Clarion Review

General

Another Messiah
Stuart Rawlings
978-0-9771405-0-3
Four Stars (out of Five)

What if someone had the power to say one word and change the world? After the last presidential election Rawlings threw himself into writing a simple story about what would happen if a little girl in a wheelchair could do exactly that.

Rawlings who has a string of academic credentials from BA to JP to PhD for economics fiction writing law social work and social welfare begins his story in the Mid-East. His "messiah" is a crippled girl who is orphaned at birth. No one knows if she is Arab or Jew. Her legs are withered she does not speak but she entrances people with her radiant smile. When she turns seven she begins to appear at critical moments around the world a dark-eyed and diminutive deus ex machina solving the unsolvable with a single word.

In Iraq a strange illness forces American troops to withdraw. Elsewhere marauders vanish guns and tanks stop working AIDS just goes away torturers find themselves unable to torture. She stops a bride burning in India the torture of a prostitute in Mexico gorilla hunters in Rwanda and interferes with a host of other perpetual brutalities that never make even the back pages of our daily newspapers. Carbon-based economies fail when she makes the oil reserves in every country disappear. In every situation Rawlings reveals global political dynamics history and economics that may not be appearing on the radar of most Americans but yet are influenced by our policy or practices.

After each incident in which she appears a shift in consciousness occurs and begins to spread. Later the girl reveals her mission here is to help human beings avoid extinction because "a combination of advanced weaponry neglect of the poor and wanton resource destruction is likely to bring about your demise within the next 100 years."

The book does have some areas of weakness. The plot is thin and choppy and the characters are barely two-dimensional some of them without real purpose. Once one understands that it is meant to be more allegory than literary however one is free to move past these flaws

and appreciate Rawlings' evident hope for a world that is not driven by greed and sociopathic value systems. One also cannot deny the veracity of the problems he highlights nor the possibility that if they are not fixed we may be attending our own funerals.

Simple but at times surprisingly fresh *Another Messiah* gives a thumbnail sketch of how the world might be if the meek didn't wait to inherit but instead took charge. What Rawlings successfully reveals is our problems can no longer be solved with the consciousness that created them which thus begs for a larger one to manifest. The truth is his little messiah does not do anything we could not do ourselves if we wanted to badly enough.

Robin Ireland