

Something About Blood

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Preface to the Second Edition

It is with great honor that I, Frilio Rolthnor of Petoskey, do at last submit to Librarian of Congress, Stewart R. Williams, this manuscript for the second edition of my history of the notable events surrounding `{main}`, `{lastname}`, that took place between the months of May 2036 CE and January 2037 CE. While we understand that our previous edition had been met with much criticism and many recommendations from the Editor of Congress, Oscar M. Pollock, it should be noted up front that all of the initially presented suggestions have been, regrettably, ignored.

We wish to be explicitly clear to Mr. Pollock that we in no way intend him any disrespect. Who among us can doubt that without the suburb advice Mr. Pollock provided to E. Jones, her best selling *A History of “the Northwest Territories”, and All Lands Bearing Such a Name* would never had made its way onto the recommended reading lists in all but three of the school districts stationed in lands covered by the work. It would be absurd to even consider whether the world would even know about T. J. Smith’s international best seller *Smith, from Profession to Name Across the World* had Oscar not provided Smith with the inspiration to shift the focus of this modern marvel beyond Tom’s own home state of Virginia. No. We once more state explicitly and clearly that we wish no disrespect upon the artistic, linguistic, and stylistic abilities of our good friend Oscar. His suggestions for revision have been all been very carefully and selectively ignored in the production of our second edition due to the offense that we took after his mocking of our name in front of the esteemed Librarian at the Winter Holidays Party where we last saw each other.

Now that such disclosure has been presented, we shall denote the differences between this second edition and the first.

It was much to our great surprise that, as you may be very well aware, the focus of most reviews for the initial publication seemed to be not on the history itself but the detail of which we described not only the sexual encounters surrounding and including our principal characters and their parents. In an attempt to *get back to the history*, we have removed all of such descriptions from this publication and we urge our readers to reconsider the significance of the history upon reading this rather than using it as material for such activities one may in the privacy of one's home.

We also wish it to be known that all efforts have been spent in attempt to make this history more accessible to those who may not fancy a formal educational publication. We have attempted and succeeded, though with much difficulty, to get the approval of my nineteen year old neffew regarding the level of entertainment and ease of reading this publication possesses.

Once more, we would like to note that we did receive several additional suggestions to this edition by the esteemed Editor of Congress, Oscar Matthew Pollack, but those were deliberately neglected, and we even moved to remove our previously used pen-name from this edition in favor of our own out of spite.

Preface to the First Edition

It is with great honor that I, Wallace G. Cunningham of Petoskey, do at last submit to Librarian of Congress, Stewart R. Williams, this manuscript for my history of the notable events surrounding ;main; ;lastname; that took place between the months of May 2036 CE and January 2037 CE.

As many of our readers must know, the events depicted in this work have been of the utmost significance in shaping both medical and economic policy of our country in the years since. While many journalists have found it in their best interests to portray Mr. ;lastname; as a sinister figure bent on destroying one of our countries great businesses, we pride our publication on its adherence to the spirit of the history. Our work contains an adherence to primary sources unfound in modern texts that touch these events, and we pride ourselves on not excluding the interviews recorded of ;lastname; in 2040 CE that so many of our fellow historians avoided due to the explicitness of the language and content. As such, we believe that our work will provide the most accurate compiled sequence of these events published to date.

We thank you, the reader, very much for your consideration of our volume, and we hope you take some degree of satisfaction with yourself upon completion of this work, for only then will you know the truth regarding ;main; ;lastname;'s story beyond what the popular media would have you believe.

It should be noted that most characters featured in this work are based on real persons, and any dialogue based on their own. At no time, however, did the author restrict himself to quotations provided by the individuals featured, and quotations used in this publication should not be interpreted

as having been direct by the speakers. If the reader would wish for a compilation of the source used in preparing this work, such a compilation may be found at the publishers website free of charge. Should the publisher go out of business and lose its website, we have, in our possession, such a list, that we will attempt to distribute to the standard libraries in both print and electronic form.

Chapter 1

Graduation couldn't have come soon enough. `jmain` (A)'s friends had all warned him that more school after undergrad would drive him crazy, but `jmain` decided to ignore all this advice, and today it was finally over. Having left the commencement ceremony a few hours prior, showered up, and met with his and Jake's family, `jmain` was now enjoying his graduation dinner at Frank's Steak House, where you certainly won't find any franks on the menu.

Getting his Pharm D had been a long and arduous process. It wasn't necessarily a difficult program, not for `jmain`, but having to stay in school four years after the majority of his friends had all gone off to the "real world" hadn't been easy. Sure, Jake(A-) had been getting his PhD in Artificial Intelligence Systems here too, but it seemed like a rarity when Jake wasn't spending his nights in the lab trying to meet his paper deadlines or, later, finish his dissertation. Still, `jmain` was passionate about his studies. What could be more noble than working to produce medicines that could cure the ailments that still plague humanity today?

Conversation at the table always seemed to take a rapid shift when `jmain` or Jake's mothers suddenly remarked, once again, how wonderful it was that they had *two doctors* sitting with them now. `jmain` always this was a silly notion. His Pharm D and Jake's PhD made them no more doctors than `jmain`'s parents with their Juris Doctorits. `jmother`(A-) and `jfather`(AB+) `jlastname` were both well known lawyers. `jmother`, his mother, fought hard in the Supreme Court case that resulted in the sending of encrypted messages, even those uncrackable by law enforcement, to be a protected right under the first amendment, while `jfather`, `jmain`'s

father, had lead the team filing the patent on `jcancer drug` back in 2019. `jcancer drug` was a marvelous piece of pharmaceutical magic; an annual injection of `jcancer drug` will be sufficient to prevent the cells in 99.99% of humanity from growing cancerous. It was, of course, wildly popular now. President Sanders even announced in his State of the Union address that the US had succeeded in curing cancer by the year 2020, as predicted. Both of `jmain`'s parents were officially retired now, though `father` still spent his time in DC lobbying for `jpharm`.

Jake's parents (both A-) lead completely different routes. While they were both certainly well off, both of Jake's parents had left the world of academia after their undergraduate degrees, so Jake was truly the first *doctor* in their family. Jake's parents had both worked at Microsoft back when Bill Gates was CEO, and Jake's mother had gone so far as to work with Mr. Gates himself on a secret project that never saw the light of day. `jmain` had always been super jealous of this, since Bill Gates was his idol. Microsoft never excited `jmain` too much, but what Gates did with his resources through the Gates Foundation after retiring was what really got `jmain` going. Focusing on eliminating deadly diseases in parts of the world where resources were scarcest was the most noble of goals in `jmain`'s mind.

"It's just so great to have two new doctors at the table!" `mother` exclaimed again drawing giggles from Jake's mother and coordinated sighs from `jmain` and Jake. "Oh, stop it now. You two know how much you've worked for today. Just think, the last time either of you weren't in school President Obama was still in his first term!"

`mother` loved breaking down history based on presidential terms. `jmain` and Jake were both twenty six even though `jmain` spent one fewer year on his Pharm D program than Jake on his PhD. Due to an unanticipated set of moves between school districts on Jake's parents part, Jake had ended up skipping the second grade, so the two boys' getting their advanced degrees at the same time was a bit of a boon for the two families who had known each other since before two boys' shared birthday in September of 2010.

"I'll toast to that!" announced Jake raising his glass of *whatever the darkest beer you have on tap*. "To no more all-nighters preparing for exams or pulling off papers!"

main_i was glad to toast to that. While he never quite saw the sunrise while trying to prepare for his exams since undergrad, having to go home and write an essay after spending all day on his studies had always been main_i's biggest complaint about school in general. The opportunity to go home after a day of work with nothing to worry about besides whatever sport was in season would be wonderful.

"Don't you two get optimistic on me now" warned Jake's father.

"Joe's right" followed father_i, "You're both moving out to Palo Alto. If the *culture* over in the valley is anything like it was when I was your age, you haven't escaped your late nights yet. It's a very cutthroat work environment still."

"Here's to that" continued Jake's mother clanking her Chardonnay against father_i's Long Island Iced Tea. "Even though you'll be working at pharm_i rather than in tech, you'll be spending long nights in the lab, no doubt" she directed toward main_i.

main_i and Jake had both managed to secure employment in Palo Alto after graduation, allowing them to continue sharing an apartment into the real world. Jake had managed to get a job as an AI researcher at a company known for their self-driving cars, which were legal to drive in seven states and Norway. main_i, on the other hand, got a job working as a researcher in one of pharm_i's medicine labs. main_i had made his father promise that no *letters of recommendation* would end up influencing anything, but after acing a full day's set of interviews, main_i had secured the position on his own merit. Both boys agreed that the best time to start would be shortly after graduation, so this dinner was not only in celebration of their graduation, but also the last time either would be seeing their families again until Thanksgiving, half a year away.

There wasn't too much more to talk about besides the slight change in lifestyle and graduation itself. Both the boys had been financially independent since they finished undergrad, if you don't count main_i's pharmacy school tuition, and not too much had happened with either of their families that hadn't been expressed earlier. Neither main_i nor Jake had any re-

maining grandparents. Those around at the time of O-Day hadn't managed last much longer. Eventually, their food had come.

All six at the table had ordered some sort of steak. While they were ordering, `mother` had noted how good the salmon used to be at Frank's, but all mention of the dish had since vanished from the high-end steak house's menu. It had come after a necessary re-branding campaign, but Frank's definitely still had the best food in town, and they lived up to their reputation. The steaks were all cooked to perfection, and even `father`'s, which was ordered "no pink" had the juicy taste steak-lovers adore. After their main courses, the six all shared what was Jake's favorite desert and Frank's special: the Brownie Sundae Pie.

The Brownie Sundae Pie was a work of art, or so Jake would say. Imagine an Oreo-cookie style pie crust filled with butter fudge ice cream from which one of each of Frank's signature brownies: (the peanut butter brownie, the peanut brownie, and the chocolate chunk brownie), all ascended to form a pyramid-like structure. `father` was busy joking that the desert resembled some palace from the cover of a science fiction book he had read as a child as Jake immediately took a substantial slice of the pie to his plate containing a majority of the famed peanut butter brownie.

After the delicious desert had been completed, `main` and Jake gave their final farewells to their parents and left to pack for the flight they had scheduled to California three days hence.

Chapter 2

It followed, after the dinner which concluded in a desert so scrumptious sounding that describing it drew hunger into the mind of the author, that our friends, `main` and Jake, proceeded directly to their place of residence. Having arrived at Frank's via a separate automobile than the ones used by their parents and having not consumed so much wine at dinner as to make it dangerous, `main` proceeded to drive himself and Jake back through streets of their college town, narrowly avoiding several of the severely intoxicated undergraduates in the midst of celebrating their own graduations, until they eventually reached their apartment over at 235 Maple St. It occurred to `main`, as it often did upon his return to the building, that he'll probably never truly leave Maple St. He was born in a hospital whose address was on a "Maple St.", and he had lived in an apartment on a different Maple St. at the institution where he got his undergraduate degree.

The apartment itself wasn't anything special. There were two bedrooms, both of comparable size, a single bathroom that needed dusting more frequently than any other room in the unit for some reason unknown to humankind, a kitchen of notable size, and a living room, which featured a pair of black leather sofas that Jake was quite fond of due to the staggeringly low investment needed to keep them clean. There wasn't too much more for them to pack. The all-school commencement ceremony took place several days after both the Pharmacy School and College of Computer Science's private ceremonies, so the two had already managed to get most of their belongings sorted out. It was only the essentials that remained. Well, the essentials and the entire kitchen.

Sorting out the kitchen was a chore the two had been putting off for

quite a few days. Most everything useful in the kitchen, sans the boring-white appliances owned by the landlord and the hideous white tile counter tops, was a combination of items belonging to either the `lastname`s or Jake's family. When a wok or a food processor was needed, one of the two knew where they could get one their parents wouldn't mind the absence of. The sorting of such items would be a task that involved not only deciding what was worth shipping to California, but also determining, of the items not passed along, where those items would live the remainder of their lives.

There was no trouble in some cases. The non-stick pans had all come from Jake's mother, since she preferred to cook with her copper set nowadays, and the knives had all been hand-picked by `father` many years prior. Cutlery and glassware were the real challenges. In addition to trying to separate the forks, knives, and spoons into their respective sets, of which the boys identified three and a half, neither could remember whose parents' houses contained the matching siblings from which these collections had been separated. Ultimately, the two had determined the origins of two but decided they could leave their parents with the tasks of ensuring the remaining piles got to their home drawers.

At this time, a knocking could be heard coming from the door. This was a simple door, and as such, the knocking fulfilled its purpose of informing the unit's residence about the existence of some individual creating the action. Opening the door was a simple task for Jake, and as he had expected, the knocker was none other than Roland (A+). This Roland, about whom we shouldn't go into too much detail, was a peculiar sort of person with with mid-length blond hair and glasses that somehow matched his lips. Roland had a very specific purpose for knocking on the door of 235 Maple St, and this purpose was already known to `main` and Jake, for Roland had come to perform an exchange with the two boys of whom we've oh so recently left dinner with. The exchange had been predetermined and was quite standard at this time of year. A set of transfusions of Roland's blood, one to `main` and the second to Jake, in exchange for all the alcohol that the two had accumulated but not yet finished over the course of their graduate careers.

The exchange took no time at all. `main` had his Clencer 900, a marvelous piece of technology that could perform a direct vein-to-vein transfusion while filtering out everything unnecessary or likely to spread disease, pre-

pared for the event, so after Roland surrendered all four MLs of his blood, two for jmainj and two for Jake, he was well on his way with an assortment of hard liqors and beer bottles. jmainj and Jake had left no wine unfinished.

Following this, each of the boys retired for the night in his own way. jmainj put on a white-noise machine and proceeded to dreamland, where he encountered a fascinating sport that involved attempting to bake cookies faster than an opponent could eat them, and Jake spent some time reading a book about four guardspeople saving their empire before he eventually dozed off himself.

Chapter 3