



Chapter XVIII

Donovan Victor Bright

Sandra L. LaVaughn

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With the baby's mom, the pimp, and her husband gone, Naomi cleaned the baby, dressed the child in its new gown and diaper. She threw the two filthy gowns and diapers in the outdoors trash, and then took the baby shopping.

Donald and Naomi named his brother's son, a combination of names, James Donald Paul Bright. They incorporated Naomi father's first name, which was Paul. Donald wanted to tell James that his parents died in a car accident. Naomi asked, "what if he learns the truth?" She looked at the baby and said, "we may have to contend with the drugs in his system."

Donald groaned saying, "I didn't think about that."

When James Donald Paul Bright turned seven-years-old, he asked about his parents. Donald told him the whole truth and that was that James never asked again. From that day forward, he called his uncle and aunt, dad and mom. The drugs from his biological parents did not affect the little boy.

James Donald Paul Bright grew up and seemed to be in a hurry to do everything, he graduated from high school when he was eleven, got his doctorate at the age of eighteen, and married his college sweetheart after his graduation. Donald gave James his great-great-great-grandpa's wallet, that was still in the tin can as one of his college graduation gifts.

Out of John Bright Sr. offspring, both James had children at the age of nineteen and seemed to be in a hurry to grow up. James Donald Paul Bright and his wife, Sara named their first child Paul, born 1986. They had two other children John 1987, and Donovan Victor Bright 1994. Donovan was a chubby spoiled baby. Paul acted like he was the father, and John just cried a lot. When Donovan turned two, he became the ruler of the house, if it didn't go his way, he would pick up something and throw it at the person which he would get an old fashion spanking.

Donovan Bright inherited Thaddeus Berhanu personality and Moses looks.

James noticed out of his three son's that Donovan, throughout his school years was voted as President of his class or chairman of the board. He was never an assistant or vice; he was always the head. Donovan's demand to be the leader of everyone made his brothers, John and Paul angry, they planned conspiracies to keep Donovan in trouble. However, at the age of six, Donovan watched and erudite his older brother plots, before they knew anything, their little brother turned their scheme around and got them in trouble.

One evening when the Bright boys were grown, James wife, Sara, was in the bedroom putting lotion on her hand and preparing to retire for the night. James entered and said, "I thought our boys would never get along. But they did."

Sara asked, "what brought that on?"

"Dinner time this evening, watching them at the table laughing and joking."

Sara said, "I noticed that as well." Laughing she said, "it was rough going when they were little."

James commented, "poor John, I thought he would never like Donovan, or stop crying."

Sara looked at James and said, "he pulled through, I am proud of him." She smiled and continued, "I am proud of all three."

"Me too," James said in agreement.

James was fascinated with his family history, John Bright Sr., had started a book with the family tree, beginning with himself, though he didn't have a birth certificate or knew where he was born. James tried to find John Bright's birth records, he contacted as many hospitals in New York but to no avail. It was as though John Bright just materialized. All James had was his grandpa's wallet and stories about his aunt JoAnn, John had written in the book how JoAnn was killed. Each generation continued to log births, accomplishments, and deaths in the book.

Like his father, Donovan studied history, got his master's degree at a Manhattan college where he met his beautiful wife, Theenda Carboy. She was shy, he was aggressive, she was quiet, he was outgoing and president of his class. They both were smart and studied hard. Theenda had seen him dashing around campus, on the day they met, Donovan was speedily walking towards her. She didn't know what to do, she began to run away, but Donovan yelled, "stay where you are," in a demanding voice.

Theenda stopped and with shaky legs, she tried to stand still, her heart raced, she was shaking so hard her pressed hair flopped in her face. She whispered, "if I move, I'll fall." She left the hair in her face and shook. The closer he got she said softly, "my goodness, he's beautiful." When Donovan got close, Theenda lost control of her breathing, and a silly smile she could not get rid of was plastered on her face.

Donovan had only seen her at a distance, her figure and long pressed hair blowing in the wind caused him to miss a class, he had followed her to her class. When Donovan got closer to Theenda, the ridiculous smile, hair in her face and shaking did not run him away, instead, he fell in love. Theenda had kindness in her voice that gently rung in his heart. Though her mannerism was frayed with shyness and fright, he saw potential that he knew she had. One year after meeting, they got married.

Donovan had a strong desire to get away from the fast pace hustle and bustle of New York. Theenda wanted to go anyplace her abusive mother was not. Since she and her sister had become adults, her mother verbally abused her children and beat her sister's children when she babysat. Theenda was all for leaving.

On a map Donovan and Theenda found three small towns to visit. In 2016, during Christmas break, they flew south to the two states where the towns were located. Ogville was their last town, it was perfect for them. The town was small, slow, the people were over the top friendly, exactly what they were looking for. Ogville had three schools, Ogville Elementary, Ogville Middle School, and Ogville High. Donovan landed a job as the high school's history teacher and Theenda got a job in Ogville Elementary as a first-grade teacher.

Theenda treasured young minds, she wanted to develop them into something great, teach them critical thinking from the beginning of their learning.

The Bright's returned home and reported that they found a small town and had chosen a house to purchase.

Theenda suggested they stop past her mother first, to get it over with. When they arrived, as expected, Theenda's mother did not disappoint. She opened the door cursing and fussing, that it was too late in the day to visit and without alerting her they were coming over. She went on and on about trivial things without hearing the reason they were visiting. Donovan and Theenda stood on the porch in the cold waiting to be invited in. They were not. Theenda said while her mother was quarreling, "we're moving out of New York."

Mrs. Carboy cursed Donovan out for taking her daughter away, she called Theenda names that were only approved by the devil and not God. "You're a fool for running around chasing after this thing." She said pointing at Donovan.

Theenda turned and ran to the car with Donovan behind her. Before they got in the car, Mrs. Carboy slammed the door shut. As Donovan pulled off Theenda waved and said to her mother, who was looking out a window, "bye forever."

They drove straight to Donovan's parents' home without saying a word to each other. Standing on his parents' porch, Donovan said, "I'm sorry Baby Girl."

"I'm used to it Sweetie," Theenda said softly with sorrow in her voice.

Donovan had the key to his parents' home when the key rattled his mother opened the door. Opposite Theenda's mom, Donovan's parents were happy to see them back, they wanted to hear all about their trip, the town they picked. His parents ordered pizza and called Donovan's brothers to the house.

Tears rolled down Theenda's cheek. She could not remember a time when the Carboy's sat around talking. She wiped the tear away.

Sara looked over and saw Theenda's watery eyes, Sara said, "Theenda come with me." She took Theenda by the hand, and said, "I want to show you my garden." Sara took Theenda outside in the backyard where she had honeysuckle trees, roses, and tulips all buried under snow. Sara turned Theenda to face her and said, "tell me about it."

Theenda said, "My mom," the tears flowed like a waterfall after a hard rain.

James had seen Theenda's sad eyes, he looked at Donovan and asked, "what's wrong with your wife."

Donovan said, "her mother."

His brother Paul asked, "is she ill."

"No, just mean," Donovan said.

John said, "I remember her from the wedding."

James said, "yep, that's right, I remember, she is an angry loud tyrant."

December 29, 2016, James and Sara held a goodbye party in their home for Donovan and Theenda. Attending the farewell party was Donovan's two brothers, his older brother's wife, and two kids. Over a hundred people attended despite the bitter cold. Everyone went to bid the young Bright's farewell, it was a happy, gloomy occasion.

No one from Theenda's family attended, not even her sister, whom she had invited.

That evening Donovan and Theenda stayed their last night in their apartment, on the floor. Theenda said, "this was our first home together, I am going to miss it."

Laughing, Donovan said, "you have taken a thousand pictures of the place outside and in when you get a little teary-eyed, look at the pictures."

They left their keys on the counter as instructed, hand in hand they left. The couple's furniture and Theenda's Honda had been shipped to Ogville. With only overnight luggage they were driving down in Donovan's sports car.

Before getting on the road, Donovan and Theenda visited his parents to say goodbye, Donovan said, "mom, dad, when you get too old to care for yourselves, you're coming to live with Thee and me." He gave them both a hug and asked, "okay?"

Donovan's mom had tears in her eyes when she looked at the young couple. Theenda reached for Sara's hand and said, "we talked it over, it's okay by me."

Donovan said, "we found a house with a big room downstairs," he looked at Theenda and said, "Thee has deemed that room, yours."

Sara gave Theenda and Donovan a hug and said, "thank you both, but that will be a long time from now."

Donovan said, "Okay, maybe not now, when you and dad come down to visit. "

James gave Donovan the tin box with the wallet inside. Donovan looked at it and said, "Paul's the oldest."

James replied, "you're my child that love history."

Donovan said, "thanks, dad. This means a lot to me."

James and Sara stood on the porch waving as Donovan drove off. Crying, Sara whimpered, "there go, my baby."

James said, "that's a grown man." They stood quietly watching Donovan car mingle in with the others. James continued, "I'll miss him. That boy can get in more devilment than most." He looked at Sara and said, "Lord help us, he's going south."

The further south Donovan and Theenda got the warmer the air. At the time Theenda was driving, she said, "this is spectacular." She opened her window then continued, "feel the warmth."

Donovan was fiddling with the tin box, he responded, "it is nice." He opened the tin and took the wallet out.

Theenda asked, "what's that?"

Donovan said, "my great-great long time ago-grandpa, born in 1869."

"Good grief Sweetie, most folk only know their grandparents, your family can go all the way back to the 1800's?" Theenda said.

Donovan opened the wallet, put his fingers in the tiny slot and felt something. He pulled it out and froze when he opened the note a picture fell out, he called his dad. Theenda said, "put the phone on speaker."

Donovan turned the speaker on, his father said, "Hello son. Everything okay?"

“Yes, Sir. “Donovan answered then asked, “who’s the woman in the picture?”

“What picture?” James asked.

“The one in the wallet you gave me. On the back, it reads, Paula. Who’s that?”

“You mean the wallet in the tin? There’s no Picture there.”

“I’m looking at it, there’s also a note”

“Are you kidding me, read it,” James said confused.

Donovan read the note, *we came to New York in 1878, I did everything wrong. My oldest child was killed in a gang fight, I blamed my baby-boy, in 1880, age eleven he left and became in’pendent. I didn’t see him till now. He stands before me a grown man and coll’age gad’u’ate like his dad. He grew to look like his dad who was an Egiptan’ from Afreeca. I had nothing to do with my Egiptan son’s success, he’s smart like his dad. He named himself, John Bright.*

Long pause before James said, “I’m speechless.”

Theenda said in a demanding tone, “hold on you two, I’m pulling over,” She insisted they say nothing more, “this is too much history you’re talking about. Just wait, stop talking.”

Donovan and his dad hushed for a bit, then James whispered, “your wife pulled over son.”

Donovan whispered, "yes Sir," he looked at Theenda and said in his normal voice, “dad she can hear us.”

Theenda cut the car off and said, “that’s why you look the way you do. You’re an Egyptian, true African Egyptian, and you know it. What I wouldn’t give to know where I come from.”

“Ah, you’re part Asian, Baby Girl, so Asia.”

Theenda rolled her eyes, and said, “not funny.”

Laughing James said, “yeah, it’s a little bit funny.” He stopped laughing and continued, “son, no one ever looked in the wallet, we passed it down from one generation to the next,” James paused and said proudly, “my boy.”

“When I get to Ogville, I’ll scan the note and picture to you.”

“Let’s do the dates first,” James suggested. "John Bright was born in 1869."

“Right.” Donovan agreed.

“1878, would make him nine when they got to New York. In 1880 he was eleven.” James paused for a while.

Donovan asked softly, “dad, still there?”

"Give me a minute to think son." All was quiet until James said, "my dad told me, his grandfather told him, that his grandpa ran away from his mom, when he was eleven years old," James burst out laughing before saying, "boy, that's our grandma from the eighteen hundred, and we have a picture of her. She's from another state, no wonder I could not find her."

“Dad, they got to New York in 1878, where did they come from? What happened to his dad?”

James said, “Now, there’s the unsolved mystery.”

It was ironic that the sixth generation of Moses and Paula was going back to where it all began, as a historian.

God Blessed Donovan and Theenda to get a job teaching, January 2017, in the middle of the school year. Ogville school district was not looking for a teacher, they simply liked the young couple and made a place for them in the school system.

Donovan’s grandma that was married to Paula’s son, John Bright, predicted as she said, “one day, someone with your genetic factor, is going to reach into that little slit, pull out your mothers note, and the picture will fall out. That person is going to do something, extraordinary.”

Donovan and Theenda were out for a walk in sunny warm Ogville, they were getting acquainted with their neighbors and neighborhood. Donovan said, “I called mom and told her it’s eighty-five degrees in January.”

“What did she say?”

“Shut-up boy, it’s twenty here.”

They laughed. Theenda said, “that sounds like her.”

He said, “dad, mom, my brothers are astonished by the picture and note I sent.”

Theenda said, “it really is unbelievable.”

Donovan and Theenda’s first day in class after the holidays, was January 4, 2017. Donovan was a tall handsome drop dead gorgeous black man, his perfect physique looked like he was artistically designed by Elijah

Pierce, a sculptor that lived in Columbus, Ohio. In looks he was duplicate Moses, his personality paralleled Thaddeus. The male students wanted to dress and be like him. The females just wanted him.

Theenda, was classy, sophisticated, and gorgeous, she was Black American mixed with a hint of Asian and American Indian, the mixture gave her a striking appearance. She resembled the pictures of Cleopatra in looks and figure. Theenda had a good laugh when a fifth grader told her to leave her husband and marry him. During dinner, she told Donovan about the boy's proposal, he did not think it was funny.

In New York there were thousands of beautiful people of all shapes and sizes, that resembled fashion models. in Ogville, not so, they weren't ugly just country decent. The clothes in the stores appeared to be from the 1950's era.

Even so, Theenda enjoyed the slow quiet small-town lifestyle. After dinner, she and Donovan took long peaceful walks, no rush hour, no school buses, one beautiful park, only three small city buses. The sidewalks were free from being jam-packed with heavy traffic of people coming and going in different directions. One evening, the happy couple drove downtown, and walked along the main street where Theenda saw beautiful wood furniture in a store window, they went inside and purchased a dining room set, plus kitchen table and chairs.

After making their purchase, they quickly walked back towards their car, Theenda stopped so abruptly she almost pulled Donovan's arm out of its socket. He said, "ouch," then asked as he yanked his hand out of hers, "what's wrong with you?"

She said softly, "I can see the sidewalk, and we're downtown." She looked around and continued, "look at the bareness of people, cars, buildings." She looked at Donovan and whispered, "listen," she pointed to her ear, and continued, "to the quiet."

Donovan was lost for words, he nodded in agreement, then said, "peaceful."

Theenda stopped to look in a clothing store window, she said in a matter of fact voice, "we'll fly to New York to shop."

"I thought you liked it here."

She hunched Donovan, who was looking in another direction, and pointed at a suit on a mannequin and asked, "like that suit."

He looked at the suit in the store window and said, "yep, we'll spend a few weeks in New York, to shop and visit the fam."

They left the shops and walked to Mall Street, where a statue of Paula's Massa, Harry V. Brown stood. He was standing in the center of a triangle shaped island, that was in a downtown park. The statue was fifty feet tall and stood on a ten feet pedestal. It was donated to the city by Harry's great-great-great grandson, Charles Brown. He thought of Harry as being more important than Christ the Redeemer. An exact replica of Harry's statue was in downtown Titleburk and MacCall, only the statues in those towns stood one hundred and twenty feet tall, it stood on a twenty-five feet pedestal. Charles had total control of all businesses and the police departments in Titleburk and MacCall. In the two towns, Charles commanded that no building could be built, as tall or taller than Harry's statue. Ogville remained nonaligned to H.B. Metropolis, though the town commission allowed Charles Brown to build the statue. Being Independent of Charles and the Browns rulebooks, Ogville was free to mandate their regulations as a small town. They were free to follow States Laws like other cities.

Donovan said, "let's get to the car."

"I think we're lost." Theenda giggled softly.

"I know where the car is, there are only one street and one parking lot," Donovan remarked.

Ogville was a party town, the residence celebrated every holiday downtown around Harry's statue. Latino, Asian, Black American, German, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, and Christmas. Though the commemorative holiday that Blacks did not participate, was the Confederate Memorial Holiday, nor did they attend parades, or shop. They were unanimous in their unspoken united defiance that was incognito during the holiday.

The residents and businesses kept their Christmas decorations up through Dr. Martin Luther King birthday. The week of his celebration, whether it fell on the weekend or weekday, the white residence planned a grand gospel gala Performing were local choirs and quartet groups, the triangle was the stage.