Stolen Land

Fred lived on stolen land—land taken over hundreds of years earlier by migrating settlers who either pushed the original inhabitants out or killed them. He felt guilty but what could he do? Now was now, then was then. Now was when unmarked graves were found on the sites of former residential schools. Millions of the migrants and their descendants occupied the entire territory. Fred donated to native organizations, did not drive on their small reserves in the city. That seemed enough. Sort of.

He still felt some guilt, not much but enough so that it nagged at him. Fred was a talented psychotranscendalinternetologist and considered his options. He could invent a time machine and undo the immigration of the past somehow. Except, then he would ever exist. Entering other dimensions where the natives won or lived peacefully with the invaders was an idea, but the problem was in his dimension. He thought of using subliminal messages or drugs on the population, but using an immoral means to achieve a moral objective did not seem…moral.

Fred started a series of True Crime podcasts about natives being murdered, whose land was stolen or treaty ignored. Such podcasts were very popular. But not for Fred. His podcasts were ignored until he hired a professional producer. He continued to narrate but the producer added sound effects and music, emphasizing sex and violence and tons of creepy atmosphere. It did not took no time before Fred’s new podcast was in the top five.

Fred was thrilled. Talk of the past and present injustices was at water coolers everywhere. He read online articles congratulating the podcasts. There was talk in Government about improving the situation, but after a few months Fred realized it was only talk, and the celebrations of the podcasts mostly hot air.

Nothing changed, except the podcast’s ratings and advertising revenue. Fred was now not only a psychotranscendalinternetologist, he was rich. He bought several large islands and urged aboriginal peoples to immigrate to them, as sanctuaries they owned. None took him up on the offer.

But, sympathetic, they offered to buy him a trip to a dimension where he would feel more at home.

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