



A Meeting of Clans: A Misfits and Heroes Adventure

Kathleen Flanagan Rollins

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Rollins's lucid descriptions allow a twenty-first-century eye to discern the humanity and heroism of a primitive world and time.

Travel fourteen thousand years into the past in this realistic depiction of primitive society. Powerful and evocative, Kathleen Flanagan Rollins's novel reveals a distant world where humans are motivated by the basic need to survive in a rugged environment. Set in the vicinity of southern Mexico, *A Meeting of Clans* focuses on the experiences and emotions of its characters.

This third installment of Rollins's Misfits and Heroes series takes a turn into a familiar realm that those in the twenty-first century can understand—love and war. Faced with risky choices, a bonded group of humans—much like a contemporary family—must cope with the discovery that they are not alone when they encounter another clan. This unsettling realization is the catalyst for an unforgettable adventure, as the group's outlook on life changes dramatically. Nervous and wary, they learn to accept their now humbled status.

Steeped in ancient superstition, this vivid story provides a descriptive account of events. In a stream-of-consciousness style, irrational thoughts spill forth, offering a glimpse of a disturbed mind: "You have to pour salt over the dead; otherwise the angry spirits come back and haunt you. So you left him roaming the hillsides, angry. Always angry. I was angry when I burned the village. I liked the fire."

The threat is real. The heroism is real. A mixture of lore and legend, friendship and romance, this novel traverses a natural earth that few ever saw. A touching portrayal of star-crossed lovers enriches the narrative and invigorates the dialogue with lyrical passion.

A heroine known as Sula relates her private interlude, a memorable initiation with a man she once adored: "I know the taste of the sweat on his skin, the rough feel of his wrap, his touch going through me like lightning. All night we make love while the stars circle the night dome. We don't care about the stars or the rock or the sound of the sea. I can feel his hand on my skin, his breath on my neck even now." Tragically, he later believes her to be a witch.

Sights, sounds, and smells mingle with near tangible descriptions of harrowing accidents and excruciating medical conditions. In a time when doctors and dentists did not exist, even simple procedures could be traumatic. Rollins proceeds through her story with gritty courage, allowing readers to live through hideous incidents vicariously—enough to achieve a horrified response.

A professor of composition and literature, Rollins has infused her work with extensive knowledge of early Western civilization. Research backed by extensive travel to the locales she illustrates shows through on every page of this captivating book. Lovers of adventure and fans of the Clan of the Cave Bear series will find in Rollins a talented, fresh voice.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (June 3, 2014)

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