

### *Chapter Three*

Galen Albret sat in his rough-hewn arm-chair at the head of the table, receiving the reports of his captains. The long, narrow room opened before him, heavy raftered, massive, white, with a cavernous fireplace at either end. Above him frowned Sir George's portrait, at his right hand and his left stretched the row of home-made heavy chairs, finished smooth and dull by two centuries of use.

His arms were laid along the arms of his seat; his shaggy head was sunk forward until his beard swept the curve of his big chest; the heavy tufts of hair above his