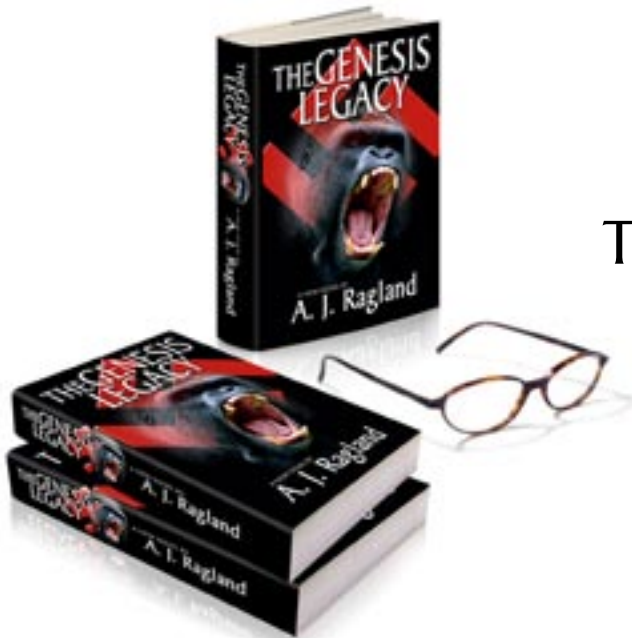


THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

Media Release



THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

News Release

Bay Area Author Takes Us Back to 1953 – When the World Was On the Brink of Disaster

It is the eve of the Coronation – and four people are caught in a whirlpool of deception, treachery and murder. American journalist, Helena Claybourn and Detective Chief Inspector John Kincaid must race against time as they try to unravel the web of treachery surrounding a Nazi organization called the Wächteradler, and stop a catastrophe that could plague the world for decades to come.

DECEMBER 27, 2004 – Tracy author A. J. Ragland has taken the classic spy thriller to new levels of excitement with the first installment of what should be one hell of a roller coaster ride. The action sweeps across two continents and an ocean with a sexy heroine and complex villains in pursuit. The Genesis Legacy, set in 1953 – but with chilling parallels with today's headlines – is now available.

"If you miss Robert Ludlum and can't wait for the next Ken Follet adventure, this is the next best read. A smart, exhilarating, terrifying thriller," says John Robertson, entertainment editor for The Tracy Connection. "You simply can't put it down."

"If you buy into conspiracies, you might believe some of it," said the author in a recent interview. "For me it was just a really great idea to build a story around, so I took it to the next level. Who knows if it ever really happened – if the Nazis are responsible for what we face today. I rather doubt it."

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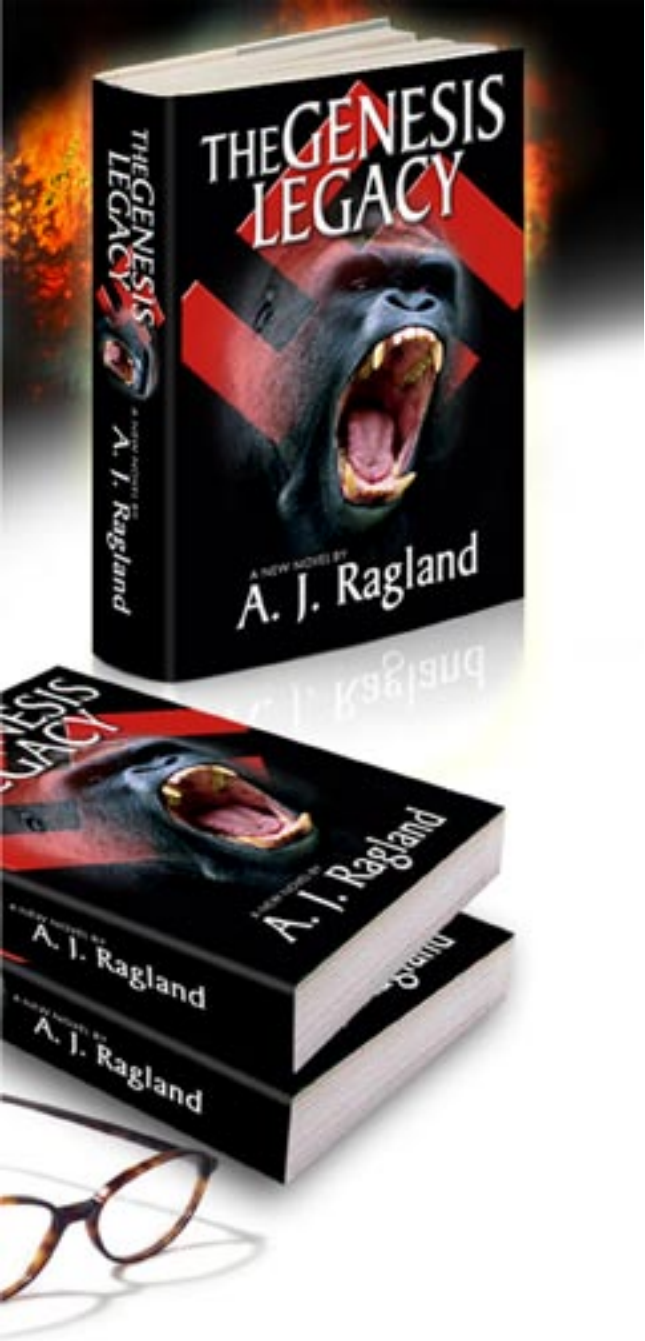
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THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

About the Book

1953 – When the World Was On the Brink of Disaster

Twenty-five years before the end of World War II, a secret German organization known as the Wächteradler launched two long-range programs. One would guarantee the purification of the human race. The other would ensure the ultimate supremacy of the German Order. The Wächteradler founders had no way of foreseeing the worldwide disaster Shining Waters would unleash. Nor could they understand how their fates were sealed the moment they witnessed the birth of the Genesis Legacy.

The year is 1953 – on the eve of the Coronation – and four people are caught in a whirlpool of deception, treachery and murder. Helena Claybourn is an American journalist based in London. Beautiful and independent, it is her research into art treasures looted by the Nazis that has inadvertently revealed the existence of the Wächteradler. Detective Chief Inspector, John Kincaid, head of Scotland Yard's legendary Murder Squad, is in the midst of a sensational triple homicide when he meets the American reporter. And the enigmatic Mr. and Mrs. Smith, relentless assassins who are systematically eliminating the men who betrayed the Wächteradler in the closing days of the war.

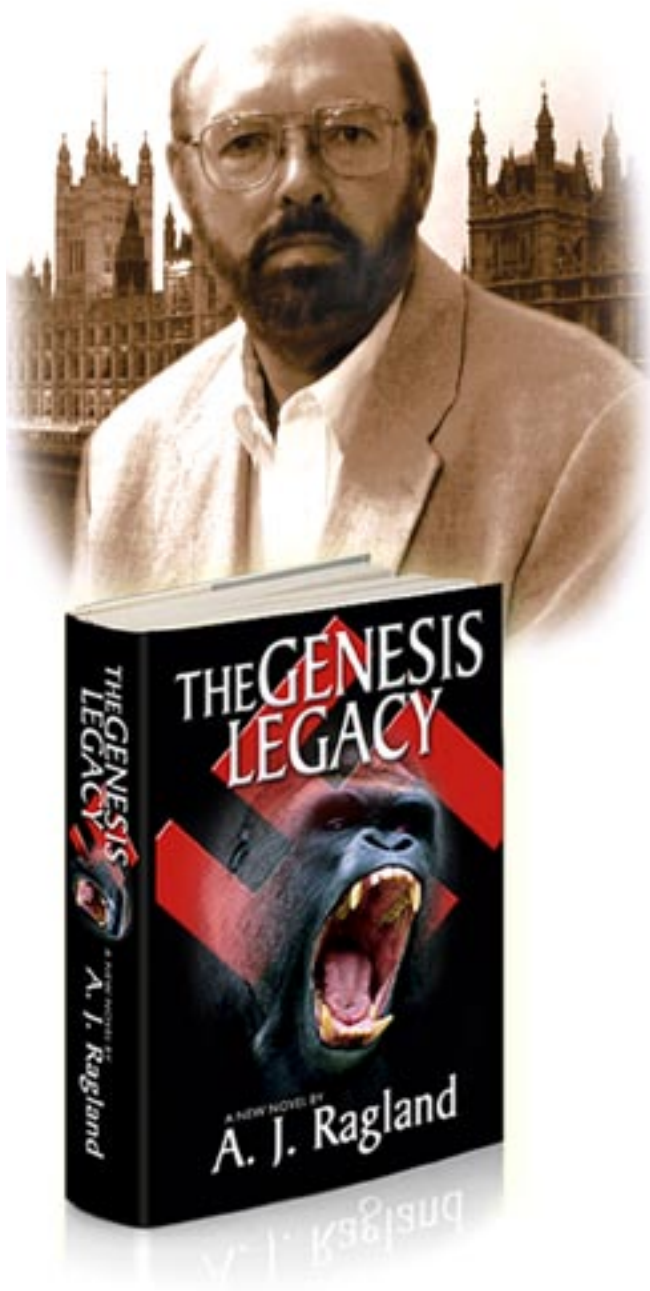
Friends, enemies and lovers: One will test the boundaries of trust. One will learn the true meaning of faith. One will pay the ultimate price. And one will face a terrifying truth from the past.

London, Paris, Hannover, Nice, Montreal, San Francisco. From a secret chamber beneath the bombed out ruins of the Wächteradler castle, to a Nazi aircraft lying at the bottom of a Scottish loch. From the pageantry of the Coronation and Buckingham Palace, to a heart-pounding air chase across the North Atlantic. Helena Claybourn and John Kincaid must race against time as they try to unravel the web of treachery surrounding Shining Waters, and stop a catastrophe that could plague the world for decades to come.

“If you miss Robert Ludlum and can't wait for the next Ken Follet adventure, this is the next best read. A smart, exhilarating, terrifying thriller.

You simply can't put it down.”

– John Robertson



THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

About the Author

A. J. Ragland was born in Swindon England in the closing days of World War II. It was there that his adventures – real and imagined – began. “My mother and I lived with my Grandmother and my two uncles in one of those narrow row houses built for railroad workers in the 1870s – two bedrooms, gas lighting and outdoor plumbing ... I spent most of my time roaming the town, train-spotting, collecting cigarette labels, and rummaging through war surplus in the rubbish dump. I’d march into the house wearing a gas mask or a helmet and my mother would promptly march me off to bed ... I was always up to mischief. I started writing and illustrating my own adventures as a way to stay out of trouble.”

In 1954, his mother married an American serviceman and they moved to Texas. A year later, Arthur was also on his way to America – alone. “There I was, a nine-year-old kid with a tag around my neck like a parcel: *Please deliver to Dallas*. That trip was one great adventure ... When I arrived in Texas, I discovered I had a baby sister ... Later, after we moved to Fort Worth, I learned that my step-father was a small-time hood. A few years after my mother divorced him, the police notified us that his body had been found in Louisiana.”

Formally educated as a commercial artist, Arthur worked for a number of ad agencies and art departments in Dallas before moving to Southern California in 1980 with his wife, Ellaine. “She was a well respected journalist in Dallas – the first female to conduct an interview from inside the Dallas Cowboy locker room before they threw her out. Four years later we started our own agency, and we also sold our first book; a *make-your-own-adventure* story for the juvenile market. That same year we moved to the Bay Area. Our design firm recently celebrated its 20th anniversary.”

The *Genesis Legacy* is the first in a series of new cross-genre thrillers. *Genesis* blends the traditional detective mystery with the spy thriller, and even though it takes place in 1953, the plot has a frightening connection to today’s headlines. Arthur’s next book, *The Tamborlane Verdict*, will be published in 2005. A *Genesis* sequel is in work for the following year, followed by the *Charlemagne Convergence*. Arthur lives with his wife (and collaborator), three cats and a cockatiel in Northern California.

“A new breed of Scotland Yard hero
who’s not afraid to mix it up –
and a new heroine, every bit his equal.”
– *Inspector Tony Baker, Rtd.*,
West Midlands Police U. K.

THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

Excerpt:

“THEY WERE GOING DOWN”

“Everything will be fine, darling.” He released her hand, and she continued down the aisle. She was crouching in front of Jack when it happened.

A brilliant flash of lightning filled the cabin, and a loud explosion shook the entire aircraft. The Super DC3 rolled sharply to port, throwing everyone to the deck.

John was in a slow motion dream, his arms and legs seemed to be made of lead. He could hear muffled voices shouting his name, but he was having difficulty locating the source. And his head was aching terribly. John raised a hand and felt a sticky wetness in his hair. The touch made him wince, snapping his mind back into real time. The aircraft was bucking wildly, and he found himself sprawled over the body of the dead pilot. Above his head on the bulkhead was a patch of red: a tuft of his hair stuck to it. He raised himself up on one elbow and with his other hand, grabbed hold of the window curtain for leverage. The action parted the curtains and what he saw through the window instantly revived his remaining senses . . . *and his fears.*

The left engine, what remained of it, was on fire. The flames were licking back over the wing like long yellow tongues. He didn't need the ear-piercing scream of velocity to let him know that the aircraft was pitched at a steep, nose-down angle.

They were going down.

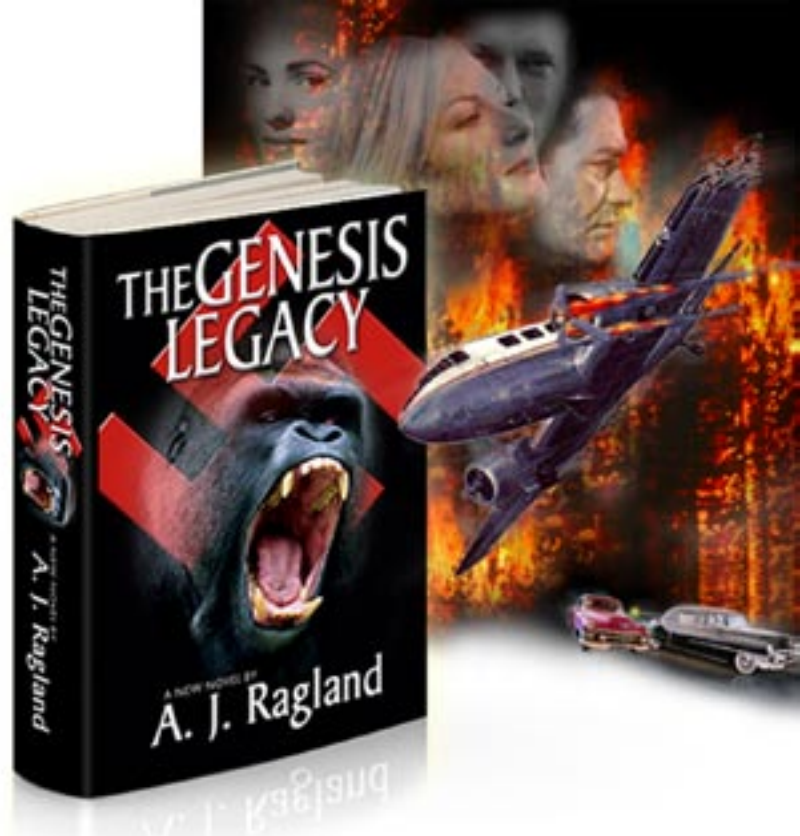
Fast.

He looked to the rear of the cabin and saw that Helena was secure. Jack was strapping her into a seat beside Judith, then he strapped himself in. They were all screaming at him to do the same thing. With tremendous effort, he pulled himself to his feet and staggered to the doorway.

“Jimmy!” he shouted.

The young pilot glanced over his shoulder. Then quickly turned his wild eyes back toward the horrifying scene racing up toward them. “Take the pilot's seat,” he screamed, “and help...me...pull this bucket...of scrap metal...up. If we...don't level out...in twenty seconds...we won't have...to worry about...brushing our teeth...no more.”

John wondered where the young man found the courage to joke at a time like this. It wasn't until he was helping Jimmy pull back the yoke that he realized he was getting very wet. When he looked up to see why, he gasped.



The roof of the cockpit and most of the windshield was gone!

“Prop peeled it back...like a cheap can of...sardines,” Jimmy shouted over the screams of engine, rain, wind, and protesting steel. “Damn near...took my pretty red head...clean off.”

The vibrations were intense and every muscle in his arms and shoulders were on fire as he pulled against the tremendous force of the falling aircraft. The twenty seconds seemed an eternity as John ticked them off in his head. By the time he had reached seventeen, he knew they were all going to die. At twenty he was certain. When the count reached thirty, he figured he must already be dead – then the Super DC3 nose began to lift. Even the stinging rain and wind against his naked face seemed to be lessening. Was she coming up? Or was it God's final little joke? – “Gotcha!”

“She's lifting! She's lifting!” Jimmy shouted. “Damn, these ships are great!”

They were beneath the low clouds and through the streaking rain and darkness they could see green fields rushing toward them. Ten seconds later the ship was almost parallel to the ground less than a hundred feet below them. Trees zipped by on either side, accentuating the speed.

“Hang on to your personals, Mr. Kincaid. We're going in on our belly.”

They were twenty meters above what looked to be a wheat field.

“Hang on back there!” John screamed over his shoulder.

Fifteen feet.

There was no way they could survive.

Ten feet.

“What's that?” John shouted . . .

THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

Excerpt:

“THEY HAD FOUND HIM”

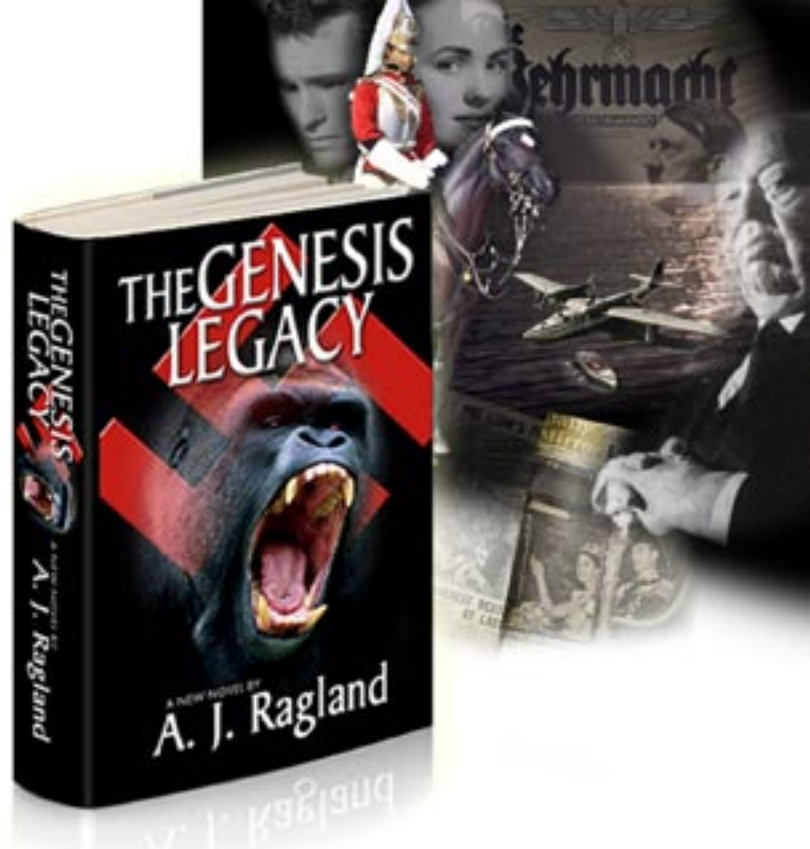
Deputy Commissioner Gordon Hamilton was in his library preparing the eulogy for his dear friend, William Branston. It was a task he was well suited for. They had known each other since childhood; growing up as next door neighbors in the small country village of Lavenham in East Anglia. They would roam over the countryside of purple heather, windmills and medieval castles, saving the people from mythical tyrannical kings; always arguing over who would play Oliver Cromwell or Lord Nelson. Writing the eulogy had caused him to gather together a collection of photographs spanning six decades of friendship. The faded snapshot he was holding had been taken on his eighth birthday – the faces of two boys, arms around shoulders, waving and grinning at the camera. Hamilton remembered the day fondly for it was the day they had each seen their first naked woman.

After the party they had retreated to Hamilton’s upstairs bedroom to play with his new toy soldiers. His room was at the back of the house, and his window looked down onto the adjacent home of Mrs. Applebee – a large woman with an enormous bosom. She was standing at the kitchen sink, bent over with her head under the tap washing her red hair. Hamilton could still remember how they had laughed and teased when Mrs. Applebee had raised her head, revealing two naked breasts the size of soccer balls; and how they had to dive for cover under the window sill when she looked up to see where the laughter was coming from.

Years later, they had both attended Cambridge on scholarship. They even served in the same regiment throughout the Great War. They were self-made men – Hamilton, the politician, and Branston, the merchant. It was Hamilton’s political connections and their love for the outdoors that first brought them to the attention of a young Prince Edward. During the ensuing years, they accompanied the Prince on numerous hunting and fishing expeditions. It was this relationship that had catapulted them to political fame and economic fortune – and dragged them down into the depths of greed, depravity and despair.

Now it was all ended: The good and the bad.

Hamilton felt alone and helpless without his friend’s constant support and reassurance, for it had most certainly been Billy’s strength, which kept him going following the unexpected death of his wife, Mildred after the war.



Hamilton was still studying the photographs when his manservant entered carrying the evening post on a silver tray. He took the handful of letters and small parcel and dismissed his man. The letters were of little interest to him in his current state of mind, but the parcel intrigued him. There was no return address, stamp or postmark, yet it was addressed to him in small printed characters. With his ivory-handled letter opener he sliced the string. Inside the brown wrapping paper was a small, plain white cardboard box. He removed the lid.

He tried to scream but only a pitiful whimper escaped his lips. His eyes clouded with tears. He pressed his spine into the soft leather of the chair, frantically trying to move away from the horror as he pushed the box from his lap with both hands. It fell to the floor spilling the bloody, severed hand of William Branston on to the priceless Persian rug with a sickly thud.

Moments passed and a lifetime of images flooded his weary mind. Fighting back the torment and tears, he looked down at the hand and the signet ring on the middle finger bearing the Branston crest. Then he saw the writing on the inside of the box lid. The words filled his soul with a terror so cold it made him shudder.

They had found him!

The *Wächteradler* had found him, and he would be *next!*

“A chilling scenario, a sexy heroine,
and complex villains –
all wrapped up in a relentless mystery.

What could be better?”

– TTC Entertainment

THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

Excerpt:
"IT'S NOT PAUL"

Three weeks ago, her world had changed after the startling call from a policeman, asking her to come down to Torquay to identify a body recovered from the harbor. Her name and address had been found in the victim's wallet, along with papers identifying the man as Paul Fox. During the journey to Torquay, she had tried to convince herself that it couldn't be Paul. She would find that it was some other unfortunate person.

"It's not Paul. I'm sure of it, It can't be," she told Detective McMillian who shook her hand and made the routine condolences. "No one seems to know where he is at the moment, but he certainly wouldn't have come here," her glance swept around the grubby, cluttered room and out the window where toy-sized boats bobbed on an improbable blue ocean. "He hates the beach," she added as if settling the matter for good.

"I hope not, Miss Claybourn," he said with out hope. He led her briskly down a low-ceilinged, windowless corridor that smelled of formaldehyde and alcohol, to the morgue. Nausea hit her in great dizzying sweeps as she walked through the wide double doors, battered by gurneys carrying passengers beyond caring. A chilling finality seeped up through the frigid linoleum floor and tightened its grip on her heart. Beyond reason, she knew that she would find Paul waiting for her.

She had furiously demanded answers, as if knowing would somehow change things. Detective McMillian patiently and thoroughly told her what they knew. Which wasn't much, which in turn infuriated her. Paul had survived the war. He had come home with the bronze star and an endless supply of stories that made war seem like fun. But to be mugged – in England! In the middle of a crowd of vacationers. And for what? He never carried money. He disliked jewelry. There were homeless people who dressed better. Her protests bounced off the wall of their official position. He was killed by a mugging gone bad. There was no other answer, so it had to be the right answer.

In the end, their insular, British certainty had defeated her, and she returned home with a packet of Paul's meager possessions to call his parents and arrange to have his body shipped back to the States. Packing up his apartment, filling out forms, contacting his wide circle of friends – the flurry of activity kept the guilt and grief at bay.

When those grim tasks had been accomplished, there was nothing left to do but focus her full attention on work – work that, only a few weeks earlier made her feel exhilarated, now seemed tedious

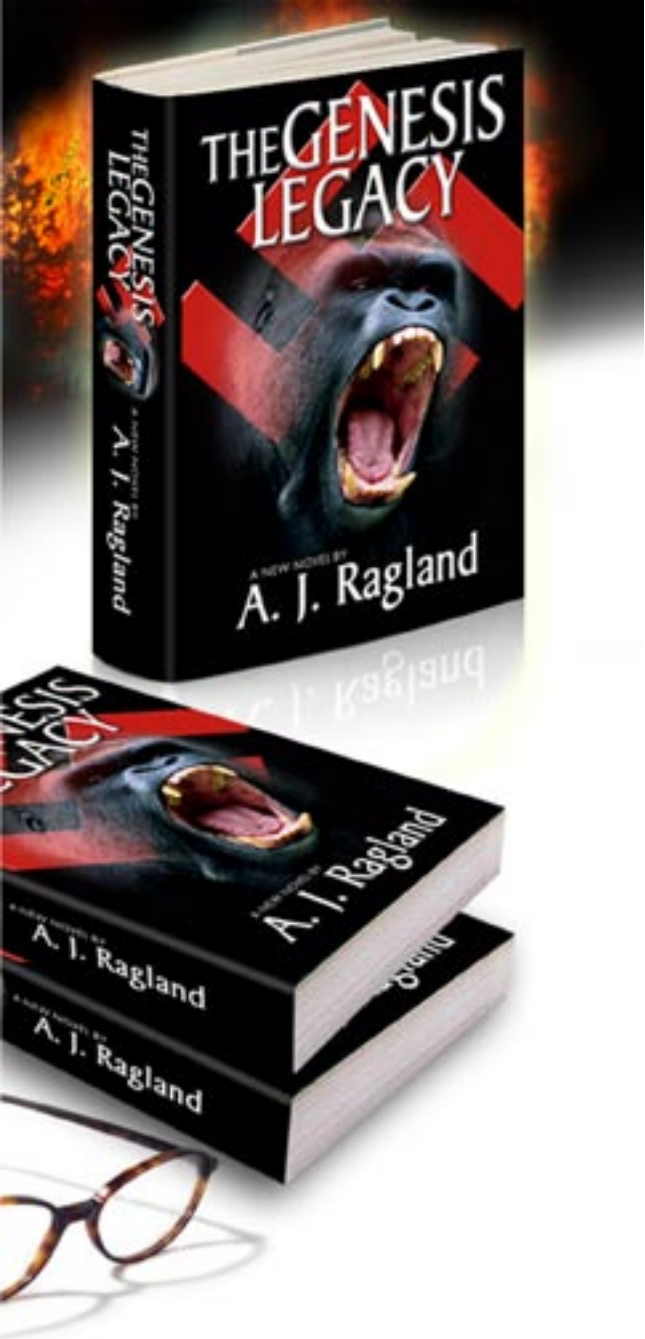


and uninteresting. The emotional vortex that had enveloped her after Paul's death had abruptly dissipated, leaving her feeling rudderless and adrift. Such indecisiveness was out of character. She usually knew exactly where she was going and what she would do when she got there.

After a full day with the rest of the international corps of reporters, crammed together in a smoky banquet hall listening to Lord Wessex drone on about the impending Coronation, she had returned home with the firm intention of locking the door on the world, taking a long hot bath and getting into bed with a cup of hot chocolate and the partially finished book she had put down two weeks ago.

But it was not to be. The moment she turned on the nubian lamp on her desk, Paul smiled up at her from the worn leather frame, the only memento she had kept from college. She reached down and touched his cheek and followed the cocky curve of his grin with her finger. He would never grow older, wiser, or have the children he had wanted so badly. All because he had demanded justice for people he didn't know. The memory of him warmed her heart and hardened her resolve. He expected no less of her. That's why he had sent that rag tag assortment of research papers to her. They weren't important; he was simply passing the torch. A shiver ran over her body and brought a prickle of tears to her eyes. In the last moments of his life, he had turned to her, trusted her. And she would not let him down this time.

With more energy than she had felt in weeks, she hurried into the bedroom, flung open the closet door and pulled out the red dress. Her father-in-law had sent it before Paul's death. Afterward, its vibrancy had offended her, and she had banished it to the back of the closet. Holding it in front of her, she looked critically at her reflection in the mirror. It would do, she thought, it would do very, very well.



THE GENESIS LEGACY

A. J. Ragland

Discussion Topics

HIV: The plot of this fictional story includes the development of a pathogen that attacks the human immune system like HIV. However, it is not the author's intent to claim factual evidence that German pharmaceutical companies played any role in the development and spread of HIV or AIDS.

Ethnic Weapons: Elements of the American and British eugenics movement were models for the Nazis, whose radical adaptation of eugenics culminated in the Holocaust. Subsequent attempts by world powers to develop a weapon targeting specific ethnic groups are reportedly still underway.

Genetics: Ever since Gregor Mendel, an Augustinian monk in the mid-1850s, devised the laws of Mendelian Heredity, scientist have pursued genetic manipulation to create a perfect food source – or a perfect human.

Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg: ERR was the most notorious and effective Nazi art plundering agency the world had ever witnessed.

The Congo Biosphere: Xenotropic Virus / Gorillas

The 1950s: British Life / Scotland Yard / North Atlantic air travel

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II

Hardware: Aircraft, Autos and weapons described in the story.

The Author's Life

A novel of this scope would be impossible without the knowledgeable input from men and women who served or worked in England during the war years and the decade that followed. I had the privilege to interview three retired police Inspectors; a Scotland Yard archivist; a wonderful lady who worked for military intelligence during the war in England (my mom); pilots who flew the DC3 and the Mossie in combat; a biochemist; and others. I owe them all a debt of gratitude.

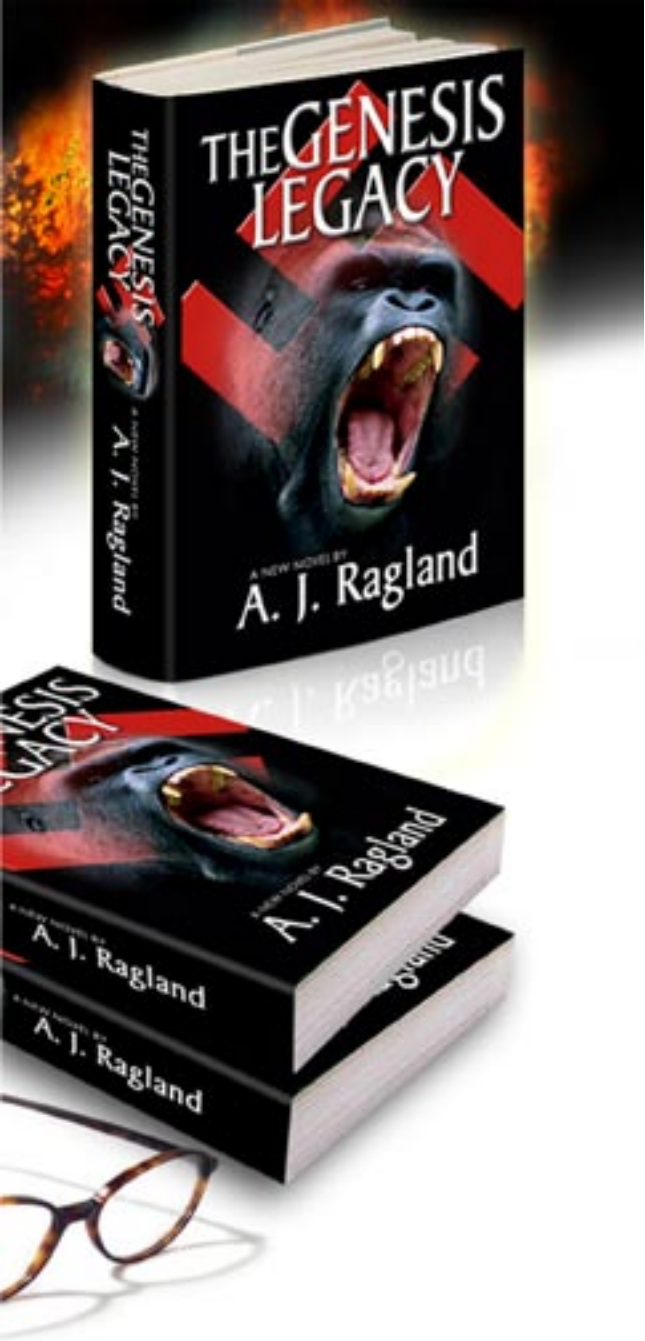
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