

THE FIRST DAYS



Months before he was born, the home of Malcolm's parents was visited in the night by the Ku Klux Klan. The hooded night-riders were looking for his father. They left a message which turned out to be an omen of things to come for the unborn Malcolm Little. The message was, "stop spreading radical ideas about freedom, independence and equality among the negroes." They were going to lynch him in front of his family if he didn't. This was the beginning of a pattern of events that would plague Malcolm throughout his life.



Malcolm "X" was born May 19th, 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska. He was the fourth child of Earl and Louise and the seventh child of his father, who was also a seventh child.

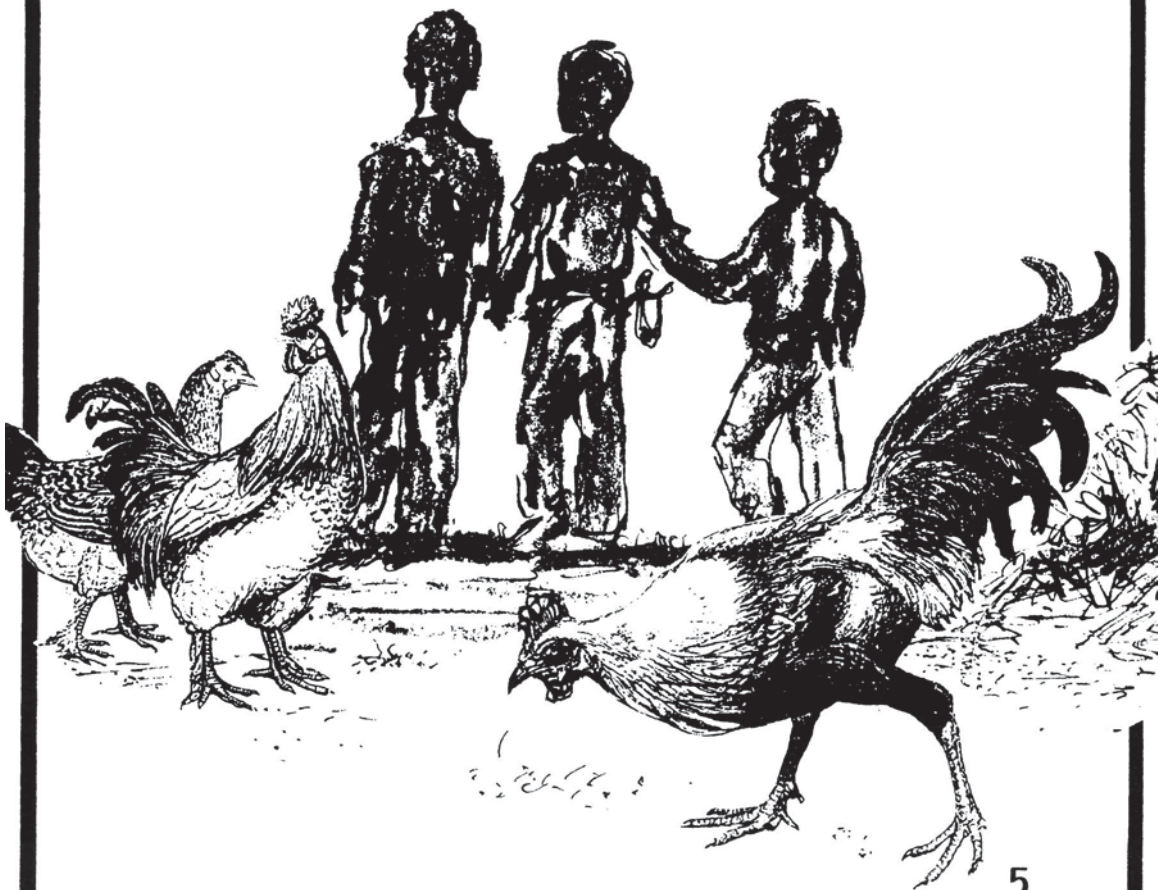
No surprise Malcolm adopted 7 as his lucky number.

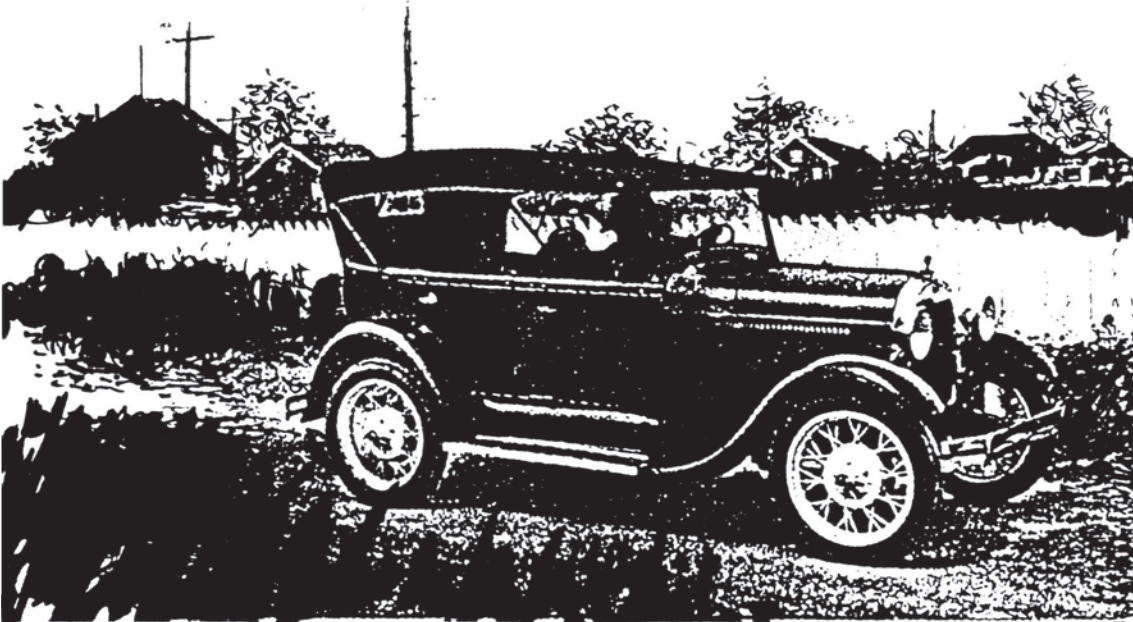


Because of his mixed blood Malcolm was very unusual looking. His grandfather on his mother's side was Scottish, which gave Malcolm his light-skin and sandy-blond hair and eyes that were an unusual mixture of brown, blue and green depending on the lighting conditions.



As a child Malcolm displayed exceptional intelligence, spending many hours browsing through his picture books. Malcolm learned early in life that by speaking out and making a fuss he could usually get what he wanted. His brothers, Philbert and Reginald, were his constant companions and even though they fought like cats and dogs always joined forces to look out for one another.





Malcolm's father was a poor country preacher and Malcolm recalls how his parents were always arguing and there was never enough to eat. Malcolm was close to his father and often went along in his father's old touring car to Garveyite meetings, where Malcolm received his first lessons in self-pride.



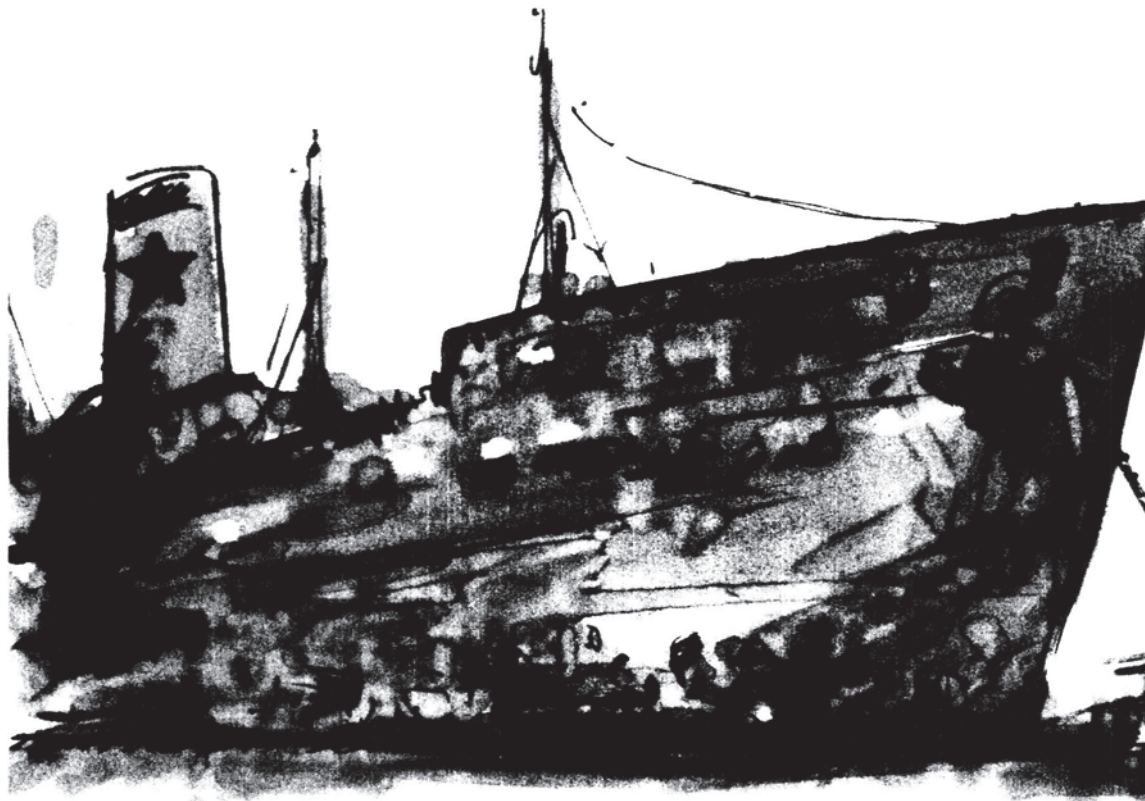
Marcus Garvey was a charismatic leader with a plan to unify the negro community. He dressed in elaborate uniforms trimmed in gold and wore a field marshal's hat reminiscent of Napoleon.

Marcus Garvey founded the United Negro Improvement Association to build a society economically independent of white America, with property, industries, services and trade. He wanted to establish trade agreements with other countries, particularly Africa and the Caribbean Islands. He outfitted an all-Black militia to parade through the streets of Harlem and other cities in the United States.



Marcus believed women had a prominent role in the U.N.I.A. and organized the BLACK CROSS to rival the White Cross philanthropic league; women also marched in the Black Militia.





Marcus established the BLACK STAR Steamship line, a fleet of giant freighters to transport cargo and, eventually, the Black community to African soil where a new nation could be founded. Garvey wanted to run all European whites out of Africa, by force if necessary.