

# Coast to Coast

by Christian Bell

## **Nibiru Cataclysm**

Nancy from Bakersfield gives Art Bell a call, says, it's coming, a pole shift's coming, humanity is doomed. Art stifles a yawn, says, is that so, Nancy, as he swirls limp kimchi lost to glaciation. The government is covering it up, she says, they're only worried about mass panic and themselves. Nancy, he says, what will happen on that day, can you give us some advice, what to look for? In her silence, Art can hear her seething on the other line, feel her eyeballs protruding. It's a skill he's developed over the years—thousands of callers, multiple marriages. She went into tidal waves, apocalyptic fireballs, city-swallowing earthquakes, Enochian messages, and government oppression, and he drifted off, thought about retirement, he and Ramona hand and hand on crisp white island sands, nearby the luminescent galaxy of a crisp blue sea.

## **John Titor**

Art felt an affinity for John Titor, a man, if he were whom he said he was, he pictured being perpetually on the run. He couldn't but help think of Tom Cruise, who seemed to be running in each of his movies. John claimed to have come from the year 2036, a soldier stationed in Tampa, to collect some old family mementos before impending war destroyed them. His breath was somewhat labored, as if he had just run down ten flights of stairs. John, thanks for taking time in your travels to call in. Art, your listeners, they need to prepare, I've seen the devastation that's to come. Ted, a friend of Art's who happened to be in the studio, said, man, how do you take it, how come you don't unload on these characters. It's entertainment, Art said, all part of the show. Do you believe John Titor or any of this crazy shit? Art smiled, said nothing.

## **Faaip de Oiad**

No one knows that, while the ex-Area 51 guy delivered his rant, Art

left the booth for a Diet Coke. He had speakers installed throughout his Nevada house so he could hear everything in case he had to leave, even though Ramona hated it. The guy blathered—he's in hiding, the government's triangulating his position, aliens infiltrating the military, his voice growing more panicked, cracked like baseball-damaged glass. For Art, this meant more time to wander the darkened house, since the guy would devour every moment he got. Upstairs and downstairs fridges, pantry, garage—not one Diet Coke. How could this have happened? He passed Ramona, who was shaking her head, hands up in exasperated surrender. The signal grew scratchy, then stomach-dropping static fuzz became lost signal. Shit. He ran back. It's gone. He's hitting buttons. Eternal static. Then it's back. At the edge of his desk, a full can of Diet Coke. No, he said, no—that wasn't there.

## **Majestic 12**

When the night went soft, Art knew you could always count on Roswell. Everybody and his brother and his brother's six-armed green-headed jazz saxophone playing cousin had something to say about Roswell. Art would try to get at least one per night, then would keep some on standby in case the calls grew light. There are government agents, high ranking military officers, who've testified they saw alien corpses. Multiple flying disks were found, not freaking weather balloons. The government has had a UFO task force ever since that night. Some nights Ramona would come down, inhaler in hand, wheezing, fighting for breath. Art would hold her, massage her back. Watch the alien autopsy, those incisions into the thorax, you'll believe. Sometimes well into the night, into the deepest darkest loneliest hours, Art would be there, coaxing her back to life.

