



Cassandra's Curse: A Black Life In A Police State

Eugene Stovall

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At war's end, an economic downturn plunges South Central Los Angeles into a jobless nightmare. Negro families that, throughout the forties, lived the American-dream, disintegrate under the depression of the fifties. Kenny Kiley and his brother, Allie, join other street urchins in a struggle for survival. Watts explodes in 1965. LA's mayor claims black gangs directed by communists caused the insurrection. He directs an avenging army against South Central LA and Watts. The FBI backs up the police with COINTELPRO ___ an intense program of surveillance, break-ins, false arrests, perjured testimony, imprisonment, physical abuse and ___ assassination. Though Kenny struggles to survive, he doesn't know that his own next door neighbor, Bert MacAble, is the undercover cop responsible for his Allie's death and is now after him. As LA defends itself against COINTELPRO and corrupt cops, the government dumps tons of cocaine into the community. Kenny Kiley, whose economic survival depends upon selling marijuana, is entrapped by the undercover police officer, Bert MacAble, and forced to join the Black Panther Party as LAPD's snitch. When MacAble and the FBI orchestrate the assassination of Bunchy Carter, former Slauson gang leader and head of the Black Panther Party and John Huggins, leader of UCLA's Black Student Union, Kenny who knows too much is added to the FBI's list. Only signing up for a tour in Viet Nam saves him from an assassin's bullet. As Kenny Kiley goes from gangster to Black Panther, from FBI snitch to Vietnam veteran, Hazel Fletcher, whose family is as prosperous as Kenny's is dysfunctional __ whose intelligence attains for her the highest level of academic excellence, a doctorate at UCLA___ cares for him and has his child. And just as Kenny and Hazel seem to have freed themselves from their drug-ridden environment, they are caught in a trap from which neither can survive.

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