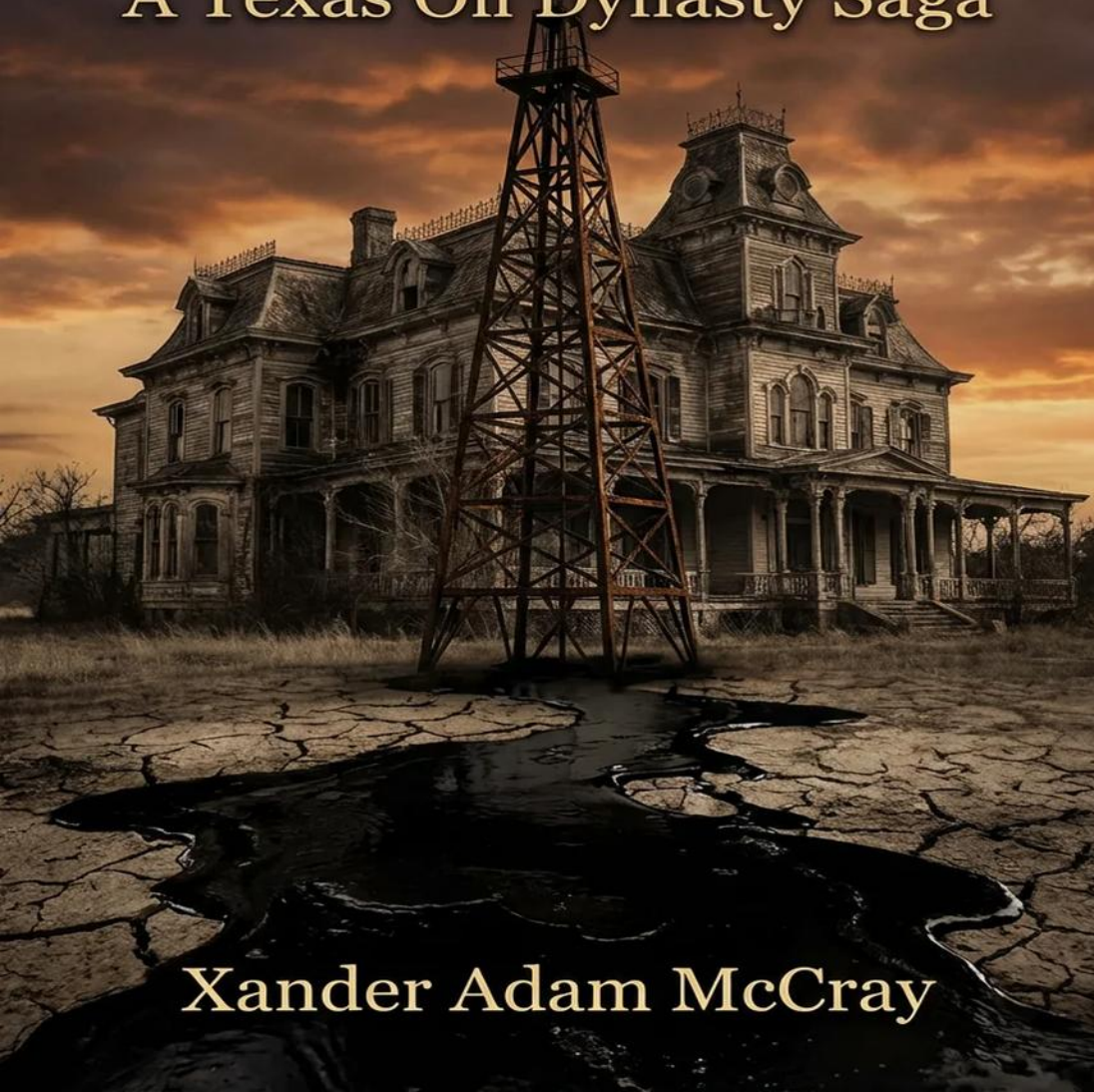


CRUDE AMBITIONS:

A Texas Oil Dynasty Saga



Xander Adam McCray

CRUDE AMBITIONS: An All My Young'uns in Howler Series

By Cornelius Ezekiel Vaughn

It was the weekend here at Earl's Authentic Soul Food and Chinese Kitchen as hungry people were at the buffet section of the restaurant piling on southern fried chicken and lo mein noodles (and sometimes all together?) it was usually hectic but for Maxine Eloise Carter the new girl with the pinkish blonde hair in dreadlocks, diamond hoop earrings and stiletto long nails this time colored baby blue. She had come out of the swinging door holding an brown paper bag with grease stains all over it and hands it to the patient man who looked like Idris Elba meets Forest Whitaker.

"Cartwright. You ordered the two orders of the orange chicken, Singapore noodles and three egg rolls, would you like some fortune cookies, sir?" Asked Maxine.

The black man was named Cecil Waters, a former Black Panther member and former military veteran who served in the Vietnam War. He served as majordomo for the Cartwright family for nearly three decades, overseeing their Cartwright & Sons Oil Co. and supporting his wife, Eve Waters, during her cancer treatment. He picked up Beauregard Cartwright and his bride, Leona Calhoun, when Eve was relaxing with her sister.

Cecil pulled out his money clip and paid Maxine for the food

and places some money on the tip jar, tips his hat, says thank you and walks away.

Cecil hurried into the sleek black SUV, chilled enough for a light jacket, to wake Beau and Leona sleeping in the backseat.

“Hey, lovebirds, wake up, I’ve got food.” Cecil called out unwrapping the brown paper bag.

“I know that it’s been a few years that I’ve had Earl’s orange chicken and Singapore noodles.” said Leona.

Cecil gives Leona an takeout box of orange chicken along with an side of Singapore noodles, while Beau received orange chicken but with collard greens on the side.

“Now eat up, folks, we’re almost there.” Announced Cecil as he took out an egg rolls and started eating.

Beau and Leona had known each other since they were three years old, it was either by chance or by luck that Beau made an vow to marry Leona Anna-Mae Calhoun one day after Leona fell off the monkey bars hitting her head on the concerte floor making Beau to rush toward Nellie Mae who was Leona’s grandma who was sitting in the shade reading when she sees an tired and exhausted little white boy cmokmign towards her telling her that Leona is hurt and needs help. And luckily for Nellie Mae, she had a nursing degree and got Leona all banded up all before the ambulance came, who put on stitches on Leona’s head. With

such bravery and courage, Leona didn't cry that much Nellie Mae saw that she's an Calhoun through and through, and rewarded Beau and Leona ice cream at Dairy Queen. And that was the seldom vow that Beau made to himself and to Nellie Mae Calhoun.

"Miss Nellie Mae, one day when I get older, I'ma gonna marry Leona Calhoun."

Beau said it while there was chocolate all round his mouth and an toothy smile to boot, and Nellie Mae chuckled not believing that an Cartwright was or better will marry an black woman as an white boy in the south no less. But little did she know, the irony of those words.

Beau was in Chicago on business, and Leona had living in Chicago for up to four years working as an stripper in an gentleman's club, Beau was accompanied by friends and co-workers to the strip club, Leona was about to head onstage as her stage name Duchess. She was called Duchess because she looked like Duchess Meghan Markle meets Beyonce with box braids and an killer body to match with an hip and thigh tattoo that traveled all around her hip area.

As Beau sat down and ordered a drink, just a vodka soda nothing else but he had to leave in the morning to head back to Howler County, Texas. But little did he and nor did anyone else know that him and Leona would have an love to fight for.

“Introducing coming up on the stage is Duchess, she may not be queen but she’s a real lady if you pay her.” Said the DJ over the microphone.

The song started playing and Leona sultry walked onstage in an sexy outfit and platform heels, the music began playing Beau pulled out his money and doesn’t realize its Leona until she got close to him so that he could see the scar on Leona’s head and did an double take as he saw the scar and looked at Leona straight in the eye and mouthed out the words:

“Leona Calhoun?”

Without missing an beat, Leona kept dancing trying not to losing her focus almost an flash before her eyes of the day they met at three years old when Leona fell with an inch of life spared thanks to her grandma.

Beau sat there in silence as he watched Leona dance on the stripper pole collecting money along the way.

After her shift was over, Leona wearing an cargo pants and an t-shirt carrying an satchel bag when she is confronted by Beau Cartwright for the first time is years.

“Beauregard Cartwright, long time no see, I suppose.”

Beau pulled out a bouquet of roses and offered them to Leona. She smiles and smells the flowers.

“Beauregard, you’re so sweet to do this. My shift is over and I’m really hungry. Damn, I really miss Earl’s orange chicken right now but I could go for a burger.”

“You got yourself a deal.” Beau said.

From then on, Beau and Leona kept in contact through phone, text messages, FaceTime calls, and more. And sometimes occasionally a flower bouquet would be sent to Leona’s doorstep form time to time.

Until one day Beau made an visit back on Chicago with an ring box and an question.

“Leona Anna-Mae Calhoun, will you do me the honor of being my wife, like I promised all those years ago?”

In front of small group of people, Beau took out a diamond ring that shined bright.

“Yes, Beauregard Ulysses Cartwright, I will marry you.” Leona replied.

Next minute Beau and Leona are at a courthouse getting a marriage license to officially be married, on the way down the courthouse steps. They see an man in an long black trenchcoat wearing an fedora hat waiting behind an black SUV.

“Mister Cartwright, you’re a hard man to find. Your daddy wanted me to find you and tell you that you need to come home, its about your mama.”

Cecil Waters had connections in Chicago hailing back to his Black Panther years, and found Beau all cozied up with Leona Calhoun. Who was the Cartwrights biggest enemy in the state of Texas.