here. They're trying to stop us and said if we don't stop, Glenn will be fined a thousand dollars and arrested and so will I." "Why you?" Alice asked. "I don't know. Could be they know it's my money, but I think it's because they know I gave the old Fitzpatrick Farm to the Abeneki people. There are a lot of outraged people around here. Some think it's a conspiracy and that we are a cult," she said, closing her eyes and shaking her head. "Isn't that nuts?" "Wow, that's horrible," Alice said. "What's going to happen?" Grace sighed. "If we don't pay the fine for building without a permit and take everything down immediately, the sheriff will come and arrest us by Wednesday. That's what I was told by Bronson, but we also received a registered letter." "Wait a minute," my dad said. "I thought Glenn submitted my plans for the buildings and my land use plan." "He did and they were rejected as too unconventional and do not meet any of their building codes. We've been fighting with them for two months." "Damn," my dad said and tossed the newspaper back to the table. "These people better wake up. The homes they're building now are obsolete and ignore where the sun comes up. They just make sure they face the road." "There are people on our side and they spoke at the Planning Board, but it didn't do any good. Only one person on the board voted for us and said maybe the codes should be changed." "What did he say?" my dad asked. "He said Glenn's right about how serious it is and things have to change," Grace said. "He said he thought Glenn was brave and thought what we were doing with the Indians was great. I couldn't believe my ears, but he got a lot of dirty looks from the others on the Planning Board and boos from the crowd."

"Sun Dancer was at the meeting and spoke," Morning Star said. "Really, what did he say?" Alice asked. "He said the land was Abeneki land and has been for centuries. He said we are a sovereign nation and the town has no jurisdiction. He told about the treaty of 1790 that has been broken and even had a copy of it he found in the library. He said the case has been before the courts several times but gets sent to a committee then ignored. Then he said the Abeneki people want to share their land with Glenn and nothing will stop them." "Really, he said that? What did the Planning Board say to that?" my dad asked. "Nothing," Morning Star answered. "They didn't say anything. They thanked him for speaking, and then voted against us and said if the fine wasn't paid by Monday and every building taken down, they would be arrested for building with out a building permit and permission of the Planning Board. They're angry and playing hard ball." "What does Bronson say?" I asked. "Can he do anything?" "He's making an appeal to the court, but that will take a long time, meanwhile they said they will arrest us unless we stop and pay the fine," Grace said. "And there's no way we're going to do that." "There's something else that happened at the meeting," Tammy said. "You mean there's more," I said. Gabe and Tim stood behind me, listening. "Yes, there's more," Tammy said. "After the meeting, I saw the sheriff talking to two men at the rear of the room. I noticed them when we came in. They stood against the wall with their arms folded during the whole meeting. They were dressed in suits with ties and didn't look like the local people." "Do you think it was the FBI?" my dad asked. "Definitely," Grace said. "Bronson said he knew they were from the FBI because they came and questioned him." "It's the Bendula," Alice gasped. "Bendula?" Morning Star repeated. "What's that?" "It's a long story," Alice said. "I'll tell you later."