

Gina D. B. Clemen

Murder at Coyote Canyon



free Audiobook



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MURDER AT COYOTE CANYON

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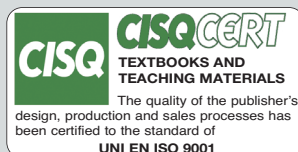
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Introduction

This story takes place in southern California near Los Angeles.

The state is on the San Andreas Fault line, a long crack in the earth's surface. This means that there are often earthquakes¹ here.

1. **earthquakes** : violent movements of the earth's surface.



The Characters



Front row: **Pam Rivers, Professor Daniel Massey**
second row: **Michelle Martin, Uncle George**
third row: **Bill Martin, Nick Chan, Meg and Jacob Richardson**
back row: **Fred, Wild Wolf and Sheriff Pedro Lopez**



CHAPTER ONE

The Earthquake

Portola Point, California, is a lovely town on the Pacific Coast, north of Los Angeles. It got its name from Gaspar de Portolà, a Spanish explorer who explored the Pacific Coast in the 18th century. When he came to southern California, several peaceful American Indian peoples lived there. One of these was the Chumash people. During the 19th century the Spanish and American settlers ¹ took the land away from them and built roads, towns and cities. The last members of the Chumash went to live on a small reservation ² near Portola Point.



track 02

Bill and Michelle Martin and their family arrived at Portola Point in March. They came from Montego Bay, Florida. Bill was a tall, handsome boy of seventeen with brown hair and blue eyes. Basketball was his sport and he played on the Portola High team. He loved science and wanted to become a biologist.

His sister, Michelle, was a pretty girl of sixteen, with red hair

1. **settlers** : people who go to live in an area permanently.
2. **reservation** : land that is given to American Indians by the government.

The Earthquake

and blue eyes. She played volleyball on the school team and wanted to become a journalist.

Their father worked for an airline and in March he was transferred from Miami International Airport to Los Angeles International Airport.

It was hard for Bill and Michelle to leave their friends at Montego Bay, but they often sent them emails and called them. They liked their new school, Portola High, and made friends there.

Our story begins in July, a hot, sunny month in southern California. School was over, and Bill and Michelle were enjoying their summer vacation in their new home.

“Well, today’s the big day!” said Bill. “July third!”

“Yeah, in two hours we’ll see Nick again!” said Michelle happily.

“What time is his plane landing?” asked Mrs Martin, a friendly woman of about forty.

“At a quarter past eleven,” said Bill.

“The guest room is ready for him, and I hope you have a great vacation together,” said Mrs Martin. “It’s almost time to drive to the airport.”

Nick Chan was one of Bill’s best friends at Montego Bay, and he was coming to spend the month of July with the Martins. Nick was a Chinese-American boy of seventeen and a good basketball player. He loved animals and wanted to become a vet.¹

Nick’s plane arrived on time and the three friends were together again.

“It’s great to see you, Nick!” said Bill excitedly.

1. **vet** : short for veterinarian, a doctor for animals.



“We’re going to have a wonderful July!” said Michelle.

“Thanks for inviting me,” said Nick, smiling at Mrs Martin and his two friends.

“How’s Rover?” asked Bill. Rover was Nick’s dog.

“Oh, he’s fine. He always wants to play,” said Nick.

When they got back to Portola Point, Bill, Michelle and Nick spent the day talking and laughing together. They were in the garden when they suddenly felt everything moving around them.



“What’s happening?” cried Nick. “Everything’s moving!”

“Oh, no!” cried Bill. “It’s an earthquake!”

“Another earthquake!” cried Michelle, who was scared. The three friends looked at each other — their faces were white. They didn’t know what to do. Nick’s glass of juice fell off the garden table to the ground.

Then suddenly the earthquake stopped.

“This is the third earthquake in two months!” said Michelle.



CHAPTER ONE

“The last one damaged several new houses in Coyote Canyon.¹ That’s where the expensive homes are. And they’re building more there.”

“The small cracks in our kitchen wall are from the first earthquake in May,” said Bill.

“And the big, long crack in my bedroom is from the earthquake last month,” said Michelle. “I covered it with a poster of U2.”

“Well, this is my first California earthquake,” said Nick, who was a bit nervous.

“Southern California is a beautiful place, but we’re right on top of the San Andreas Fault,” said Bill. “There are lots of earthquakes in California, and scientists say a big one is coming, but they don’t know when.”

“Gee...,” said Nick, worried, “I read about the San Andreas Fault in my science book but you guys live right on it.”

Suddenly everything started shaking again for about five seconds.

“It’s an aftershock,”² said Bill, looking at Nick and Michelle nervously. “Let’s hope these earthquakes stop before tomorrow.”

“Yeah,” said Michelle, “tomorrow’s the Fourth of July,³ and there’s a big parade, a western rodeo⁴ and a barbeque.”

“You’ll see some real American Indians from the Chumash Reservation in the parade,” said Bill.

“Sounds like fun!” said Nick, trying to forget about the earthquake.

1. **Canyon** : a long, narrow valley.

2. **aftershock** : a small earthquake that follows a big one.

3. **Fourth of July** : Independence Day. See dossier on page 24.

4. **western rodeo** : public show where cowboys ride wild horses and bulls.

The text and **beyond**

PET 1 Comprehension check

For each question choose the correct answer — A, B, C or D.

- 1 Gaspar de Portola was a Spanish explorer
 - A ☐ who built roads and towns in southern California.
 - B ☐ who lived in northern Spain.
 - C ☐ but he never explored California.
 - D ☐ who explored the Pacific Coast in the eighteenth century.
- 2 The Chumash lost their land
 - A ☐ because there was a war with the Spanish explorers.
 - B ☐ and went to live in Mexico.
 - C ☐ and went to live on a reservation.
 - D ☐ because there was a big earthquake.
- 3 The Martins moved to Portola Point in March
 - A ☐ because Mr Martin's job moved to Los Angeles International Airport.
 - B ☐ because they did not like California.
 - C ☐ because they were afraid of earthquakes.
 - D ☐ but they want to return to Florida next year.
- 4 Mrs Martin, Bill and Michelle were going to the airport to
 - A ☐ pick up Mr Martin.
 - B ☐ catch a plane for Miami.
 - C ☐ pick up Michelle's best friend, Susan.
 - D ☐ pick up Nick Chan.
- 5 Nick was a bit nervous because he
 - A ☐ did not like flying on planes.
 - B ☐ experienced his first earthquake.
 - C ☐ didn't like Mrs Martin.
 - D ☐ lost his suitcase.
- 6 Portola Point planned to celebrate the Fourth of July with a
 - A ☐ rock concert in the park.
 - B ☐ barbeque on the beach.
 - C ☐ carnival and a western rodeo.
 - D ☐ barbeque, a rodeo and a parade.

2 Characters

- A** Look at the pictures of Michelle, Bill and Nick on page 5 and describe them. What do they look like and what do they like doing?

Michelle

.....

Bill

.....

Nick

.....

- B** Now match the three characters to what they say.

1 Michelle

2 Nick

3 Bill

A ☐ "Today's the big day!"

B ☐ "Thanks for inviting me."

C ☐ "This is the third earthquake in two months."

D ☐ "This my first California earthquake."

E ☐ "... we're right on top of the San Andreas Fault."

F ☐ "I covered it with a poster of U2."

G ☐ "How's Rover?"

H ☐ "... tomorrow's the Fourth of July..."

I ☐ "It's an aftershock."

PET 3 Writing

Nick writes a postcard to his parents in Montego Bay, Florida. He wants to tell them about:

- his trip on the plane
- his friends Bill and Michelle
- his first earthquake

Write the postcard using between 35-45 words.

INTERNET PROJECT

EARTHQUAKES!

Earthquakes are very common in California. Did you know that every day there are several earthquakes all over the world? Let's find out more about them.

Connect to the Internet and go to www.blackcat-cideb.com or www.cideb.it. Insert the title or part of the title of the book into our search engine. Open the page for *Murder at Coyote Canyon*. Click on the Internet project link. Go down the page until you find the title of this book and click on the link for this project.

Work in groups.

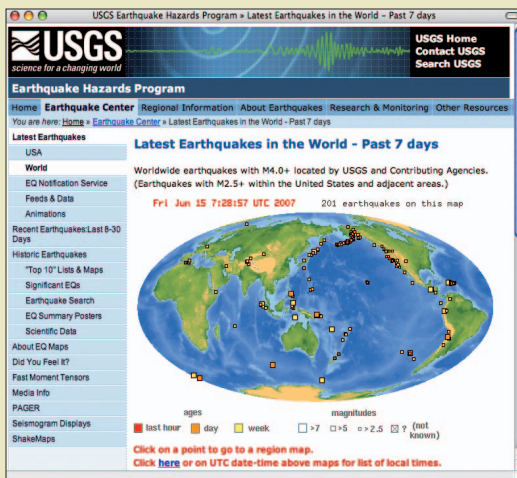
Look at the world map and the U.S.A. map and make a list of the recent earthquakes. Include the following information:

- A** where the earthquake took place
- B** the date
- C** how big it was
- D** is your country on the list?

Click on 'About Earthquakes' and then on 'Earthquake Facts' and answer these questions:

- A** which was the largest recorded earthquake in the world?
- B** which was the earliest reported earthquake in California?
- C** what are moonquakes?
- D** what is a tsunami?
- E** how many detectable earthquakes are there in the world each year?
- F** how many earthquakes are there in southern California each year?
- G** how long and how deep is the San Andreas Fault?
- H** which two states in the United States have the lowest number of earthquakes?

Now click on 'Photo Collection' and look at the damage caused by earthquakes.



Before you read

1 Vocabulary

Look at the pictures and match them with the words in the box below.

marching band flags majorettes cattle ranch
float headdress warrior saddle fireworks



1



2



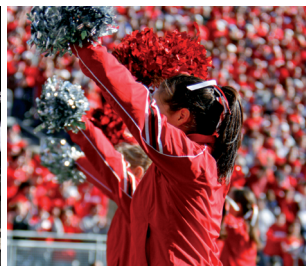
3



4



5



6



7



8



9

Which of the people or objects above are usual in parades in your country?