

VALLEY OF THE SUPERSTITIONS

Genre:

Local (Phoenix, Arizona and environs, especially Superstition Mountain Wilderness Area and brief trip to Santa Fe, NM.) Draws on Pueblo Indian and Mesoamerican myth.

Alternate history and anthropology. Low brow intellectual suspense.

Topical Satire.

Cast of Characters:

Mateo Rodriguez, anthropologist from Mexico City. Specialist in Mesoamerican Art, History, and Languages.

Brother, **Alberto Rodriguez**, archaeologist living in Phoenix. Fired from his professorship in Archaeology at ASU for plagiarism and unorthodox methodology and other crimes against academia. Now Professor Emeritus of Mexican History before the Revolution at University of Phoenix Online Campus.

Katy Lesdents, Mateo's girlfriend. Lab tech at POSITSOC, Inc. a R&D technology firm contracting with the Federal Government on special projects.

Stuart Lesdents, President of the local Northe Pointe Historical Society. Wealthy collector of antiquities. Friend of Alberto until Alberto ripped him off. Supports Mateo's mission to find his brother, but also has his own motives.

Brief Plot Summary:

Alberto has gone missing again. Mateo comes again to Phoenix to track him down. Vick Taylor, the Sheriff of Maricopa County, has mercilessly consolidated power and caused the county to secede in a time of general strife for America when it would be especially inconvenient for the federal government to respond effectively.

Vick has incarcerated most Phoenicians in open air desert gulags on trumped-up charges and rules over the rest with an iron fist. Mateo, following his brother's mysterious trail, finds himself drawn into an exotic exciting world of ancient relics which appear to possess supernatural powers.

These various Pueblo Indian and Mesoamerican artifacts are in fact, held by a select knowledgeable few possibly to be the remains of an ancient space suit, maybe belonging to our distant ancestors, an ancient civilization who ruled over a vast empire stretching from today's Mexico to the American Southwest.

It is proposed that once these relics are all found and reunited, that they will confer godlike powers on the wearer, and possibly call back the Star People (Katsinas) worshipped by the Hopis and Zunis, and perhaps even the Mesoamerican deity, Quetzalcoatl, who had long ago vowed to return right before he was murdered by the Toltecs.

Mateo must find his brother, avoid getting arrested, and somehow find a way to deal with the main problem at hand, that the most powerful relic--the Mask of Quetzalcoatl--appears to be connected with the evil Phoenix sheriff's reign of terror.