

Alien Disclosure

Amnesty



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## Amnesty

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Off-World Books

Surprise, Arizona

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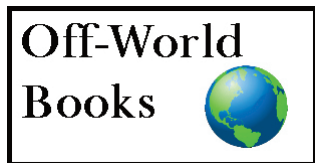
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# Introduction

The net of secrecy suppressing the alien presence on our world is not completely secure. Openings woven into the fabric of the net allow surprising truths to escape.

However, unequivocal proof can only be met by an artifact or the unfettered presentation of the aliens themselves. In a sea of nebulous, contradictory waves of information, only this form of proof will calm the waters of disinformation and sunken historical events.

In this story, the proof is provided by an artifact (a motion picture film) that captures a presentation of intelligent life from another world. This precious celluloid record documents the meeting of President Dwight D. Eisenhower with a humanoid, not of planet earth. The basis of the story within these pages is built upon this remarkable event in our nation's and the world's history. To expose the presence of aliens on earth, the recipients of this artifact repeatedly escape capture from the legitimate and hidden forces of the US government.

The impact to humanity of disclosure is of paramount importance

to society. This novel addresses these issues, fears, hopes, and desires from the perspective of the champions of disclosure as well as from the factions that are struggling to deny the existence of these visitors from afar. The story is therefore more than a simple, one-sided battle cry for instant disclosure.

The key agenda that must be implemented as part of the disclosure of alien intervention on our planet is amnesty. Amnesty must be granted to all who struggled—albeit futilely—to protect us from the truth. Absolution must be guaranteed and legally documented. This prohibition against litigation is fundamental to the health of our society if we are to resolutely proceed forward as a nation and as a peaceful world. Litigation must be set aside for all individuals responsible for any and all actions that thwarted the bona fide release of the alien presence. If this is not enacted, individuals, companies, agencies, and governments will be sued ad nauseum for the illegal actions of these governmental and industrial groups. We would endlessly drag each other into court for reparations for these deceptions, these crimes inflicted on our fellow citizens in a twisted paternalism sanctioned out of fear that the adult “children” would either remain frightened by the truth or fail to comprehend it.

These are important issues. However, this is a novel not a lecture. It is filled with adventure, sacrifice for love, acquiescence to duty, spiritual awakening, celebration, and humor. The novel is more than a journey across America with the biggest secret of the last thousand years. It is a roadmap of the issues facing humanity when—not if—an intrepid citizen presents definitive proof that alien visitors are among us.

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**TOP SECRET**

To: SAPS 4-11  
SCI – For Your Eyes Only  
Breach of Artifact 54-0006-33

Regular inventory protocol was performed at 0800 this morning. The above artifact was discovered missing from its shelf in storage Locker B, at this facility. Analyst IV Fred Willow did not report for duty today nor was he documented as sick by security.

Team 3 left at 0900 to search his rental in person. Analysis of security footage of Mr. Willow's work station and his residence is underway. Security Team 1 is preparing to pursue the individual when preliminary intel is collected. We interrogated members of Fred's analyst group. We are just now hearing of his increased disaffection from secrecy mandates and his desire to make contact with a person or persons willing to daylight this artifact.

Our location as well as the nature of our artifacts may be compromised. We are considering all options—including re-assignment and complete shutdown. We will have a tentative classified report by 1300.

Please advise further.

SCI Alert Protocol 27 - nmh



Memo 3:

From: Don Petruccio, CIA Station Chief

Current Assignment: Artifact Retrieval

Research and observation began in San Antonio at the UFO Conference. I identified James Broadhurst and Frank Connors. We are pursuing the likely recipient of the artifact as instructed. However, there are other teams here. I thought that we were alone on this assignment? The other teams are not DIA, CIA, or FBI.

Broadhurst and Connors left after their presentation. No sign of any artifact. Will pick up the case as instructed in St. Louis. I am not sure that Broadhurst is the recipient. Anecdotal info says that said artifact was taken by FW after a chase through River Walk. Willow appears to have drowned in canal but no body or artifact recovered.

This case is pretty sketchy. Sorry for the vernacular, but there's not much to go on here, sir. Please advise further.



# Chapter 1

## Saturday, September 9

“Turn left at the next corner,” said James, leaning forward from his rear seat position. James Broadhurst was a prominent UFO researcher attending another confab of writers, journalists, researchers, and fans and the debut of a few new films at the St. Louis Extraterrestrial Conference. His normal conference attire was a bit old fashioned: a grey tweed jacket with pads at the elbows and an open collared white shirt. Tonight, he was convincingly disguised as a waiter dressed in a white uniform jacket and black pants.

In his middle forties, his brown hair was cut close with grey invading at the temples. His disarmingly blue eyes were proportionately set in his clean shaven round face. His easy smile, slightly rotund physique, and breezy demeanor disarmed the most ardent challengers to his serious lecture topics.

James had achieved some modest success. He had written four

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books in his long career. His big break came when a well-known UFO luminary took ill at a conference and James graciously offered to step in and fill the opening in the schedule. His talk on disclosure and “the Amnesty Option,” as he called it then, piqued the interest of seminar organizers. After that, he became a regular on the circuit.

“Are we there yet, boys and girls?” quipped Frank from the front passenger seat. James hired his longtime friend Frank Connors, a former fighter pilot in the US Air Force, to help him with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) filings with the Federal Government, arrange his conference schedule, and provide additional assistance—the kind of “assistance” that turned into everything from security to answering fan mail. Frank was a bit older, a bit shorter, a bit more ruffled, but was always there to bring about a successful presentation, and this was help for which James was extremely grateful.

“James, you don’t need to lean forward and talk into my ear. I can hear you just fine if you sit back in *your* seat,” said Maya, shaking her head.

Frank had received a call from his army buddy, Maya Jablonski, after the San Antonio conference. She said that she was interested in the research of UFOs and said that she wanted to “help.” He had heard the rumor that she took a position with the CIA after her stint with the army, but nothing was confirmed and nothing came from Maya to verify it. Frank felt that she had invited herself into their fledgling operation.

He knew her well, back then. Now, he wasn’t so sure. However, Frank continued to give her the benefit of the doubt, ignoring the methodology she employed to become an active member of their mission.

James was not so generous. They got off to a rocky start and proceeded to go downhill from there. Maya’s forthright support and ability to quickly develop a cohesive plan for tonight’s adventure confirmed

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Frank's confidence in her. James, however, could only voice "guarded approval" for her participation. That was as high as he could rate the athletic looking thirty-year-old's eagerness to be a part of their secret project. He was not about to let the most astounding revelation of alien visitation on earth disappear again. He had not chosen this task; it was thrust upon him. He was committed to the goal outlined to him by the giver—a scientific researcher who escaped with a fifties era artifact from a secret corporate/government facility. The artifact was supposedly the film of Eisenhower meeting with aliens from another planet. If only it was real and not some fleeting fancy by some delusional character.

The task charted for him by the thief who liberated the film consisted of a cross country race from San Antonio to the United Nations General Assembly. A staff projectionist at the UN agreed to sacrifice his career to run the film at the General Assembly meeting in September.

It was a daunting mission made absolutely compulsory by the apparent mortal sacrifice of the man who offered this artifact to James.

Sitting alone in the backseat of Maya's rental car, his mind replayed the series of events in San Antonio: the offering of the film in the alley behind the River Walk Hilton, Frank's quick action to hide the film, the chase by government agents after the man carrying the now empty film case through the crowded streets and over the bridges of the River Walk. The plunge to his apparent death into the murky waters of the San Antonio River, the clandestine shuffle of the old film reel among sympathetic conference attendees, and the disappearance of the artifact practically under the noses of government watchdogs astounded James.

They had not tested the veracity of the film's supposed content before sending it out, but something was on the film. Shadowy government agents do not usually give chase in public places for a reel of cartoons. Frank lobbied a plan to rapidly get it off their hands and to a trusted

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film archivist in St. Louis. There it sat, waiting to be viewed during their next scheduled UFO conference.

James thrust his shoulders back into the seat. "This would have been a lot easier if I had sat in the front," said James with a distinctive harrumph.

"It would have been worse with your nose pressed up against the windshield pointing in all directions," said Maya, shaking her head slowly from left to right. "You guys got lucky in San Antonio, at the River Walk. Judy Davenport should have never made it out of there with those guys on your case. I still don't get what happened."

"You told Maya about San Antonio?" asked James.

"Well, she seemed to already know some of it. I filled in the gaps. She's going to see it all now," said Frank. He looked out the window, averting his eyes from his longtime partner and friend.

James was clearly irritated at his business partner. A cross look on his face evolved into a surprising affirmation of how successful the San Antonio mission was. "It progressed exceedingly well. Our team there handled every facet of the operation. It went very well. I don't believe that anyone in the government thinks we have the artifact. We were very good. Didn't need a young woman pushing her way into our team here," continued James, folding his arms.

"Enough of this bickering!" said Frank, whipping his head around to face James. "What I want to know is how you know your way around this town? You haven't lived here before, have you?"

"I did what you told me to do. I memorized the directions to our destination, the address, and, anyway, we're here. Maya, could you pull over there behind that Mercedes?"

"Okay," said Maya. "What is our destination?"

"It's a theater around the corner. We're going in the back door.



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It's a small art house that makes a modest living with specialty films."

"So, it's a film you have?" said Maya. James and Frank were still unsure of their self-invited security and logistics guru. Too much was at stake, they thought, to divulge the details of what they had. *What if she's not the same person that I knew years ago?* Frank had thought. They were unsure about almost everything.

"Yes, but we don't really know if it's a batch of cartoons or something important. It's billed as something more. We're hopeful or fearful depending upon your orientation," said Frank.

"Okay, some ground rules. Are you prepared to see filmed images of aliens—the real thing, not just some Hollywood movie?" asked James. He was unconsciously leaning forward again, his head at Maya's ear.

Maya slowly turned around, placed her fingertips on his forehead, and gently pushed his head back in the car to a comfortable distance. "Yes, I am, Mr. James Broadhurst. I dare say I've seen many more things than you have."

"Okay, you two. This car's too small for a pissing contest," said Frank. They both looked at him and sneered. "Anyway, we're not going to spend all night in this car. Are we getting out?"

James opened his door and whispered across the roof to Maya. "We do this as we planned."

"And that includes not pissing your pants or screaming like a little girl while you watch this flick," hissed Maya, gently closing her door.

"We'll see," said James. He led the others down the block and around the corner. A short walk across the deserted street took them to an almost unseen door along a windowless wall. "I think this is it."

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In a darkened basement command center in Fredericksburg, Maryland, lit by the glare of data and images splashed on over-sized monitors, two men and one woman scanned the structured collage in front of them.

“So, how’s the CIA doing now?” asked Kathleen Johnson, choosing to stand behind her chair. Kathleen, a tall, sinewy woman dressed in a blue business suit was a junior director of an unnamed agency of the hidden government. Flecks of grey peppered her short, dark brown hair. Her thin face and pointed features were assets in her arsenal to maintain order in this most secret facility. The plain features of this woman belied an inner strength and confidence that she projected to defend the company.

There was no name on the door. Members of this autonomous and top-secret facility collected and cataloged artifacts retrieved from other agencies, conducted public disinformation campaigns about alien sightings and close encounters, and thwarted any public knowledge that world governments were in contact with extraterrestrial beings. Her purpose and mission were clear and unwavering. The “government” had hired her twenty years ago, and Kathleen steadfastly defended her duty to protect Americans—to protect them from the truth.

“Same as before, Don Petruccio and his team are still falling behind,” answered one of the men. “They’re no closer to finding our man, nor do they have anything on Broadhurst and company.”

“And where are we with the retrieval of our escapee?” demanded

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Kathleen.

“I don’t think he’s dead. He’s getting protection,” answered the other man.

“I know that! Have we confirmed who’s giving him the protection—some private UFO group or one of us?”

“No private saucer org has the resources. It’s one of our usual suspects,” said the other man.

“Okay,” said Kathleen. The resignation in her voice was difficult to hide. Time and again her efforts to tamp down each leak of alien visitation was reversed by a cloaked operation within the same hidden government, under some senior director deeper in the organization set on ultimate disclosure. She mentally set aside action toward the perpetrator and who was assisting him for now. “Recovery of the artifact is vitally important. Let’s put our resources where the action is. Being allied with one of our ‘usual suspects’ explains his relative success in handling the artifact—if he indeed has it,” said Kathleen.

“True, he hasn’t made any mistakes, and that’s extremely unusual for a novice. Our operatives on the scene are convinced he is going to collect the film soon if he doesn’t already have it. We’re not sure of his intentions yet, but we believe he does have help,” said one of the men.

“And you have had no luck identifying the operative giving him assistance?”

“We’re checking. We’re convinced it’s ex-CIA or ex-DIA. Military might be an option,” answered the other man.

“Doesn’t Connors have military background?” asked Kathleen.

“Yes, but we don’t see a connection,” said the first man.

“You don’t see a connection or you haven’t looked for a connection?” pressed Kathleen, getting impatient with the discussion. “That film is one of the holiest of holies for the MUFON lackeys. Can you imagine

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if it were broadcast on CNN? At least we would hope our man at CNN would head it off, but, nevertheless, that kind of exposure cannot be tolerated. Do I make myself clear?”

The two men nodded their heads affirming that they indeed understood. “We’ll start forming a list of all his military contacts and team members throughout his career,” agreed the first man.

“You’ll do that. And, you’ll have the list of likely suspects on my desk in the morning. Broadhurst is in St. Louis for three days. Let’s make sure the net is so tight that whoever is helping him is going to be squeezed to the surface. Update your operatives in St. Louis, and tell them not to get gun happy. We need recovery and detainment. We don’t need a murdered UFO freak. Our policy is not to give up the assailant. It just makes things difficult with the local law enforcement who are left with a body with a hole in his head and mysteriously no one with a motive or opportunity to prosecute for the deed,” said Kathleen.

“Yes, I understand,” answered the second man as he picked up the receiver of the telephone in front of him.



“There’s no doorknob to these theater exit doors,” said Frank.

“And I left my C-4 back in my room,” said Maya, not really expecting a response.

“It’s supposed to be unlocked, and a small shim is up here to help us open it,” said James, feeling around at the top of the door. He gently pulled on it, and the door slowly opened. Maya stuck her fingers

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in the widening crevice to help pry the door open. A dark hallway with only two hanging red bulbs appeared in front of them. James started to go in first, but Frank held him back.

“Let Maya go in first,” said Frank. “She’s security on this detail.”

“What are you expecting—crack commandos bursting forth in a hail of bullets?” whispered James, unable to contain his emotions.

“No, just weirdos on crack,” said Maya. “If we could pry our way inside here street people are very resourceful too. They like warm places to shoot up and crash.” She pulled a small gun from her purse and held it up in front of her with both hands as she entered the building.

“Is this really necessary?” asked James, staring at Frank on the threshold.

“James, let her go. We’re going into a darkened building that we don’t know, and we have god knows who on our tail.” Frank stared at James for a moment. “Really, Jim,” he said as if to finalize this issue.

They followed Maya into the hallway and took the route and protocol that was discussed last night. The lighting improved a little once they reached the bottom of the stairs. Maya led the way, constantly sweeping the space in front of her. They reached the landing of the first flight of stairs meeting no one. Climbing the second flight and walking down another dimly lit hall, they found two doors facing each other across the narrow vestibule.

“Is this it?” whispered Maya, pointing the gun at the door.

“Yes, now put that thing away! We don’t want to scare Henry out of his wits. He’s probably extremely nervous about meeting us anyway,” whispered James.

Frank nodded in agreement, and Maya put the gun back in her purse but continued to hold it in her hand. She knocked twice, as agreed in the instructions. The door opened slowly, and a thin, bearded man in

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wire rim glasses peered out.

“Is one of you James Broadhurst?” asked Henry.

“That would be me, Henry,” said James.

“I hate to ask this, but can I see some ID?”

“No apology necessary. Here you go,” said James, passing his wallet opened to his driver’s license. Maya handed the wallet to Henry with her free hand. She expected him to look at it while she held it. He tugged at it without speaking. Maya continued to resist.

“I’m sorry. I need to take it inside. There’s not enough light out here.”

“Let it go, Maya,” said James. Maya reluctantly unclenched her fist on the leather wallet, and it and Henry disappeared behind the door. A few moments later the door swung wide. Maya clutched her purse with her other hand in anticipation of drawing her gun. Even Frank stepped back a bit.

Henry stepped forward and thrust his hand with the wallet in the direction of James. “It’s an honor to meet you, sir,” said Henry, as James stepped forward to claim his property. “Please come in. I’ve been waiting patiently for your arrival for days now.” Henry held the door open as James, then Frank, and finally Maya entered the small projection room. Maya carefully checked the surroundings, looking for exits or windows.

“You seem very cautious,” he said directly to Maya.

“Oh, don’t mind her. She’s the self-appointed security freak for this adventure,” answered James.

“Is that a gun in your purse?” asked Henry. Maya looked seriously at Henry, smiled, and then withdrew her hand from the purse leaving the pistol inside. She made no response to his question.

James thoroughly dismissed Maya by employing a combined gesture of demeaning eye roll, a rapid toss of his head shrugging off this

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crazy woman, and a question for Henry to refocus his attention. “I take it you received the package?”

“Yes, I did. Why are you all wearing white outfits? Do you all work in a restaurant?”

Frank responded for the group. “We needed to escape scrutiny as we left the hotel.”

“Is there someone following you?” His apparent level of fear was clearly evident to the team. “I don’t want any trouble. Why don’t you take the package and go? Christopher said it would be safe.”

“Henry, it is safe. I can attest to that. No one followed us in our car. No one detected that we left the hotel. You have nothing to worry about,” said Maya. The statement of facts and the cadence of the elocution softened Henry’s sense of alarm.

“We really need your help on this, Henry,” said Frank.

“Okay, I know who you are,” said Henry, pointing to James. “I haven’t been introduced to your friends.”

“This is Frank, my good friend and business associate. This is Maya, who volunteered to help us tonight.”

“Pleased to meet you, Henry,” said Frank, shaking Henry’s hand.

“It is nice to finally meet you, Henry. Rest assured. You have a lot of friends pulling for you. Thank you for doing this,” said Maya, shaking his hand. Frank mouthed the words *lots of friends?* to James behind Maya’s back.

“Oh . . . okay,” said Henry tentatively. “I had the equipment set up in here for a long time, but it wouldn’t allow us much room to work, so I moved our operation across the hall. Shall we get started?” Henry led the way out into the hallway.

“Stop!” yelled Maya, as Henry was about to open the door.

James spoke up. “Now what?”

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“She’s right. Let her go first,” said Frank.

Maya edged forward past the three men. “Where is the light switch for this room?” asked Maya.

“On the right, about so high,” said Henry, motioning with his left hand in the air.

Maya opened the door enough to slide her arm in to feel for the switch. She flicked on the light and pushed the door open wide panning her purse from side to side in the open room.

“Surprise, surprise! The bogeyman isn’t here,” said James.

“I’ve had about enough of you,” said Maya, getting in James’s face. “This is serious business. I’m trying to protect you—all of you,” she said, scanning the faces in the room. “All you have is snide remarks; it’s always a joke to you.”

“It’s not a joke, but it sure as hell doesn’t require brandishing guns and searching through this room. What were the authorities going to do, shoot us as soon as we entered the room?” said James.

“If we’re going to get out of here before dawn, we need to get started,” said Frank.

Henry looked at the tense faces on James and Maya. They were still staring at each other. “Okay, here’s the film.” He picked it up and laid it on an open table. “I think I can get it all done in one pass. We’ll be able to watch it on the little monitor over there. But the real action is going into this computer and these units here.”

“Sounds good if you say so,” said James, a little surprised at what had to happen technologically.

“We need to collect it on the computer, and once it’s collected, we send it out to these DVD drives here,” he said, waving his hands over the electronic equipment. “I tested the equipment with another 16-mm film and it works. I’m going to create three DVDs of the raw footage.



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That's what you asked for, wasn't it?"

"Yes, that's correct," said Frank.

"I followed the instructions inside the box. I didn't view the film, as you requested. I don't have blue ray or 4K or fancy stuff like that. Besides, this old film will look just fine on DVD. What are we going to see anyway? I'd like to prepare myself," asked Henry.

"It's apparently Eisenhower visiting some military base out west in the fifties and greeting aliens," answered James.

"Muroc or Holloman?" asked Henry without any hesitation.

James stood motionless staring at Henry. He could not believe someone so young knew the stories of how Eisenhower secretly went to two Air Force bases within a year of each other, drove onto the base, and, in a prearranged event, watched flying saucers land and occupants come out and talk with the humans. There were reports that at the second meeting a treaty of some kind was signed. Here was a young man stating with certainty that he knew of the events and could readily identify the military bases. "You know about these events?"

"James, it's all over the internet. I've had a strong interest for years. Something's going on here, that's for sure," said Henry assuredly. "It doesn't take much to find these stories."

"We really need to get going here," said Maya.

"Okay, I'll load it up." Henry quickly got to work, took the film out of the box, and carefully threaded it through the projector. "It looks in good shape—not too brittle. Some of these older films you have to have special equipment to run it. Loops like these through the gate behind the lens couldn't be done. Just need to attach it to the take-up reel. The computer is already on, and the program is ready to take it. Frank, there are some folding chairs over there against the wall. I'm going to stand most of the time and monitor this machine," he said, patting the projector. "The

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rest of you might as well get somewhat comfortable.”

Frank brought four chairs over to position in front of the monitor. James and Frank sat down first. Finally, Maya hesitantly sat on the other side of Frank.

“Is everybody ready? Let’s make history!” Henry bellowed as he flicked on the projector light and pressed the advance lever on the large brown projector. At first it was white leader that ran through for less than one minute, but it seemed like hours waiting for the unveiling. The first image was a makeshift reader board claiming a date and place. “Well, that answers that question. It’s Muroc, now known as Edwards Air Force Base.”

“It’s black and white,” said Maya, stating the obvious.

“Does this film have sound?” asked James.

The image dramatically changed. A desert scene, in full color, appeared at dusk. Thin bands of grey clouds framed a burnt orange setting sun hovering atop an auburn hued mountain. The image shuddered a little, and voices were heard from behind the camera. The scene was a long shot of three silvery saucer-shaped spaceships hovering about one hundred feet off of the ground. One ship was positioned in the foreground. The other two filled up the background. The image was mesmerizing. Henry looked at his guests’ faces. Their eyes, transfixed by the projected image in front of them, looked as saucer-shaped as the craft on the small screen. All faces were in a state of shock, except James who had an ear-to-ear grin. James caught Henry’s gaze. He quickly formed a thumbs-up and returned his focus to the screen.

Within a few minutes, a new camera angle displayed the three ships in a new configuration, indicating that multiple cameras were used. This image was zoomed in on the lead saucer. A slight wavering in the saucer could be seen, and a soft hum that wasn’t apparent before came

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across the speakers. "It's true then, they do waver a bit when they're close to the ground," said Henry in a soft voice.

The film continued showing different angles of the extraterrestrial craft in the aerial display. The scene ended, and white leader began feeding through the projector.

"Shit, is that it?" said Frank. The tantalizing snippet left him wanting more from this presentation.

"Hold on there. We have a lot of film left here. I think we're going to see the meeting with . . ." Henry's voice trailed off as the next scene unfolded. The sunset sky had dissolved into pitch black night. The images on the screen were lit with powerful floodlights from multiple directions. In the foreground was a single saucer-shaped craft supported on a finely configured tripod. No doorway or opening could be seen on the pewter colored skin that appeared to glisten under the glaring spotlights. The other spaceships were either gone or out of view. The camera was positioned on this one extraterrestrial craft.

The film jerked again into a second camera angle that captured the scene in landscape. At last the importance of this scene became obvious. On the right was the interplanetary vehicle resting lightly on the runway, and on the left was a group of men. Standing at the forefront was President Dwight Eisenhower. The camera closed in on the group and began scanning their faces.

"This must be the entourage of important people from the private sector. God, this is great! It's just like Michael Salla described," shouted Henry. The camera returned to Ike and zoomed back to capture the ship and the welcoming committee. An opening slowly appeared on the undersurface of the ship. A ramp promptly deployed and lightly rested on the asphalt surface of the runway with no hint of a sound. Ike stepped forward a little and waited. From inside the ship, a tall form disembarked.

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Was this a man? The bipedal motion of the legs and hips didn't add up. *The gait is all wrong*, thought Frank. *But still, it looks human with two arms, two legs, and a human-looking head.* The camera position changed, and the lens focused on this seven-foot representative of a race not of this earth. Floating at head height approximately two feet to the side of the humanoid's head was a gold colored spherical drone. The one-foot diameter drone had a number of one- to two-inch asymmetrical protrusions that rotated or wavered as the humanoid walked. It seemed to be talking to the alien, rotating from time to time. It followed every move of the humanoid carefully, not interfering in any way.

The head appeared to be human. *No, that face, that face, it isn't human*, thought James. "He's real—a real alien, not from here," he said, not expecting a response.

The alien's uniform, a slight hue of grey accented with maroon red, was form fitting without appearing taut or clinging to the skin. He strode forward and stopped about five feet away from Ike. Ike stepped forward, expecting to engage in the human gesture of shaking hands. The drone withdrew its appendages and inched forward to be parallel with the alien's head. Ike looked at the floating small metal sphere. The alien held up his hand palm forward to Ike alerting the President to approach no further—or maybe it was a greeting. He spoke something to the President, and Ike appeared to relax.

Ike extended his arm as if to gesture to an open hangar. They walked side by side, with the President keeping his distance from this strange visitor. The entourage dutifully followed at a discrete distance, controlled by two military policemen. The camera followed from behind these men until the film ran out again and dissolved into the familiar white leader.

"This is incredible! I've heard about this film for a dozen years

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and now, now . . .” stuttered James.

“Now it’s here,” added Maya. “Can we stop the film for a moment?”

Without waiting for a response from the others, Henry flipped one switch on the projector and pushed a button on the recording unit.

“Why are we stopping?” demanded James.

“How much have we seen of this?” Maya asked Henry.

“It’s about half done. We have about twenty minutes left on this reel,” he said, waving his hand over the film reel. Maya looked at her watch.

“Okay, I just wanted to check our time.”

James leaned forward to speak to Maya. “We’re watching the most importantly revealing presentation of the last thousand years, and you’re checking your watch!” he said incredulously.

Frank held his arm, attempting to rein him in. “Hey, she’s security. We’re on the clock here. It’s a valid question.” Frank turned to Maya and asked politely, “Do we have the time?”

“Yes, I was just having difficulty estimating the time . . . for the rest of the film. We’ll be fine.”

“Shall we resume?” asked Henry. Without waiting for an affirmative answer, he flipped the switch and pushed the button, and the equipment whirred into action again.

The next image was from a new camera position inside the large hangar. The scene was of the President and the extraterrestrial entering the well-lit structure. The room contained two comfortable leather arm chairs positioned facing each other at a distance of four or five feet. Behind one of the chairs was a row of seats. Ike stepped forward and extended his arm toward the leather arm chair.

The full features of this humanoid came into view. His shoulder

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length white hair framed a ghostly white face that appeared to glow with an iridescent sheen replicated even through the medium of fifties era film. The invited guest directly faced the camera lens for a brief moment. *Nice. An intentional act to permit us to fully catalog you*, thought Maya. A high forehead and prominent cheekbones that framed an incredibly thin nose extending to almost non-existent nostrils. The visitor's almost colorless lips circled a human looking mouth with white teeth. The eyes were light blue with distinctly nonhuman large irises and small black pupils. Everyone stood motionless waiting for this stranger from another world to make his next move.

"May we sit and talk with you?" said the President.

"Thank you," said the guest from another world, in plain Americanized English. The startled guests murmured. "Yes, I know your language. We have had many years to study it."

The President nodded to the men, and they quietly sat in the open seats behind him. Once they were seated, the President and the visitor sat down in unison. The drone rotated one hundred eighty degrees, the glistening tools retracted on the gold sphere, the weightless device scooted back to the two-foot attentive position to the right and back, and it rotated to the "front" again. Frank smiled and thought, *So this is the front side*. As Frank stared at the round drone, he perceived that his brain received a massive download of the specs of the device floating near the alien's head. Pictures, specifications, all translated into English—but at a fantastic rate of delivery that gave him a headache.

"Welcome to earth, or should I say welcome back?" said Ike.

"Thank you. We have been in your solar system for a long time. I remember the land when vast herds of buffalo grazed on your Great Plains. It was not so long ago."

"How old are you?" asked Ike.

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“I’m approximately four hundred of your years old. As a young—as you would say—pilot, I flew over these hills and deserts around this site many times. We have been watching the development of this planet with great interest. You hardly know what you have under your feet.”

“Do you mean the planet’s mineral wealth?” The alien’s facial muscles appeared to project a smile.

The President smiled in return.

“By ‘under your feet’ I mean that you take this beautiful world for granted. So many inhabited worlds are out there that are so inhospitable to life, but life persists, sentient life develops. Here your world is so rich with the ingredients for life that you and all other creatures flourish. Even calamities such as the intersection with asteroids is not enough to quell the drive for life. It comes back again and again. Your species has proliferated to the point that you are a hazard to this planet’s survival, and still you do not see. You assume it is all there for the taking, that it is your right to exploit.”

“But it is *our* planet,” protested the President. The visitor manufactured a smile again.

“This is what I mean. You somehow think that anything you do, any defilement, is acceptable on this world because ‘it is *your* planet.’”

“Why are you here?” asked the President directly.

The visitor sat up in the chair, looked at the entourage of men assembled behind them, and spoke so that all could hear. “As I have said, we have been here for a long time. However, there are new arrivals in the neighborhood. There is a distinct energy signature with every nuclear explosion that your countries explode on the surface. It is, at the moment, your most telling calling card. The species that are advanced enough for interstellar travel and concurrently have the means to detect your clarion call, have arrived.” The men watching and listening mur-

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mured again. "One of the species that you have detected circling the equator in a high orbit that you will probably call the 'grays' are not the most honorable of species. We can protect you from them."

"Why do we need to be protected? Will we not be able to defend ourselves? Are they a danger to us?" asked Ike.

"In a way, the answer is yes." A murmur of voices circulated quickly behind the President.

The President held up his hand. "What do you mean?"

"In all likelihood, these aliens will be willing to negotiate with you. They will offer technology to you but at a price. The question will be: is the price to your liking? There is no limit to human greed. You will strike a bargain with these visitors, but it may not be a bargain for you."

"And what are you offering us?"

"Your species is still so violent. You are now at a crossroads where you can literally blow yourselves up. You must renounce the development of nuclear weapons on a global basis. You must foster the development of your spirituality.

"We cannot put into your hands technologies that you could manifest into even more powerful weapons, because you are not ready for it. In time, when you fully understand your true selves, we can work with you as equals and share our technologies with you."

The President put his hand to his forehead and gently wiped his balding head. "What you are asking us to do is extremely difficult, especially now with our standoff with the Russians. They are a very dangerous people, and we believe that our nuclear weapons function as a deterrent to their aggressions." The President paused and then turned to the men behind him for a moment. He turned back and spoke to the visitor. "Knowing your understanding of things, this may sound illogical to you, but we are suspicious of the intentions of our fellow men. Countries have

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agendas; they often communicate them ineffectively, and sometimes they are misconstrued. We are trying to build trust with our United Nations, but it is not always effective. You are asking us, one by one to drop our guard, and that's how it would be: 'one-by-one.' Any country that would do what you ask would be leaving themselves open to unsavory agendas on the part of another." The President forced a small smile. "You must have guessed that rejection of your proposal was a distinct possibility."

"Yes," answered the visitor with almost no expression in his voice.

"Then why did you come here?"

"The opportunity to place this seed of understanding and truth could not wait any longer. We have ongoing projects and missions within this galaxy with thousand-year timelines. This mission was spurred on by the arrival to your planet of the others. We would have been happy to keep working behind the scenes, but a face-to-face was given a higher vote so that you would have an alternative."

"What do you mean by 'behind the scenes'?" asked the President, leaning forward again.

The visitor seemed to pick his words even more carefully. "We are talking directly to some on your planet. They want to know the truth. They understand."

The President leaned back and softly pleaded for a break. "Will you give me a moment please?"

"Yes, of course," said the visitor. The President rose smoothly from his chair and waved his group of invited guests to join him a distance away from the seated visitor. A second cameraman joined the group of men huddled with the President.

"Should this be filmed, Mr. President?" said an old man with a priest's collar looking directly into the camera lens.

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The President looked directly at the camera and then back at the questioner. “Yes, it should. Someday someone may look at this recording. I want them to know what some of the world’s leaders and thinkers said here today of this monumental interaction.

“I want you only to respond to a go or no-go with further negotiations,” said the President. “We will debrief with all of you after our guest leaves. Can we—or maybe the question is ‘should we’—negotiate under these terms to abrogate our nuclear arsenal?”

“As a man who speaks for many in the church, I find this approach simply wonderful,” said Bishop Macintyre. “The promise of peace and enlightenment as a basis of our society and theirs is what God would expect of us. However, we are only men, sinners to be true. We live in a dangerous world now, and I cannot see us relinquishing our stand against godlessness and evil of the Soviet Union. Maybe someday, when we as a people are more evolved, then and maybe only then can we negotiate with this species.”

“What do you think, Franklin?” asked the President.

“I can’t believe I’m in concurrence with Bishop Macintyre, but I gotta say no to this. If he’s been watching us for such a long period of time, he’s bound to know that this is an intractable position to bargain from, knowing our present condition.”

“I concur,” offered another man in the circle.

“What is your take on this, Eddie?” asked the President.

“Well, it’s the right thing to do. Unfortunately, it’s the wrong time. I’m not talking about military issues or global annihilation. I’m sure that if full scale knowledge of their presence here comes out it will cause panic, monetary destabilization, a full-scale assault on the Judeo-Christian tradition in this country, and quite possibly a crisis of confidence in the political makeup of Western governments. Does anyone remember a little

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on-air radio play by Orson Welles back in 1938?”

“What do you think?” the President asked a grim-faced man.

“I’ve been listening to this unanimous declaration of rejection of sanity with absolute horror,” responded Gerald Light. “What are we to do? Is it our fate to negotiate, apparently badly, with this other group of powerful aliens for a few trinkets and give away everything? This man speaks the truth, and we’re going to send him packing? Mr. President, I urge you not to do this. Let’s talk to our friends in Europe and talk to our enemies, too, and come to an agreement. We can do this, sir.”

“Thank you, Mr. Light.”

“Are there any other opinions, one way or another?” the President asked the assembled group of men. “Well, this is a democracy still, and the votes of this caucus have been tallied. I’m sorry, Gerald.”

“The country is sorry too, Mr. President,” added Gerald.

“Let’s get back to our guest,” said Eisenhower, and he turned and walked quickly back to his chair. The other men followed. “Thank you for waiting, sir,” said Ike, as he sat down in the chair with both hands on the arms. The visitor looked up and appeared to smile.

“As I said, we are in a difficult situation on this planet. We cannot at this time renounce these terrible weapons, not just yet. Maybe there will be a time in our future when we can limit or even remove this burden from our shoulders, but not now. I am honored to speak to you, sir. A direct contact with peoples from another planet has been dreamt about by millions of this planet’s citizens. I hope we can still have further discussions with you. Is that possible?”

The visitor ignored the President’s question and looked over his head at the men sitting behind Ike. “Did all of you agree to this?” he asked. He slightly moved his head, as if to grill each one for a response. They said nothing.

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“We had one dissenter,” offered the President. “We have a democracy and—”

“And this was important to exercise your democracy. I understand,” he said, still keeping his eyes aloft looking at the men’s faces. The camera angle was fixed in one position perpendicular to the two seated men facing each other. Any nonverbal reactions of the men behind the President were lost to history. The visitor and the President had up to now ignored the camera. A heavy silence hung over the meeting, with the President having nothing to say. The visitor slowly dropped his eyes. “I appreciate the single dissenter. I know who you are,” he said with a slight smile.

Inexplicably the visitor slowly turned his head and focused his gaze right into the camera lens and spoke. “Is this what you want?” President Eisenhower followed the visitor’s gaze into the lens of the camera.

“Whoa!” said Henry. “Who’s he talking to?”

“He’s talking to *us*, Henry, here, right now,” answered Maya.

There was nothing left to discuss. “Thank you for welcoming me,” said the visitor as he effortlessly rose to a standing position in front of his chair.

The President slowly stood to reach parity of a sort with this tall stranger. “I speak for my fellow Americans and proudly say this has been an honor to sit and discuss these issues. I would like to know if you will come back and speak with us again. We have so many questions.”

“It is up to you, sir. I hope it will not be . . . very long.” The visitor appeared to pause looking at the surrounding faces that were absolutely hanging on every word he spoke. His eyes recorded the weight of importance the President and his entourage ascribed to this historic meeting. Like a tourist with a camera, he seemed to be savoring it all through whatever number of senses he had, collecting tidbits of human en-

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deavors—of what it means to be from here, an inhabitant of earth.

“This is my last mission to earth. My son is very interested in working with you. He has taken the earth name Bastian. Maybe when he is ready to meet with people from this planet, you will be ready for him.

“I hope that the presence of my friend did not scare you,” said the visitor looking directly at the ever-present metal sphere suspended near his head. “He bristled at the thought that you would touch me. He looks harmless, but had the physical interaction gone forward, my friend would have neutralized you. That would not have been good for détente. I am old, and my friend has been with me for as long as I can remember. Establishing good friends is hard to do, no matter the planet in the cosmos.” The alien smiled again. The President genuinely returned a deep, tearful smile. “Goodbye, Mr. President. Goodbye, gentlemen.” Without another word, he turned to the wide opening in the hangar and walked resolutely back to his ship. The visitor did not turn around, but walked up the lighted ramp of his ship. A voice in the background could be heard urging the control tower to turn off the radar. The three ships rose silently, hovered for what seemed minutes but was probably less than thirty seconds, and then rose uniformly into the night sky. The three discs reached a point above the base and inexplicably just vanished. The scene abruptly closed with the white leader coursing through the sprockets and rapidly whipping around on the take-up reel as the film completely ended. Henry dutifully turned off the whirring projector and stopped the DVD machines.