

Chapter One: Gypsyland

Steve and Kate walked into their friend's house without knocking. They were expected. It was Saturday evening and they had already made plans to visit. In fact, it was a usual event for them to visit Tony and Teri. They had been good friends for years.

As Steve walked into the house, he saw Sarah, Tony and Teri's daughter, texting on her phone. She didn't look up. He waved at Teri and went into the kitchen to deliver some food that they had brought. As he opened the refrigerator door, he noticed Sarah's work. She had placed several signs on the door. The first one was a picture of the planet that said, "We love the planet." The next one said, "Hold the light," and another one said, "Join Team Creator." The last sign was something called the hand prayer that included several paragraphs in small type.

Steve went outside to the backyard, where he expected to find Tony.

Tony smiled when he saw Steve, "Hey, buddy. Glad you could make it."

"What else do I have to do?"

They both sat down and relaxed.

"Want a Kombucha?" Tony asked.

"Yeah, that would be great."

"I'll be right back. You like the green one, right?"

Steve nodded. "Yeah, if you have one."

Tony returned with two bottles of Kombucha and handed one with a green label to Steve.

"Thanks."

Steve looked at Tony, but didn't say anything. He wanted to resume the talk they had last week, and waited for Tony to figure it out.

"What?" Tony asked.

“I think it’s time to go. Kate and I are ready.”

“Cortez?”

“Yeah, California is done. It’s not coming back.”

Tony looked at Steve and contemplated. This was a conversation they had been having all summer after Tony’s daughter, Sarah, brought up the idea. She had become obsessed with a community called Team Creator in Cortez, Colorado. When she found out that her dad and Steve knew John Randall, one of the founders of Team Creator, she wouldn’t stop talking about it.

Both families were what could be termed as newagers or lightworkers. They held metaphysical beliefs and didn’t fit in with mainstream society. They only ate organic food and were either vegetarian or vegan, with an aversion to processed foods. Ecology and a love of nature were noticeable in the pictures on the walls of their homes. The reading material and books on their shelves were mostly metaphysical. An assemblage of crystals were littered throughout their homes, and the smell of incense was common.

“Are you sure Teri and Kate are ready to go?” Tony asked.

Steve nodded. “Yes, you’re the only holdout. If we don’t leave now, it’s going to be cold soon. It’s now or we wait until spring, and I don’t want to wait. Sarah said that we can join the new community that’s being built next to Team Creator. Now’s our chance.”

Tony let out a long breath. “Okay, let’s do it. I’ll give my two weeks’ notice on Monday. My sister can sell the house. When do you want to go?”

Steve practically jumped up out of his chair. “How about two weeks? Or do you need three?”

“Three,” Tony replied. “Where are you going?”

Steve smiled. “To give everyone the news.”

He hurried into the house to give everyone the good news. He was smiling. “Sarah! We’re going. In three weeks, we will be living in Cortez!”

Sarah, who was sixteen years old, smiled brightly and gave Steve a hug. “Thanks, Uncle Steve.”

She knew that Steve had convinced Tony.

Teri and Kate both smiled watching Sarah hug Steve. They knew how much this meant to her. She was a special child, who was gifted with amazing healing abilities. She wanted to go to Colorado and help heal people who came from all over the country. She had read about Team Creator's healing center and knew that it was her calling.

"What's that hand prayer on the refrigerator?" Steve asked Sarah.

"Oh, I got that off of Team Creator's website. It helps you to hold the light. You're supposed to do it every morning. You say it out loud, and it can include anything you want. Everyone can make up their own.

"The thumb represents who you serve, or who you work for. Where is your allegiance? The ego or your soul? The ego or humanity?"

"The index finger represents when someone metaphorically points at you. What do they see? Someone who is selfish or selfless, an egotist or egoless, prideful or grateful?"

"The middle finger represents giving the Creator the finger. Do you live the sin of pride as a hedonist, or do you live a life of purity and integrity?"

"The ring finger represents unconditional love. Do you live from the heart? Are you kind, caring, considerate, and compassionate?"

"The pinky represents a pinky swear to hold the light. This requires that we live God's virtues by remaining humble, grateful, trusting, faithful, selfless, and in service to humanity. We have to walk in the shoes of all the great avatars and saints. That's what is required to hold the light."

Sarah stopped and looked at Steve, waiting for him to reply.

"Do they expect everyone at Team Creator and Gypsyland to hold the light and live the life of a saint?"

"That's the ideal, but we know that men aren't as strong as women and probably can't do it."

Sarah laughed.

Teri and Kate also laughed.

“What’s so funny? I can hold the light.” Steve said.

“Yeah, until some girl walks by without a bra, and there goes your plan,” Kate said.

Everyone laughed.

“Hedonism may be wired into men, but it’s also wired into women,” Steve said.

“Perhaps, but not as strongly,” Teri said. “All you need to make a man happy is sex, beer, and sports. Women are a bit more complex.”

Steve laughed. “Okay, I’m going back outside. I can’t win this argument.”

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“How much longer?” Sarah asked.

Tony was driving a Dodge Ram 2500 extended cab truck while towing a large travel trailer. Sitting next to Tony was Steve, with Sarah, Kate, and Teri in the backseat. They had stopped in Flagstaff, Arizona, the previous night; otherwise, it would have taken about 14 hours to drive from California. They had left Flagstaff at 8 a.m. and had been on the road for about 4 hours, and were getting close to Cortez.

“About an hour,” Tony replied.

Sarah groaned. “This is taking forever.” She, once again, looked down at her phone, while the adults enjoyed the scenic views of southwest Colorado. It was early October and trees were changing colors. It was quite beautiful.

Tony and Steve had planned a long day. After they arrived and parked the trailer, they were going to drive to Durango and pick up another travel trailer that Steve and Kate had already purchased.

During the two-day drive, there wasn’t a lot of talk, except for what they planned to do at their new home. Sarah was going to be a healer, so she didn’t say much. Kate was an artist and hoped to

work with some other creative people who made artistic products. She was hoping to make jewelry that could be sold on the Internet. Teri loved gardens and growing food, and decided to do that.

Tony was good at fixing things and decided to volunteer as a handy man. Steve was good with computers, software, and programming. He would see if there was a need for that. He might even start a small company that made smart phone apps, if he could find a few more programmers at the new community.

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“The GPS says we are getting close,” Steve said.

“Yeah, it’s only about a mile away,” Tony replied. “There should be a sign.”

“I see it!” Sarah exclaimed as she pointed.

Off in the distance were two distinct groups of travel trailers. Tony slowed as he saw two signs that marked the entrance. One sign said Team Creator with an arrow pointing left. The other sign said Gypsyland with an arrow pointing right. He turned onto the dirt road and followed it. As he drove down the road, he could tell that this was the border of the two communities. When he got to the end of the road, he turned right into Gypsyland. There was an elaborate entrance gate, with a large Gypsyland sign above the entrance.

They could see about one hundred trailers and RV’s, and a few buildings. They parked at what looked like the main building.

As they got out of the truck, someone came to greet them. He was a thin, white man about 30 years of age, with a long ponytail and a goatee.

“How was the trip? I’ve been waiting for you. Sarah texted me that you were due any minute now.”

He held out his hand to Tony, “My name is Josh. I’m here to get you situated. I have two

locations that you can choose from to hook up your trailer.”

Tony, and then everyone else, even Sarah, shook his hand.

“Are you aware that we will have two trailers? Steve and I are going to Durango today to pick up his.”

Josh nodded. “Yeah, I’ve been in contact with Sarah for about a month now. She has filled me in on everything.”

“When is the orientation?” Sarah asked.

“We have one every day at 10 a.m. if someone signs up. I’ll sign you up for tomorrow. It will be in that building, and it lasts about an hour.” Josh pointed.

“Does anyone ever leave the orientation disgruntled?” Kate asked.

Josh laughed. “No. You will like living here. Nearly all of the rules are common sense ones that anyone would agree to uphold. Everyone wants to live in peace and harmony, but you can’t do that with zero rules. Someone has to set the community standards. I think the model we have chosen works well. We’re not as strict as our neighbor, Team Creator. They actually live by a written constitution.”

“Yeah, I’ve read it,” Sarah said. “It’s not so bad. I could live there.”

Tony laughed. “You’re practically going to. You’ll probably spend more time there than here.”

“Why is that?” Josh asked.

“I have a job there to be a healer,” Sarah beamed.

“Excellent,” Josh said. “They have a very good healing center. We all use it. Both communities are very integrated. We do a lot of things together, especially business.”

“Okay,” Tony said. “Let’s see those hookup spots.”

“First,” Josh said, “does anyone need to change their shoes? It’s a bit of a walk. Also, I know you have been driving for a while. Why don’t we make a quick trip inside, and you can get something to eat or drink. You can take it with you. I’ll have a backpack for any trash.”

“I need to change my shoes,” Teri said. “I’ll meet you inside.” She started walking back to the

trailer, where they had all of their luggage.

The rest of them went inside. There, they met several new friends and helped themselves to an assortment of drinks and snacks. All of it was free to those who lived in the community.

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After about a five minute walk down a dirt road that was lined with trailers, they came to the first location.

“This would be my choice,” Josh said. “The views are excellent, and the sun will rise from that direction, giving you more direct sunlight. We can put solar panels on your roof, and it will be an ideal spot.”

“Can we put both trailers here, side by side?” Tony asked.

Josh nodded, “Yep.”

“I like it,” Sarah said.

“What’s our second choice?” Tony asked.

Josh took off his backpack and removed a document from within it. “Here is the community master plan. We always like to show newcomers the plan, and give them the opportunity to select any spots that are available.”

Josh laid down his backpack on the ground, and then placed the master plan on top of his backpack. Everyone gathered round. He pointed at the plan, “This is where we are now, and these are the spots that are available.”

“It doesn’t look like anyone lives over there,” Kate said.

Josh looked at Kate. “There are a few trailers, but not many yet.”

“Why would we want to live over there?” Steve asked.

“Only one reason. It will be quieter. The trailers are more spread out, but it’s a longer walk to

the main buildings and the gate.”

“Why will it be quieter?” Kate asked.

Josh smiled. “This is Gypsyland. It can get noisy, especially at night when people like to talk or play music.”

“I want to stay right here,” Sarah said. “This is where everything is happening.”

Everyone smiled at Sarah’s assuredness, and agreed with their silence.

“Okay,” Josh said. “Let’s get your trailer hooked up.”

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The next morning, they went to the orientation. It was held by two women, both of whom were in their mid-twenties. They stood in front of the room, while Tony, Steve, Teri, Kate, and Sarah sat in chairs that were lined up in rows, to seat about fifty people.

“I’m Jane and this is Sue. We’re going to tell you all about Gypsyland. First of all, welcome. We’ve lived here about a year, and it’s really a fun place to live. Everyone becomes family very quickly as we get to know each other. Gypsyland is only on one hundred acres, so it’s small. There are currently about two hundred people, and the plan is to limit the capacity to three hundred. Once we get to three hundred, we will let in a few more people, if they are family or close friends, but it won’t be easy to get in, once we reach capacity.

“Until then, anyone is welcome, if they have a sponsor. If you are going to sponsor someone, we ask that you wait at least three months, so that you know exactly what you are recommending. Also, we ask that you only sponsor people that you know well, and who can give back to the community. This is not a retirement home. We prefer active people with some type of skill, and everyone is expected to be of service in one form or another.

“The main buildings are shared by everyone. They include the cafeteria, where you can get food

twenty-four/seven. We have three cooks, but they set their own hours. If one of them is working, you can order off a daily menu. When they are gone, there are leftovers in the refrigerators. Everything is labeled, so it's easy to find what you want. The food here is good. You won't be hungry."

"Can we have food in our trailer?" Kate asked.

"Yes, of course," Sue said. "We have a small farm on about ten acres. The harvested food from the farm can be taken to your trailers. Also, we have storage bins of food in the cafeteria that you can take to your trailers. We usually always have some fruit in our trailer. I recommend that you only snack in your trailer, and come to the cafeteria for larger meals."

"Can we order food from the outside? Like raw nuts?" Steve asked.

"If you have a credit card or bitcoin," Sue said, "then you can order nearly anything online. It will be delivered to the building at the front gate."

"Next to the cafeteria," Sue continued, "is the laundry room. There are also showers and bathrooms in the laundry room. I don't think we've mentioned it yet, but everything is free in Gypsyland. Once you cross through the front gate, no money changes hands. There are no taxes and no fees. We make our money from donations from members, and the farm income. Once a week, we go to the farmers market in Durango and sell harvested food. Currently, we have about one million dollars in our bank accounts. Most of that came from donations."

"We plan to donate a large sum," said Tony. "As soon as my house sells, I will transfer the funds."

Sue smiled. "Thank you. That is very generous."

"There are a few items that are not free," Jane said. "If you want to own a cell phone or a personal computer, that is your expense. There is a nearby cell tower, and we get good access here. We have both land-line and Wifi Internet, which is free. You can own your own vehicle, at your own expense. Lastly, any items that we do not have which you wish to purchase, come at your cost. If you need to borrow something, like a power tool or a sewing machine, you can do that through a request on

our intranet website.”

Jane looked at everyone to see if they had any questions, and then continued.

“Next to the laundry room is the entertainment room. It’s actually four rooms. Three of them have large screen TV’s, and the fourth has several cubicles with computers for Internet access. Each of the TV rooms seats about twenty people. They are popular at night. It’s first-come-first-serve, and once a movie or show ends, the room votes on what to watch next. Democracy rules.”

“If a TV or computer breaks,” Sue said, “there is a problem box in each room with a pad and pen. Describe the problem on the pad and drop it into the box. You can also report problems at the front entrance, if someone is working.”

“We do not yet have an exercise or yoga room,” Jane said. “However, you can use the one next door at Team Creator. We plan to build one in the future. We also do not have a healing building. You can use the one at Team Creator.”

“That’s where I’m working,” Sarah said.

The two young women who gave the orientation smiled. “That’s awesome. Hopefully, we can have our own healing center here one day, and you can work there.”

“The last building is at the front entrance,” Jane said. “It’s used to welcome new people to the community, greet visitors, and take deliveries. If no one is there, we have a special texting doorbell. It will text people in about five trailers that are near the front entrance. Then someone will volunteer to help out whoever is waiting.

“We have two water wells, one that is used for the farm and one for the rest of us. We also have two large water tanks that are kept full. Nearly all of our electricity comes from solar and wind. We have backup batteries that can hold about one week’s worth of our energy needs. The community has been wired with underground fiber optic cable to each hookup location. We have a tech team who will help you with Internet access. If you want wireless Internet inside your trailer, that’s no problem. We have wireless modems that will cover a small area, but we recommend plugging into the wall

connection, to reduce radio frequency exposure.

“The farm is our biggest function. If you find yourself without anything to do, there is usually something at the farm. We have several large greenhouses that operate year-round. We have a bit of a competition with Team Creator to see who can produce the best fruits and vegetables.

“On Saturday nights, a band at Team Creator plays music and has a dance. It’s a big party every week and we are invited. You will also find people here that play music at night. It’s a very festive community. We like to get out of our trailers and commune with our neighbors. Often, you will see groups of people hanging out together.”

“Does everyone hold the light?” Sarah asked.

Sue and Jane smiled. “Yes, it’s why we are here. Gypsyland was created after Team Creator ran out of space. We were drawn here from what Team Creator started. They are holding the light and so are we. The people here are all like-minded and live by God’s virtues. We live in purity and innocence. We don’t let the darkness into our community. We hold the light and hope that it spreads throughout humanity.”

“Do you do the hand prayer?” Sarah asked.

“That is something that is recommended by Team Creator,” Jane said. “Some people do the hand prayer, but not all. You will find that once you get into the habit of living God’s virtues that it is not needed. Before I came here, I did it every day. On the outside world, the darkness is pervasive, and you have to work hard to keep out your personal demons. Here you will find that it is a much easier thing to do.”

Sue smiled. “There is so much joy in this community that all you have to do when you wake up in the morning is acknowledge that you plan to hold the light. That’s enough. You will feel the gratitude and you will feel the love that pervades the community. You will find that the hand prayer is no longer needed.”

“It’s like doing your times tables after they have already been learned. It becomes meaningless,”

Jane added.

“Okay, one last thing,” Sue said. “We have an intranet with a community website that is not open to the public, although it is shared between Team Creator and Gypsyland. We ask that everyone share their biography and post some pictures. And we ask that you read everyone’s bio, to get to know them. Share as much information as possible. Include your birthday, so that people can check if they are compatible with you. We have a compatibility app on our website that you can use. The best way to find friends is to find people you are compatible with. Share your natal horoscope and other details like that. You might want to read a few bio’s before you post your own, to get some ideas of what to post.”

“I’m a five of clubs,” Jane said. “I like to meet all of the other fives. I find that we all have something in common. Some of my best friends in both communities are fives.”

“You make it sound like both communities are not just neighbors, but work closely with each other,” Steve said. “Are there any rules that govern this integration?”

“Why didn’t you just become part of Team Creator?” Tony added.

“Team Creator donated the land to Gypsyland,” Jane began, “but they didn’t want their community to grow any larger. They liked the harmony that existed and did not want to disrupt what they had created.

“So, we are welcome to come and go in their community, but we do not eat at their cafeteria or use their entertainment rooms. We do use their exercise and yoga rooms, along with their healing center. There is a degree of crossover, but we have remained distinct communities. We think it is the best arrangement, and it has been working out.”

“You mentioned rules,” Sue said. “Team Creator likes to write their rules down and use a governing committee. We are a bit more carefree here at Gypsyland. We do not write our rules down, but we do have a small leadership team. They pay the bills and make sure everything runs smoothly.”

“What happens if someone has a complaint?” Tony asked.

“It would go to the leadership team,” Sue said. “Luckily, we have not had to exile anyone, yet.

We know, eventually, that will happen. They will be driven to Durango and told not to come back.”

“Gypsyland is a bit more laid-back and easygoing than Team Creator,” Jane said. “However, we are still strict in abiding by the philosophy that Team Creator originally created. We do not allow mind-altering drugs or alcohol, and we discourage any use of expletives. But you will still find that there is a degree of laxity at Gypsyland that does not exist at the more pristine Team Creator.”

“You could say, that next door at Team Creator, they are all metaphorically wearing white,” Sue added. “Whereas, here at Gypsyland, we tend to be a bit more colorful.”

“So, basically what you are saying is that you could see or hear things at Gypsyland that you would not see at Team Creator?” Kate asked.

“Yeah,” Jane replied. “The tone is a bit different.”

“There is more reverence next door,” Sue added.

“They are a bit more evolved, but we are catching up,” Jane said.

“Does anyone have guns?” Steve asked, changing the subject.

“Yes, both communities have militias,” Sue said. “We have to be prepared for some type of invasion from outside enemies. We can’t be so naive as to believe we are living in a safe world. If you want to join the militia, it’s on the website.”

“That reminds me,” Jane said. “The website has a lot of information about both communities. There is a blog, where various groups post. If you want to see if there are any job openings, that’s where to go.”

“We have our own mini-FaceBook, called MyCommunity,” Jane said. “It was created by two teenage programmers at Team Creator. You will find that it is fun to use. Once you post your bio, you become part of MyCommunity. When the techs come by your trailer to hook up the Internet and intranet, they will show you how to log in. They should be by sometime today. I already notified them that you have moved in.”

“If I want to begin a small business, can I bring in another trailer to host it?” Steve asked.

“Sure, that’s not a problem as long as the community benefits from some of the profits,” Jane said. “We expect all money-making ventures to be shared by the community. You can determine how much you share. Some people give all of their earnings to the community, others much less. There is no minimum, but we suggest at least ten percent.”

“Any more questions?” Sue asked.

Everyone was quiet.

“Okay, that’s it,” Jane said. “If you have any questions, you can find Sue and me on MyCommunity.”