

This is the revised version

DFE – Dark Force Entity

A Novel

by T. J. Palmer



Cover illustration: *Vampire's Kiss* by Boris Vallego

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Synopsis

Dark Force Entity tells the story of how James Parker, a spiritual healer, part-time hypnotherapist and truck driver encounters dark forces and the spirit entities that influence human beings. Following a lifetime of failed relationships and career misadventures, James Parker embarks upon a new career as a hypnotherapist, using his knowledge and natural healing skills to bring relief to the suffering. When he meets Marianne, he finds what he believes to be a woman with whom he can reconcile his past failures and become what he always wanted to be – a family man. His compassion and vulnerability lead him to discover a realm of human experience that openly challenges the modern secular world-view of materialistic determinism. His journey of discovery as a spiritual healer takes him through mystical experiences as a hermit in the mountains of Crete to the romantic Bay of Naples where he encounters the Divine in human nature and to the high passes of the Swiss Alps where he first encounters the demonic. James breaks the code of ethics of professional therapists and enters into an emotional and physical relationship with Marianne. This brings his hard-won therapy career to an end and he commits himself in total to Marianne as her partner and applies all his skill and knowledge to helping her overcome the consequences of earlier abandonment and childhood trauma. James fathers a son for Marianne, a son she had yearned for since she had three daughters and is devastated when she betrays his trust in her and she rejects him. With his career and professional relationships in tatters James retreats in order to find answers for Marianne's actions.

What James Parker ultimately discovers is that several worlds exist in parallel – the world created by each of us from within our own minds, the co-created world of the greater social collective and the two worlds of the transcendent – good and evil as they are experienced and denied by ordinary people in their daily lives.

Inspired by true events taken from case notes, this story explores the fuzzy and confusing relationship between mental illness and the influences of an unseen world of spirits and demons. What James discovers is the evidence for the existence of unseen spiritual domains that affect us all for good and for ill. This is a story of how deeply-rooted scepticism is challenged and overcome by experiences that are ultimately foolish to deny. A novel of powerful emotions and moral purpose, DFE is a story that explores the paradoxes of love and betrayal, trust and distrust, fear and courage, disbelief and denial.

The characters are fictitious and any resemblance to real personalities is purely coincidental.

'I see a deep, deep pool. It's dark.
 It's so deep if I fell I don't know if I'd ever reach the bottom.
 There's a long fat snake in this pool hiding, waiting to get me.
 It's so long and it's ugly.
 I'm naked and alone on the surface.
 There are huge cliffs and mountains completely surrounding me.
 I know humans are there but they're hiding. Watching me die.
 I've been in here a long time, but you knew that didn't you?
 The only way out is down.
 To look him in the eye.
 Are you down there? Are you waiting for me?
 When I dive down I'm going to find you and wring your neck.
 Are you in the pool with me?
 Where are you?
 Who are you?
 Are you taking me to the snake?
 What will you do if I ask you not to save me?
 What will you do if I try to kill you?
 What will you do if I refuse to go with you?
 I'm so tired, I expect you'll do what you want.'

Acknowledgements

It is estimated that about 10% of therapists who have a personal relationship with their patients commit suicide because of their failure to treat them with genuine human love. This book is dedicated to all those therapists, doctors and healers who suffered that terrible fate. I extend my grateful thanks to those therapists who, through lack of knowledge, and naïveté were unable to help their suffering patients until they discovered an alternate reality. I thank them for their honesty and integrity. I also extend my thanks to those pioneers of spirit release therapy who published their findings and their successes in the treatment of spirit possession and for their contribution in lighting the way forward for all psychiatry and medicine in the modern world of science and technology.

I further extend my grateful thanks to all those patients who, through disbelief and misguided attempts at treatment by mental health services were destined to suffer for so long. All shall remain nameless and anonymous because of the stigma associated with mental health issues and the persistence of medical science and society at large to view spirituality with disdain and incredulity.

My very special thanks to the founders and members of the British Association for Spirit Release and their supporters for their knowledge and unending desire to educate us all. Special thanks to members of those Spiritualist Churches where mediums conveyed messages to those who are willing to listen and in particular to those who asked specific questions in the search for truth and enlightenment. And special thanks to those nurses, therapists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners who remain anonymous for fear of being exposed for their beliefs. May they continue to work for the common good with discretion and confidentiality. I sincerely hope that this narrative will inspire others to recognise the Light and contribute to changing values and treatment methods for those who suffer at the whims of the Dark side of reality.

Special thanks go tofor proof reading the manuscript and to for suggestions on themes and presentation.

Preface

Disbelief in the Dark is no defence from it.

One day, at some time in the future, institutionalised ignorance will be a thing of the past. Until that day arrives the mentally ill will continue to be treated according to the misguided beliefs of those who put themselves in positions of power.

Foreword

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Chapter 1

James Parker and the Seven-Year Cycle

It's going to be a warm one, thought James Parker as he parked the truck and walked to his car for the journey home.

It was 5.30 a.m. on a bright August morning in the Year of our Lord 2000, and he had just finished his night's work, from Rochester up to Birmingham and back with a 40-foot overnight parcel trailer. The drive home would take him forty-five minutes, then he would have enough time to have a spot of breakfast, bathe and shave, and get his notes ready for the morning's work at the clinic and the hospital. Clinic started at 8.45 with the first patient arriving at 9. He would see three patients and then get to the hospital by 12.30 where he was conducting a research project for his doctorate. He would finish at the hospital by about 2 and go straight home to bed before getting up again at 5.30, eat and head up to Rochester for another night trunk to Birmingham.

James Parker had an honours degree in psychology, was a certified hypnotherapist, was researching for his PhD, and he drove trucks. A strange mix of professional activities you may say, but the hypnotherapy didn't provide enough for a living yet and the research was costing him his own money until he could get a grant, so he had to drive trucks to make ends meet. He was 53 years old, divorced and lived alone in a one-bed ground floor flat. He lived only for his work as a therapist and his objective to be awarded his doctorate. He worked nights for a driver agency usually from Monday to Friday, but sometimes at weekends, and had nights off prior to attending the clinic as and when required by his friend and colleague Dr Samuel Weston. He did his practical research at the hospital on Fridays and Saturdays again with Dr Weston. The rest of his time was his own to sleep, read and write up his clinical and research notes, punctuated with a couple of pints at his local pub after church, and Sunday lunch with his daughter and her family. Apart from a sporadic and sometimes intrusive love life in the form of Penny, his life was pretty routine, and to most who weren't interested in psychology, perhaps a little dull and boring. That was all there was to know about Mr James Parker, but it hadn't always been as dull and routine as that, and it was about to change again. Over the coming months James Parker's life was about to be turned upside down.

James left the yard and headed down Blue Bell Hill towards the motorway. Traffic was already starting to thicken on the M20 on its way to London, but James was going the other way; in the opposite direction. *Going against the flow*, he reflected, was something he had done in the past, or so it seemed.

There's going with the flow, and then there's running with the herd, he reminded himself as he approached the speed limit with nothing to get in the way. He wasn't running with the herd. That was going the other way. But where was the flow taking him? His thoughts began to wander as he dropped the car into high gear and his mind drifted into neutral. He was in highway hypnosis. A natural state often experienced by long distance drivers when the conscious mind drifts off into a kind of day dream whilst the subconscious goes onto automatic pilot and takes control of the driving. The idea of going with the flow took him into a reverie of other times and other places.

He had been a truck driver after he came out of the army, then progressed to transport manager and eventually to transport consultant. He had also been an entertainment promoter, an advertising agent, a conference and exhibition organiser, and a hermit living in the mountains of Crete. His adventures and experiences had been wide and varied; from being acknowledge by his peers to being thrown into an Arab jail and deported. He had been a consultant for the United Nations in Africa and had worked as a waiter in a Greek taverna. Now he was a hypnotherapist and student researcher. His experiences had changed dramatically every seven years or so, give or take six months either way, through a series of cycles. There had been high points and low points to each cycle, and there were crisis points too. One thing remained constant though. He could always earn a living by truck driving. This was the common thread and his security.

He had been twenty-eight years old and driving a truck across the Saudi Arabian desert when this realisation of seven-year cycles occurred to him. It had been an interesting observation and he had concluded that he was being influenced by a naturally recurring cycle that he had no control over. James needed to understand how it worked and whether it was controllable or predictable. These were the same questions that philosophers, scientists, historians and economists had been attempting to answer for centuries. James Parker was none of these. He was an ordinary man trying to do his best to make his way in the world without the benefits of a formal academic background or financial independence. He didn't know it at the time, but he was following a path of discovery that was not designed by him. He had identified several types of cycle. There was a physical one, an emotional one, a mental one and a creative one. He had also identified in the world around him a political one and an economic one. He even took the time to read into the past and actually identified a shape to history in the form of cycles in the rise and fall of civilisations and empires. He identified that each cycle had a peak and a trough, and a critical point that heralded a change from one cycle to another. He arrived at the tentative conclusion that everything that could be observed or experienced could be understood by seeing it as part of this universal cycle of events. For James' own personal experiences, each cycle had limits and boundaries that confined their influence to within James's capacity to accommodate their effects physically, mentally and emotionally. He saw natural progression and personal development as 'going with the flow' of the naturally recurring cycle. But there was another cycle of influence that was still a mystery to him, and he often found himself musing as to its nature and its influence, not only on his own life changes, but on his understanding of the world he found himself in. He was to learn that this cycle was the one that stretched boundaries, and even went beyond them.

By the time he had reached the Ashford exit James had been reminded what it felt like to run outside of the main herd, influenced by his own cyclic changes and going with the flow. There didn't seem to be any stability or predictability, but amid the apparent chaos there was definitely a pattern. He just wanted to know where it was headed.

He was gaining on a convoy of heavy trucks on their way to the channel tunnel and the ferry ports, trundling along at a governed speed of 56 miles an hour, nose to tail like a herd of elephants. His conscious awareness took over once again from his automatic pilot as he checked his right rear-view mirror and indicated to pass them. He checked his speedometer to register that he was still cruising at exactly 70 mph.

James arrived home at 06.15 and let himself in with the anticipation of a relaxing soak in the bath. The moment he was inside the door he switched on the radio tuned into Classic FM, turned on the bath water and put the kettle on. He stripped off while the kettle boiled, adjusted the bath temperature, made his mug of tea and took it with him to the bathroom. He stepped into the bath and sat down to sip his tea. This was his time: Time to let the dust of the road wash away and listen to a nice piece of classical music - heaven. But the reverie that was started on the motorway by his thoughts of going with the flow was still only just below the surface. The strains of *Pachelbel's Canon in D* drifted into the bath room and he slipped down into the warm soapy water to make the mental transition from truck driver to healer.

Each seven-year cycle that James Parker experienced brought him to greater heights of success and then into greater depths of despair. As he was getting older, the roller coaster was getting rougher and wilder. He thought that maturity was supposed to bring wisdom and success, but all he could see was that he was being thrown from one crisis to another - from the heights of achievement to the depths of failure. During one such cycle, between 1985 and 1991 his computer exhibitions business collapsed and he lost his soul partner, the beloved Julia. Escaping to a simple life in Crete seemed idyllic at the time. He found space to breathe, and to stand back to see the bigger picture, and he discovered a peace within himself that he had never known before. He had learned the true value of isolation and tranquillity. He lived the life of a hermit in the mountains and people would come to him with their problems, locals and tourists alike. Without any form of teaching or training from an adept or master of any kind, James Parker was a natural comfort to his fellow humans in trouble. What he hadn't realised at the time was that with each cycle, as he traversed its peak and trough, his trials and tribulations became harder and his failures were to become more traumatic. Each time he traversed the critical point of a cycle the emotional energy created became greater and greater. As his own emotional pain increased with each revolution, so his compassion and empathy for others increased in equal measure. The more pain he experienced so the stronger he became. Just as a Samurai sword is heated

and beaten a thousand times to give it its strength and its edge, so James Parker was being beaten and tempered in preparation for something yet to come.

His studies, research and efforts to establish a viable hypnotherapy practice bring him to this day in August 2000, and he thinks that by now he knows where he is headed. His friends and family think his life is routine and uneventful. But he is on the cusp of another cycle, and this one will take him further and deeper than ever before. This one will take him to the edge - and beyond. This one is the boundary breaker.

Yes, he thought as he climbed out of his car at the clinic car park, *it is definitely a warm one*. James arrived at the clinic at five minutes to nine with just enough time to take off his jacket and wash his hands when the receptionist announced to him on the internal telephone that his first patient had arrived.

Amanda Fernandez was huge. James could find no other way to describe the frame of the 25-year-old woman who waddled into his consulting room. She was six foot six tall and so obese that he didn't dare risk putting her on the scales. He had visions of the chair collapsing under her huge bulk as she accepted his invitation to sit down. Under the enormous face he could see that she was really a very beautiful young woman and she spoke with a delicate child-like voice that did not fit the frame she filled. It was obvious why she was referred to him, but he had to stick to the protocols as he took down her basic details for the record.

'What can I do for you Amanda?' he asked.

'I'm fat,' she said tearfully. 'You name it and I have tried it. Diets don't work, exercise doesn't work, and psychotherapy doesn't work. I have even had my jaws wired together to stop me eating, but absolutely nothing works. I am at my wits end and I don't know what else to do. You are the last resort. Can you help me?'

It was a plea from the depths of her soul and it touched him. He felt her pain and anguish as he began to explain the procedures he used.

'Before I can answer that question we have to see how well you are able to go into an altered state of consciousness. That's a trance,' he explained. 'Then we have to see how well you respond to suggestions. If you are a good subject for hypnosis then rather than give you direct suggestions to lose weight we have to find out the cause of your obesity. But before we begin can you tell me why you think you are overweight?'

She misinterpreted his question and replied, 'Look at me. I'm huge. Nobody should be this big. I feel like a freak. I have difficulty doing everything; getting dressed, moving around, even cleaning myself.' She began to get tearful so he stopped her.

'I'm sorry,' he said. 'What I meant was, what do you think is the *cause* of your overweight?'

'I really don't know', she replied. 'I have always been fat. I mean I have never been anything other than fat. My earliest memories as a child are of being bigger than anyone else at school. My mum says I was born fat. How can I possibly know what caused that?' He detected a note of annoyance with him in the tone of her voice.

He was anxious that he should immediately restore rapport between them in order to proceed. Without rapport there can be no chance of success with hypnosis. So, he quickly explained, 'The reason I ask this question is because we have two minds; the conscious one that we are using now to have this discussion and an unconscious one that is beyond our awareness. When I ask a question like the one I just asked you, I am asking the conscious mind. But when I ask the unconscious mind the same question we should get a different answer.'

She listened with intense interest and he went on, 'We use our conscious mind to analyse things, solve problems and make decisions, but the unconscious part of our mind works in a different way. It stores information and controls things that are beyond our conscious awareness. For example; you don't have to think about breathing or heartbeat or putting one foot in front of the other when you walk. Do you?' She relaxed as he spoke and listened with intense interest. He had already started the trance induction process and as he spoke the tone of his voice changed imperceptibly to a gentler, soothing one.

'No,' she replied.

He had the attention of her unconscious mind as he suggested to her, 'The ability to go into trance depends on how well you are able to relax.' She nodded, and in a short time he had succeeded in inducing a good level of trance. Then he brought her back to full conscious awareness and asked her

how she felt. James had developed a method of trance induction, through much practice and trial and error that incorporated both direct and subliminal suggestions of peace and tranquillity. The induction itself was of enormous therapeutic benefit to all his clients, and for some of them just learning how to do it for themselves was enough to help them deal with the everyday stresses of modern living.

As Amanda emerged from her trance her face was transformed into one of experiential delight. 'I feel absolutely wonderful,' she said.

'That's what it feels like to be hypnotised,' he told her. 'You respond very well. Now let's see if your unconscious mind has the answers we are looking for.'

Amanda slipped beautifully back into trance and James began his investigation; 'I am speaking to your unconscious mind Amanda. Your unconscious mind has much more knowledge than your conscious awareness has and is much wiser. It knows all there is to know about you. I don't want you to look for answers - they will just come. What we need to know originates beyond your conscious memory, so it would be futile to try and remember - just let it come. On the count of three you will find yourself in another time and another place. You will find yourself in the time and place where the cause of the problem originated - one, two, three - you are there.' He gave her a moment to adjust to her experience and then asked, 'Can you tell me where you are?'

'No,' she replied in a faraway little voice.

'What can you see?' he asked.

'Nothing,' she replied.

'OK, then tell me what you are experiencing.'

'It's dark,' she said, 'and warm, and cosy. I like it here.'

She had regressed and was in her mother's womb. Now he needed to know what caused the obesity. 'Something caused the problem here Amanda. What was it?' he asked, and she began to cry. It was a silent cry, but the tears flooded down her cheeks as her huge frame began to quiver with silent deep sobbing. 'Can you tell me why you are crying Amanda? What is it that is disturbing you?' he asked.

'I don't know,' she said as her sobbing continued, 'but I feel so empty.'

'Do you know what is causing this empty feeling?' He prompted.

'No,' she said as the tears flowed fast down her cheeks into big wet patches growing on her blouse. He had reached a dead end for now and after calming her down and bringing her back to a state of relaxed tranquillity again, he brought her out of the trance.

Something had seriously disturbed Amanda when she was being carried in her mother's womb, but with an undeveloped intellect the unborn child was unable to interpret the meaning or the significance of the experience. He needed to know what happened, so when she had recovered to full consciousness he asked her, 'When your mother was pregnant with you do you have any ideas about what she was experiencing?'

'I have never known my grandmother because she died when my mum was pregnant with me,' she said. Straight away James knew the answer.

'And tell me this; what kind of birth did you have, was it easy or difficult?'

'Oh, apparently it was terrible. My mum had a terrible time. I was two weeks late and very big. I even had a full head of hair and long nails on my fingers and toes.'

Now James had the full picture. The emptiness that Amanda experienced as an unborn child was the grief that her mother experienced with the loss of her own mother. Because mother and child share the same emotions during pregnancy, what the mother feels so does the child feel. With this knowledge, James reintroduced Amanda back into trance for the resolution of the problem. Because the unborn child has no understanding of its experience in the womb the resolution technique involves a dialogue between the unborn child and the adult that it has subsequently grown into. It's as if a voice talks to the child to explain to it why it feels the way it does. James reflected on why it is so important for mothers to talk to their unborn children.

During this dialogue between the unborn Amanda and the grown-up one it emerged that the unborn one was reluctant to emerge from her mother's womb at the appointed time because she didn't want to come out into a world where there was so much emotional pain and emptiness. She stubbornly stayed there using all the mother's resources to feed on until she grew hair and nails and the nutrition supplied by the mother ran out. Amanda was born feeling both empty from her mother's grief and starving through lack of nourishment. She was born big because she was late and she spent the whole of her life trying to fill the nagging emptiness by eating. Amanda's problem was thus solved with satisfaction.

About three months later Amanda invited James to her wedding. She was able to get into the wedding dress that was her dream.

James's next case that same day was Deborah Collins. She had been diagnosed with a disease of the nervous system called Dystonia and Doctor Western had referred her for hypnosis to help her come to terms with the disease emotionally. This was Deborah's second visit. During the first one, seven days previous, James had introduced her to her trance and had taught her how to do it herself. Then he had taught her how to detect the precursory sensations that precipitate an attack. The effects of her condition meant that she had involuntary spasms that resemble a seizure, but the spasms were confined to the right side of her body and she didn't lose consciousness as one did with other conditions like epilepsy. He taught her to recognise the onset of an attack and to go into a trance to escape it. She also learned how to hold off an attack until she was in a position to go into trance, for example if she were driving or socialising with her friends.

'Hello Deborah,' he greeted her, as he offered her a chair. 'Come and sit down and tell me how you have been getting along since last week.'

'It's quite amazing,' she said. 'Not only can I escape from the attacks, but they are less frequent and milder. I feel as if I have control over them.'

'Good. And how do you feel about that?'

'That's what it's all about isn't it? Control I mean. We all need to be in control of our lives, and when something like this happens we lose it.'

'Yes,' he said. 'It's all about control. We all have the gift of free will, but when we get sick our free will is compromised. It's frustrating and can be very upsetting. Our aim is to regain control so that we can exercise our own free will again.'

As he spoke to her a part of his mind was reflecting on the concept of free will as a God-given gift to human beings. He was being reminded that first and foremost he was a spiritual healer. His gift for healing had been discovered whilst living in Crete, but he tended to forget this because of his academic and scientific education. But his education in the arts of healing had begun with the discovery that he could remove physical pain simply by putting his hand over the affected part. His experiences in Crete had enabled him to progress from simple things like headaches and insect bites, and as he developed his skills he found himself treating more serious conditions like chronic back pain and even multiple sclerosis. By going to university, he learned how the mind affects emotions and set off on the new path of healing these facets. As Deborah was talking he reminded himself of his physical healing abilities, and on an inspirational impulse said to her, 'I want to try something if it's OK with you. I am going to stand behind you and I don't want you to go into trance, OK?'

'OK,' she said, as James rose from his chair and stood behind her.

'Now,' he said. 'Let's see if we can detect the point of origin of these attacks. Where do you think they originate from?'

'I don't know,' she replied.

'Last week we learned that the first signs of an attack were detected with a small tremor in the top of the right arm – right?'

'Yes,' she answered.

'Then it spread down the arm and up to the neck and face?'

'Yes.'

Deborah's attacks not only took control of her arm so that it went rigid and waved about and contracted the muscles in the right side of her neck to twist her head to one side in a painful contortion. But the most distressing feature of them was that they also contorted the right side of her face into a grimace resembling a gargoyle. She lost control of her mouth and dribbled. Coupled with the contorting of her neck and the waving of her right arm, her right cheek slapped against her teeth like a dog's when it shakes its head.

James placed the palm of his left hand about an inch from the nape of Deborah's neck and asked her to focus her attention on the top of her right arm, and then said, 'You have learned how to control an attack – right?'

'Yes,' she said.

'So, if you had an attack now you would be confident about your ability to control it – right?'

'Yes,' she replied.

'Good, I am going to invite an attack if that's OK with you. By doing this we may be able to detect where it originates. Ready?'

'Ready.'

'Now tell me what you experience.'

'I feel a little twitch in my right shoulder blade,' she said. He moved his hand over the spot.

'Tell me what's happening?' He asked. There was a pause and a mild tremor passed down her arm and up her neck. Tell me what's happening.' He repeated.

'I don't like to say,' she said. 'I feel silly.' He was intrigued.

'Please don't be afraid to tell me what you are experiencing. Go on,' he urged her.

She had to force herself to say the words, 'It's really weird.'

'What's weird?' he asked.

'Well,' she began tentatively. 'It's like something horrible is coming away. It's black ... like like. No, I can't say. It's silly.'

'Never mind,' said James. 'Go on. Tell me what you see.'

'It's like black bats coming out,' she said.

'Let it happen. Just allow yourself to relax and let it happen. When we experience something unpleasant we tend to go tense. Just relax and let it find its own way. By deciding to relax when you experience discomfort is another way of being in control. Let the negativity go and release it out of your body,' prompted James. He waited until the weird sensations had finished, removed his hand from its position over her shoulder blade and resumed his seat in front of her. 'How do you feel?' He asked.

Deborah was in a state of amazement and she was trying to understand what had happened. In answer to his question she asked him, 'What was that?'

James didn't fully understand himself. He had never experienced anything quite like it before, but he had to give her some kind of explanation. 'Well,' he began. 'All disease can be viewed as negative energy. Our perceptions of negative energy can take various forms depending on how our imagination works. Imagination is a very powerful aid in overcoming disease and distress, and what you did was to use your own imagination to visualise the negative energy that is causing your condition.'

It was a satisfactory explanation, he thought, and one he could accept himself. But was it the right one? This was a precursor of what was to come, and the transition from one cycle to another had begun. But James didn't know that just yet.

Chapter 2

Love for Julia

Shortly after Deborah had left the clinic, the receptionist brought James a mug of hot coffee and the news that his third patient hadn't shown. This is what troubled him most about trying to develop a hypnotherapy practise and earn a living from it.

Sometimes a patient failed to turn up for an initial appointment and at other times they failed to maintain a prescribed course of treatment. He thought it was probably due to the fact that the local Health Authority didn't make financial provision for hypnotherapy as a prescribed treatment and patients had to dip into their own pockets. People had become so used to the fact that medical treatments were provided free of charge on the NHS that they couldn't come to terms with having to pay for it themselves. In addition to this, James's geographical location was not particularly affluent and the marketing potential to the well off and open-minded section of the local community was very limited. Even referrals from a general practitioner like Samuel Weston who strongly advocated complementary therapies were not enough to enable James to conduct more than two half-day clinics per week. And when two or three of those referred failed to show - well it was a bit of an uphill struggle.

James sipped his coffee and started to write up Deborah Collins' notes. It was not a requirement for him to keep patient records for Dr Weston because technically they were his own clients when the doctor referred them on, and the treatment they received from him was not required in the official patient notes for the surgery. But he liked to keep his own paperwork up to date and report patients' progress to the doctor. He pondered on how to present Deborah's experience, bearing in mind the unusual description she had given. He decided to present it the way it was without making any comments or assumptions on what he witnessed. But it made him think....

The absence of his third patient and the thoughts that had occurred to him during Deborah's session gave James the opportunity to reflect back on his therapy career roots.

Some pretty weird things had happened in the beginning. They seemed weird then, but as James experienced more and more in those early-days things seemed less weird. Just after he had returned from a consultancy project in Sudan, someone had told him that he was a healer. 'No', he had replied with incredulity. 'I'm a business man.'

'Well you will be then,' came the reply. The person who had told him this asked him to sit down whilst she placed her hand behind the nape of his neck, just as he had done with Deborah Collins. Almost immediately he felt a burning on the back of his neck, just like an infrared heat-ray lamp. It was so intense that he moved his head away from her hand sharply.

'Just as I thought,' she said. 'You are a conduit for healing energy, and because you don't need to receive it yourself you are repelling mine. The two positive energies coming together are creating the heat.' He didn't know what to think. Part of him wanted to scoff and brush it aside, but another part of him was intrigued. After all, there needed to be some explanation as to why his arthritis had never bothered him. He had been medically discharged from the Army after only seven years' service and told that he would be crippled and in a wheelchair by the time he reached the age of forty. He knew that the arthritis existed because the medical examinations to justify his army pension confirmed that he had it, but he felt no pain or discomfort at all.

James spent that weekend with Julia and decided on an experiment. He asked her to sit on a chair and then placed his hand behind her neck, just as the healer had done with him. Immediately Julia jumped and arched her back.

'What the hell was that?' she exclaimed.

'What was what?' he asked her.

'What did you do to me?

'I didn't do anything,' he said. 'I didn't even touch you.'

'Well something did,' she said. 'It felt like an electric shock down my spine.'

'Did it hurt then?' he asked.

'No,' she said. 'It was so unexpected and strange, but very nice. Can you do it again?' She asked him. He asked her why and she told him it felt a bit like an orgasm, but in her back.

Later that evening he gave her a similar sensation, but this time it wasn't caused by his hand and the sensation wasn't in her back.

Julia's father had passed on some years earlier and now her mother was failing fast with diabetes and an amputated leg. She needed a lot of emotional support at this time and she began to develop minor aches and pains. James wanted to find ways to help her relax and deal with her anxieties. She was a willing subject as he experimented with this new and mysterious energy that flowed through him. On one occasion she went into a very deep form of relaxation that she found extremely pleasant, and as she emerged from a trance-like state she commented, 'You hypnotised me.'

'No, I didn't,' he said. 'I never said a word. I don't know anything about hypnosis.'

Julia was convinced that she experienced something out of the ordinary and took it upon herself to go to the local library. She brought James two books on the subject of hypnosis and handed them to James. He read them with interest and after discussing Julia's experience with her he arrived at the conclusion that she had been under the influence of a hypnotic trance. He had hypnotised her without realising it, and what was even more intriguing was that he could do it without talking.

Julia had been James' dream come true. They were about the same age and had come from very similar backgrounds in the South London of the fifties with both their fathers being bookie's runners. They were introduced to each other by mutual friends and clicked immediately. She was divorced with two teenagers living with her in the family home. They spent alternate weekends together. He would spend a weekend with her and the following week she could escape the kids and relax with James. Julia had been living a somewhat lonely and isolated existence until James came along. He lived in a charming 200-year-old cottage in a quiet backwater in the middle of town right next to an old fashioned traditional village-type pub. All at once Julia had someone to care for her and she joined him in his active social life in his local community.

One day he asked her what her idea of paradise was, and when she told him he took her there - to Southern Turkey, with its miles of golden sands and stunning sunsets. She had never been abroad before and between them they experienced their first romantic fantasy. James had worked hard for the past seven years building a successful consultancy and exhibition business and meeting Julia put the icing on the cake. He was a truly happy and contented man.

Shortly after meeting Julia, James had been selected to go to Africa on a consultancy project for the United Nations. He missed Julia terribly and couldn't wait to get home to her, but when he did finally arrive home he found a 15% interest rate, his house had negative equity and an economy in freefall. His business went into liquidation and he had to go back to square one to find a means of earning a bread and butter income.

This couldn't have happened at a more inconvenient time for James and Julia's blossoming love. Julia's mother died, and at this time when economic chaos ruled and James needed time to regain a sense of direction, she needed all the emotional support he could give. James' entire world was collapsing like a house of cards and he felt an immediate need to do something, but he had no idea what to do. Two major calamities; the loss of his business and Julia's loss of her mother were a bit too much. James knew that sooner rather than later he would lose his lovely home when the mortgage company came to repossess his house. As if in another world of his own creation James bought a van, packed a sleeping bag and his guitar and headed south as far as he could go - to the Greek Island of Crete. It seemed like a very callous thing to do when Julia needed him most, but he was not a callous man and he loved Julia deeply. He had been rendered helpless by external events and it was as if he was being driven by a compulsion - not to escape, but to find something. Or was he being drawn to the island for some reason that was beyond his conscious awareness?

These events had heralded a dramatic and traumatic shift from one cycle to another.

It was when James was on his way to Crete that the next strange experience occurred in relation to the mysterious energy that passed through him. He was on the ferry from Ancona to Patras, sitting in the coffee lounge with his guitar when a Greek crewmember came and sat at his table. The man looked around him furtively as he asked James if he could sit there. James asked him why he seemed so nervous and he told James that he wasn't really allowed to sit with passengers, but he needed a break from the engine room.

The crewman told James that he liked to play the guitar too and asked if he could try his. James handed the sailor the instrument and he began to finger a chord with his left hand. He winced with pain and put the guitar down.

'What's the matter?' asked James.

'My hand hurts,' replied the crewman. 'I trapped it in a machine a few moments ago below in the engine room. That's why I came up here.'

Another opportunity for an experiment, thought James. He asked the crewman to close his eyes so he couldn't see what he was about to do, and to lay his hand on the table. The crewman looked at him puzzled. 'Go on,' prompted James. 'I won't touch you, I promise.' He gave an encouraging smile to the crewman who obliged by putting his hand on the table and trustingly closed his eyes. James placed his hand hovering over the crewman's. After just a few moments he opened his eyes and raised his damaged hand in front of his face. He turned it around then looked straight at James.

'How did you do that?' he demanded.

'Do what?' enquired James.

'The pain has gone. How did you do that?' he repeated. James didn't know how he did it and told the crewman so.

'It's a mystery to me,' he said to the crewman. 'But its good isn't it?'

James sipped his coffee as he pondered these early experiences. There was a link between the healing energy that moved through him and the altered state of consciousness known as trance. Some things happened all by themselves without any intervention or suggestion from James. All he had to do was establish the link between himself and the patient and the energy that flowed through him did the healing. James speculated that consciousness and imagination had something to do with it as well, but it was only speculation. *What is the actual nature of consciousness?* He mused. It would be a very long time, many years in fact before James could finally make the connection, but it was at this point that his education was to begin.

Musing on these memories in the consulting room after Deborah Collins had left, he was still in the dark about such things. His coffee had gone cold and he glanced at the clock on the wall. It was 11.45. He thought he may as well get off over to the hospital for his research, even though it was a little early.

As well as being an independent GP and owner of the clinic where James practised, Samuel Weston was also an endoscopy surgeon at the local hospital. James had known him since his very first year at college when he was taking his entrance exams for university. Because James only had one GCE 'o' level and his army certificate of education (ACE) he needed to take the equivalent of A-levels in biology, psychology, sociology, English, maths, I.T. and counselling at the regional technical college. Part of this preliminary education was to have practical work experience. Dr Weston kindly agreed to accommodate James and allowed him to participate in every single patient consultation for a week, provided they had the patient's consent. James was given the opportunity to demonstrate his healing and hypnotherapeutic abilities there and then. Up until that time he had only been given the opportunity to develop his skills with willing friends and family, except of course for his previous experiences without supervision or training in Crete. Dr Weston, although trained in the use of hypnosis himself never had the time to fit its use into his overburdened schedule. He therefore welcomed the opportunity to see how it could work for those patients that he would have used it on himself if he had the time.

Dr Weston placed his trust in James and together they witnessed some truly remarkable results. With his confidence in James's abilities well established, Samuel Weston had no reservations in offering him the use of a consulting room for rent at £20 per half day and referring those patients with chronic physical or emotional disorders to him. All during the following three years whilst James studied for his degree in psychology he attended the clinic and administered to the doctor's patients. A solid and reliable relationship built between them based on mutual trust and respect.

In James' final year at university he had to complete a research project. Dr Weston had been experimenting with the use of acupuncture as an alternative to diazepam sedation for his endoscopy examinations. An endoscope is an instrument with a small camera lens on the end of a flexible tube that is passed into a patient's digestive system to look for diseases. An upper endoscopy looked at the oesophagus and stomach by being swallowed by the patient, and a lower sigmoidoscopy looked into the bowel via the anal opening. These minor procedures could be conducted whilst the patient was wide-awake and not sedated, but it was extremely unpleasant for some and impossible for many. Therefore, to administer the tranquilliser diazepam was the accepted procedure. James and Dr Weston had often discussed the possibility of using hypnosis as another alternative for patients to choose from,

and as a final-year research project for James' degree, the doctor agreed to allow him to conduct a clinical trial.

This initial trial was a success. James got a good mark for his final year and he and Dr Weston had their research findings published in a medical journal. The publishing of the findings was a real bonus for James. It meant that he had contributed to medical science before even being awarded a doctorate. His confidence in his own abilities together with the trust and support from Dr Weston enabled James to apply for his doctorate at London University and they continued with the project.

James arrived at the hospital half an hour early. The two endoscopy-unit nurses were there busily making their preparation for the arrival of the doctor and their first patient.

'Good morning ladies,' said James as he walked into the outer preparation room and removed his jacket.

Two female voices in unison responded from inside the operating theatre, 'Hello James, you're early.'

'I had a no-show at the clinic,' he replied. 'Fancy a cuppa?'

'Ooooh yes pleease,' came the harmonious reply.

He always made them a mug of hot tea. It saved them the trouble of having to do it themselves when they needed to concentrate on making sure everything was ready. Dr Weston was prone to arrive in a bit of a rush. He would sweep into the unit, shedding his coat as he came, and like a whirlwind arrive in the theatre ready for action and expecting everything to be on the ball and primed. Having someone else make the tea was a welcome relief to the nurses.

James poked his head round the door of the theatre where they were busy. 'How many today?' he asked.

'Six upper and three lower,' came the reply from Sue, the unit staff nurse and senior of the two.

'I'll get the forms through to sister and put the kettle on then,' he said to her.

'Good man,' she said and carried on with her preparations.

James went to the copy room and copied nine complete sets of the trial forms, one for each patient and made his way to the day-ward where there was a little kitchen on the side. He put the kettle on and stepped onto the ward. 'Fancy a cup of tea sister? Kettle's on.'

'Yes please. Got your forms with you?'

'Yep. Here they are.' He offered them to the ward sister as he entered the ward and she put the patients' names and dates of birth in the appropriate place and returned them to him. There were half a dozen people sitting along the wall of the entrance on the other side of the ward from where he entered. They all looked anxious and tired, and when he entered the ward they lifted their gaze towards him with the premature belief that he was the one who was about to stick something down them or up them, as the case may be.

'This is Mr. Parker,' announced the ward sister before any further misconceptions could develop in their minds. 'He is doing some research with the doctor and he has a form for you to look at.'

'Good morning all,' James greeted cheerily as he crossed the ward towards them. 'I would like you to read this please. It is an invitation to participate in a clinical trial we are conducting on the quality of patient care in this unit. You will see that you have a choice of how you can reduce any potential discomfort during your medical examination. You can have the procedure with sedation, acupuncture, or hypnosis, or if you prefer with nothing at all. It's entirely up to you.' he continued as he handed out the forms.

'Let me know which of them choose hypnosis,' he said to the sister as he passed her the remaining forms for those still to arrive and made his way back to the boiling kettle.

Only one of the nine patients had opted for hypnosis for his upper gastrointestinal endoscopy examination. James introduced him into trance and gave him direct suggestions:

'You are aware of everything going on around you. You hear what the doctor and the nurses ask you to do without any reservations. You are in good hands and you are able to relax completely. You are able to swallow easily and without any discomfort. Nothing disturbs you. When you hear the word 'calm' you are completely calm and relaxed. You are aware of the instrument and you feel no discomfort. The word '*calm*' is a command to your entire nervous system to become just that - *caaaalm*. Every time to hear the word calm you become more and more calm and nothing disturbs you. When you are touched on the forehead like this,' James touched his forehead, 'you go into a deep, deep state of relaxation and nothing bothers you. On the count of five you return to full waking consciousness feeling perfectly fine and normal in every way, one, two, three, four, five - eyes open and wide awake.'

James gave the patient time to recover to his normal waking consciousness and then brushed his finger across his forehead. The patient dropped straight into a deep trance. He had confirmed that the patient had accepted his suggestions and would be fine. After bringing the patient back to normal awareness James reassured him and left to return to the operating theatre.

Dr Weston was in the middle of an upper tract examination as James entered. He looked up, peering over his instrument and asked James, 'All OK?'

'Yes,' said James. 'He'll be fine.'

When Dr Weston had finished his examination of the patient on the operating table he handed the endoscope to Carol, the junior nurse, for cleaning whilst Sue, the staff nurse tended to the patient who was slowly coming out of her drugged state. He and James retired to the preparation room adjacent to the operating theatre, and he began recording his findings for the patient's GP. James waited patiently for him to finish. This was about the only time he had a chance to talk to Samuel. He was always rushing around between his surgery, the hospital and visiting his patients, and he never had the time for formal meetings. James had to time it right in order to get Samuel's attention if he wanted to discuss anything of importance. 'Any news yet on the funding of this research?' he asked.

'I have had a letter from the hospital's administration, but I haven't had a chance to read it yet,' Dr Weston replied. 'Remind me before we leave and we'll see what they say. Is your hypnosis man ready?'

'Yes,' replied James. 'Do you want him now?'

'Yes please. Get sister to wheel him in.'

James went to the ward and asked the ward sister to bring the patient, a man in his mid-fifties, and she escorted him from the day-ward with his clinical notes to the prep-room. Dr Weston introduced himself to the patient and asked him to sign the procedure consent form and the research consent form, then led the way to the operating table. The patient then came under the care of Sue, the staff nurse, and she asked him to lie down on the table. Like most patients he was nervous, and the ward sister would have recorded the levels of anxiety prior to the examination in the day ward. Sue reassured the patient as she clipped the oximetre cable to his right index finger. 'This tells us how much oxygen is entering your blood,' she told him. 'And it tells us about your heart rate. OK?'

The patient nodded and allowed Sue to adjust the oximetre cable so it didn't get in the way. Doctor Weston waited, instrument in hand, until Sue had finished settling the patient and smiled at him.

'Are you ready?' he asked, and the patient nodded.

'Ready as I'll ever be I suppose.'

Both he and Dr Weston looked at James in anticipation. James stepped forward and stroked the man's forehead. The patient's eyes closed and he drifted off into his tranquil world. James nodded to the doctor who then asked the patient to swallow as the instrument was placed at the back of his throat.

'Just swallow as if you are drinking a cup of tea,' said the doctor, and the man swallowed the instrument.

James picked up his clipboard with the patient's data form and began making his recordings; start time, oxygen saturation levels, heart rate, ease of intubation, etc. As the instrument passed down towards the stomach, the patient's heart rate started to rise and he became fidgety. There was always a danger that a reflex action by the patient could cause him to try and pull the instrument from his mouth and jump up off the table. Everyone was attuned to this possibility and their senses picked up the slightest degree of distress. Sue was at the patient's head, holding it at the right angle for the instrument and to reassure him, whilst Carol was attending to the doctor's future needs with biopsy sampling equipment standing by.

The patient's heart rate rose to 100 beats per minute and Sue spoke to the patient, 'It's all OK, you are doing very well. Just relax.' The heart rate rose to 105, 110. 'He's getting very agitated,' she said, and Doctor Weston stopped looking down the eyepiece.

He looked at James and asked, 'Is he OK?'

James had been waiting for Sue to use the cue word 'calm' in her reassurances to the patient, but she hadn't said it so far. The heart rate rose to 117 beats per minute and the alarm sounded.

'Tell the patient to be calm,' James whispered into Sue's ear.

'Be calm, it's all right, just relax,' she said to him. Immediately the patient's heart rate dropped like a stone to read 90 beats per minute and stayed there. Sue's jaw dropped open and her eyes popped as she saw the reading on the heart rate monitor and the patient's head became heavy in her hands. 'Bloody

hell!’ she exclaimed. ‘I have never seen anything like it.’ Doctor Weston resumed his examination to completion.

When the whole list of patients had been completed and all the instruments had been put into sterilisation they all retired to the prep-room for a cup of tea. This was the time when they could relax and enjoy a bit of friendly banter. Sue commented, ‘Did you see that heart rate drop? I couldn’t believe it.’

‘That’s the power of direct suggestion,’ said James. I gave the patient what’s known as a post-hypnotic cue. When the cue, which was the word *calm*, was given then he responded to it immediately.’

‘Amazing,’ said Sue. ‘Absolutely amazing.’

The nurses finished their tea and returned to the endoscopy unit to finish putting away the equipment. Dr Weston opened his briefcase and withdrew a letter. James waited patiently. He had waited patiently for a very long time. Since the very first trial for his finals at university had been completed two years previously, they had improved and enhanced their methods to arrive at a very high degree of accuracy in recording data for the project. In the meantime, James had passed two interviews with *London University* and had secured approval and supervision with a senior hypnotist for his PhD and had been offered a post-graduate research place. His acceptance by *London University* was one of those very rare peak experiences that one has in one’s life. The last one James had was when he was appointed by the *United Nations* to go to the Sudan in 1990. At that time, he couldn’t reconcile the fact that the peak experience of going to the Sudan was immediately followed by the total collapse of his entire world.

James’s objective in gaining his doctorate depended on two things; a grant to cover his living expenses and tuition supervision fees and agreement from the local area health authority for him to use their patients and their hospital resources. The letter that Dr Weston opened was from the administrator of the clinical effectiveness department, in response to James’s submission of the pilot study report and a request for support for the project. Without this support there would be no research, no *London University* and no doctorate.

All correspondence regarding the project was channelled through Dr Weston’s practice where it was less likely to get lost in the system than at the hospital. Dr Weston read the letter aloud:

‘Dear Mr. Parker,

Thank you for sending me a copy of your report, which I found heavy reading. I would like to see an executive summary written in plain English. I think it would be worthwhile summarising the very clear outcomes you found from your research. It is always better if someone like me can immediately switch to a bulleted list of results / recommendations / outcomes.

I wish you well in the future and hope you achieve your ambitions.

Yours sincerely’

Without actually saying a clear and categorical ‘no’ to James’s request, the last sentence said it all. James and Samuel looked at each other in disbelief.

‘That is a very rude letter,’ said Samuel.

‘The NHS is full of very rude people,’ said James. Although his objective was to be a doctor of psychology, he had no intention to be a part of the NHS. He despised the bureaucracy and the internal politics. James empathised with all those caring professionals, the doctors, nurses and consultants whose mission in life was to heal the sick but were forced to submit to political and financial pressures from above. He had been passed from pillar to post in his attempts to get his project approved for his doctorate, and he had found to his amazement that trying to find a way through the bureaucratic maze was much, much harder than doing the actual research itself. And it was making him tired.

‘What do you suggest we do now?’ he asked Samuel.

Dr Weston hunched his shoulders, turned down the corners of his mouth and spread his hands in a ‘how do I know?’ sort of gesture. James sat with his elbows on his knees and although his eyes pointed towards a spot on the floor, they weren’t focused on anything. He began to feel a futility for all the hard work he had put in since 1994 when he first enrolled for his studies to become recognised for his

natural healing abilities. It was now 2000. Six years of mental torture and patience had just been dismissed by the ignorance of a hospital administrator.

Chapter 3

A Very Special Gift

That night, as James drove up to Birmingham he tried hard to check his frustration and his anger. Here he was; still driving a truck for a living at the age of 53 after having been through all those other changes and challenges. He was an experienced transport manager and consultant, he had a natural leaning towards helping his fellow man with sickness and he had the ability to go the full distance and get his PhD. He had knowledge, experience and an understanding of the world that was beyond the normal everyday imagination of the majority of his fellow drivers. Yet here he was still doing what he was doing to earn a living when he had been only twenty-two years old. He felt deeply embittered at the waste and the futility of it all, and he resented having to continue with driving trucks for a living. He knew he was worth more than that, and he decided that he was not going to be a truck driver all his life. After all, it wasn't through the lack of trying, or a lack of ability that kept bringing him back. He began to feel that time was running short and he could feel the anger rising from the pit of his stomach to his chest. He breathed deeply to disperse the energy around his body and decided he couldn't give up now. This avenue may be closed but there had to be another one.

There was absolutely no way he was going to do this for the rest of his life. He aimed the truck forwards along the M6, brought his mind back to conscious awareness from automatic pilot and handed the problem over to his sub-conscious to solve for him. He listened to the music on the radio and identified the piece playing – Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity from the Planets by Gustav Holst. *Must be the evening concert*, he thought. *Shit, I've missed Mars and Venus*. He settled down to listen to the rest of the suite, and by the time he reached his destination at 11 p.m. he was back into relaxed mode as a professional truck driver.

Under normal circumstances, James would have attended the endoscopy unit at the hospital for his research at 10 p.m. on Saturday morning. But with the news that the project wasn't being supported there didn't seem any point. It was a pity because over the past three years he had become a part of the endoscopy unit team and everyone knew and accepted him as part of the team. All the nurses, who took turns in the endoscopy unit, together with all the nurses whose shifts changed on the day-ward, and even the senior consultant surgeon came to know James well. The research programme had actually become a habit, not just for James but all the others as well.

At first it had been very hard for any of the nurses to accept changes in their routines by having to take readings, issue forms and record extra information for James's project. It had been an exercise in patience and diplomacy, as well as practical application of some psychological techniques that he had learned in how to encourage others to respond to change. Eventually all the nurses had relinquished their resistance to change and had accepted requests from James to help him with his research. The fact that the senior consultant surgeon and the senior ward sister supported his work must have had a lot to do with their acceptance and compliance. However, as time marched on they all enjoyed working with James and they all came to like having him as part of their team. He was tempted to carry on as part of the habit, a bit like the man who retired from work but still left the house every day to go to work because he couldn't get out of the habit. Not going to the hospital every Saturday and letting his research project go was going to be a wrench. On the other hand, he could have a lie in on Saturday and surface from the Land of Nod when his system had rested enough. There was no doubt about it; James was beginning to get very, very tired with the kind of tiredness that makes one weary.

The weariness was still with him when he awoke at midday the next day. Normally he would have been at the hospital now and would have spent the afternoon entering the data from the past two days and looking at the statistical significance and interpretations of the findings. But today James had time to himself. It seemed very strange to him. His research project had been his creation, like a baby of his own, and it was going to die. He dragged himself from his bed to put the kettle on and run a bath, as he wondered what he would do with the empty time that the research had occupied.

He made his tea and sat in the bath. Then it hit him like a punch in the guts. He had never had the time to grieve the loss of his beloved Julia because he had been swept along firstly by the force of events in Crete, then his focus on his studies at university and then the research. These activities had taken up all of his time and energy for the past seven years, and suddenly, with the loss of his research there was a void. There was an emptiness that triggered the deep emotional loss that he had not had the time to express when he discovered that Julia had married someone else. But the time had now come to let go of all that emotional energy. He released it there and then, in private and in full – and his heart broke.

James Parker did not like loose ends, so that afternoon he entered the last batch of data from the last day and looked at it. Then he closed the file and put it away in his filing cabinet as he considered the possibility of going out for a breath of air. Just then he caught a glimpse of Penny as she passed the window and knocked the front door.

Penny always swept in like a storm force wind and gushed around the place with incessant chatter. She was a very attractive woman and looked a lot younger than her age, which was the same age as James. They had met at church when James had returned from Crete and when Julia and he had finally gone their separate ways. Penny had stepped into the physical space that Julia had vacated, but she had never taken Julia's place in James's affections. In fact, James's relationship with Penny had always been a bit of a game, with his capture being the objective and Penny being the huntress. With Penny he was always on the defensive.

She had been fun to be with at the start, but James had soon realised that Penny was a drain on his energy and his time. He actually called her a 'time-thief' at one point and demanded that she give him space to breathe. For six years now, James had been trying to get Penny to take another direction and let him go his own way, but she just simply refused to listen.

After the events of the past couple of days, Penny demanding his time and energy was the last thing James needed, but he always found it near impossible to be rude to her and ask her to go away – no matter how hard he tried. On those rare occasions when his frustration pushed him into it she would just brush it off anyway and say, 'You know you don't mean it.'

James was a very good hypnotist and a very understanding and empathic therapist, and he had used his skills often in an attempt to get to the bottom of Penny's emotional drives and needs. He would get so far and then he would realise that she was only playing a game with him. He never openly challenged her fraudulent posturing directly but allowed her the freedom to continue to protect her vulnerability in this way. However, on one occasion he did catch her off her guard and he asked her what she was most afraid of. She gave some plausible answer, as we all do in response to such a question, but James knew that it was not a truthful answer. But his strategy was to set a trap, and she walked right into it. 'What are you most afraid of?' she had suddenly asked him.

'Do you really want to know?' He asked her. 'Are you sure you really want to know what I am afraid of?' he repeated. Penny knew by his tone and his sincerity that what she would get from him was the truth. She knew that James was as honest about his emotions as any man she had ever met. This was part of the attraction. With James Parker what you saw was what you got.

'Yes,' she replied. 'Tell me.'

He hesitated. She had walked right into the trap he had set for her and now he was about to spring it on her. 'What I am most afraid of,' he began with some trepidation, 'Is that when the time comes for you and I to go our separate ways – you will not have the resources you will need in order to deal with it.'

He felt awful as he watched her face crumble before his very eyes. This was why it had taken so long for him to get his message across to her that he saw no future in them as a pair. He hated the idea of causing pain to anyone. He had hated being a witness to Julia's pain when her mother had died, and he had hated himself for not being able to comfort her at that time. The very idea that his going to Crete when she needed him most had caused her pain was too much for him to contemplate. He despised the very idea that he could be a cause of pain to anyone with such vulnerabilities. He despised himself now because he had made Penny cry. But it was the price he had to pay for making her hear the truth. Too many people live a lie and pretend to be in relationships that are not meant to be in.

By her response to his statement of what he feared most, James knew what Penny feared most – being alone. The idea was such anathema that it was not acceptable to her. She therefore recovered

her composure, ignored the fact that her vulnerability had been exposed, and carried on as if nothing had happened. ‘What shall we do tonight?’ she asked him with a saucy smile and batted her eyelids. He hated it when she did that. It was contrived and unnatural. Penny was wearing her mask again, but a time was rapidly approaching that would rip that mask from her face and another side of Penny would be exposed to James that he had never dreamed existed.

‘Are you all right?’ asked Penny when she detected that James wasn’t quite himself.

James drew on his inner reserves and replied, ‘Oh I’m OK. A bit disappointed that’s all. The hospital administration is not supporting my research and I’m feeling a bit low.’ She sympathised with him, knowing how hard he had worked.

‘Why don’t we go to the pub and relax a bit?’ she said. ‘It’ll do you good to unwind.’ He didn’t really fancy the idea, but it did make sense. So that’s what they did.

The next few days slipped by with James trying come to terms with the idea that he had lost his opportunity to go to London University for his PhD. But there was no way he was going to give up and settle for driving to Birmingham and back every night for the rest of his working life. As he headed on up the M1 his thoughts wandered to a case he was dealing with that intrigued him, and that he needed to find a solution for.

Sarah was in her mid-thirties and in her second marriage. She had one daughter from her previous marriage and she suffered from chronic depression. James had learned that it saves a lot of time if an investigation into the cause of a problem is embarked upon as quickly as possible rather than going into a detailed history first and then trying to work out what the problem is from the history. James had found through experience that the direct route to the cause of a problem was always through the subconscious, but with Sarah this had not been possible. He just could not get her into an altered state and he could not get her to relax. He had tried every technique known to him to get her into a trance but without any success, and he had run out of ideas.

Driving long distances at night was the ideal job for thinking or studying. As a young man with a family, when James had wanted to progress from driving to transport management, he had to sit a series of five examinations over a two-year period. But because he used his driving time for mental revision he was able to pass all exams within six months. The ability to focus one’s attention on a problem whilst the subconscious drove the truck was a trick that James had been using for a very long time, and it was very useful. When James pointed the truck in the right direction for his destination, his mind wandered the highways and byways of hidden consciousness to learn other things. But when the solution to a problem was not forthcoming then he would turn the procedure around. He would return his conscious awareness to the road and let his unconscious processes provide him with an answer to his question. The question usually had to be a specific one, but often an inspired thought or a piece of new information would pop into his mind without any kind of prompting on his part. James had come to regard this ability as a very special gift that had been given to him and he valued it greatly.

The receiving of this gift had been one of the most significant and far reaching experiences that James had in Crete. He had been driving his van up the mountainside to his campsite. As he was driving along a thought came into his mind. It was his name – James. It wasn’t a voice talking to him – it was just a thought. It wasn’t like being called by name by someone. No – it was just a name. Not his name, but just a name. James.

He arrived at his remote campsite in the mountains by a bubbling stream shaded by wild figs, olive and lime trees. He parked his van as close as he could get to his camp and walked the rest of the way, over an ancient Roman bridge into his sanctuary. The tranquillity of this place was palpable, and the moment anyone stepped across the old Roman Bridge they became aware of a kind of enchantment. It was indeed enchanted, but James had only recently arrived here and he was still not aware of the significance of the place. He could smell the wild herbs and hear the loud chorus of the cicadas as he approached his tent, and an irresistible impulse gripped him. He went to his tent and rummaged around his bags until he found what he was looking for – a book that was given to him as a gift from a very special friend, Renate who lived in Germany. He had stopped off on his way from England to Crete just to say hello, and she had given him this gift. It was very special to her and she wanted him to have it. It was her Bible, and it had notes written in the margins and verses marked out in highlighter all the way through it. Renate hadn’t just read this Bible, she had studied it.

Renate had wanted James to pray with her before he continued his journey, but not being a religious man, he declined the offer. He didn't realise it at the time, but his decline to pray with her had hurt her deeply. She cared for James. They had been friends for many years and he had rescued her from her deep grief when her husband had died suddenly. She had given him her most treasured possession and asked her God to guide him and keep him safe on his journey. James had no idea what was going through Renate's mind or what she was feeling. In his naiveté he accepted the gift just to please her and continued his journey in total and complete ignorance. A man lost and trying to find his way with no idea where he was going. In the picture-book language of the ancient Tarot, he was The Fool – innocent, naïve and very vulnerable.

James found Renate's gift to him and it fell open in his hands at the *Book of James*. He couldn't believe his eyes as they fixed on the page and read the title and the name in large black print, 'THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES'. He recovered his senses and began to read the part that had been highlighted in yellow marker:

5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him.

6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord (James, 1:5-6).

James was stunned. He sank onto his haunches and stared at the page in front of him, not knowing what to do or think.

He had been asking himself since arriving in Crete, *What the bloody hell am I doing here?* He had left his beloved Julia to grieve for her mother alone, and here he was living in paradise with no responsibilities and nothing to do. He had completely lost all sense of direction, and now this. *What is going on here?* He asked himself out loud. In so doing, he had spoken a question. He had asked for wisdom. And now he was being told how to ask. His spiritual awakening was about to begin. He was blind and in the dark, and his journey had begun. He just hadn't been consciously aware of it.

By the time James came face to face once again with Sarah he still hadn't received an answer to his question, *how do I get this woman into trance?* His skills were being tested and he didn't have the answers – yet. So, he began his enquiry by interviewing her about what troubled her. He learned that she'd had a stillbirth, some sixteen years earlier. At the recollection of this event in her past Sarah broke into tears. She still hadn't come to terms with this loss and it was still affecting her deeply. James was not a psychotherapist or a professional bereavement counsellor, so he didn't feel qualified to deal with this situation, but something was urging him to prompt her further. He was pressing on a boundary out of curiosity more than anything else and wanted to know why this woman was so troubled after such a long time.

'Tell me,' he began. 'How did you feel at the time about the loss of your baby?' She stopped crying and he watched her face go stony. She sat upright in the chair and straightened her back.

'I was angry,' she said as she stared unblinking at an imaginary spot in front of her.

'With whom?' asked James.

'With *HIM*! He should have *known*!' She spat it with a venom that caused James to be quite taken aback.

'With whom? Who should have known what?' He asked her.

'The doctor of course,' she replied as if it was obvious who she should be angry with. 'He should have known there was a risk. I had pleurisy and he should have known it and he should have taken precautions. But he didn't and my baby died.'

James looked at Sara and watched her cold, emotionless face. He didn't know what to say next. Sara continued in a new matter-of-fact tone of voice. 'He had to suffer too. It was his entire fault and I wanted him to know what it feels like. So, I wished the same thing to happen to him. His wife was having a baby too. And she lost hers just like I did. Now he knew how it felt.'

James was having a little trouble believing what he was hearing. He heard himself say, 'Did that make it alright then?'

'No,' said Sarah. 'After all, it wasn't his wife's fault was it? It was *his* fault, and something should have happened to *him* – not to her. He should have lost an eye or a leg or something.'

James sat in stunned silence. He couldn't believe what he was hearing, and he couldn't believe the coldness with which she said it. It was like another person sitting there. One minute he had been talking to a woman who was expressing a powerful emotion, and the next he sat opposite a cold and unfeeling one.

James's questions had led to other questions and he began to realise that he was entering into an arena that he was not at all familiar with. It was time for some research reading before he could understand the processes that were at work with Sarah. Her coldness was one thing. A cold and unfeeling façade was often a mask to hide real feelings that were too strong or too painful to deal with in the open, and he could understand the reason for her depression. That was caused by anger that still hadn't been resolved and satisfactorily expressed. But what troubled him most was the simple fact that Sarah had wished something towards another person and that wish had come true. This was outside of anything he had read in the realms of psychotherapy and psychology. This was the stuff of curses. But this was not fantasy or fiction. What James had witnessed was a normal human being who had been through a traumatic and emotional experience, and through a need for revenge, she had cursed someone and caused another family severe harm, even to the death of a child.

Some very serious research reading was called for, but where was James to start? He remembered being told at school by one of his teachers, a Mr. Van Heerden from South Africa, that curses and black magic only work if you believed in such things. Van Heerden had said that it was the *belief* that was the power behind the curse. In modern medicine and psychology this belief is what has become known as the placebo effect and is always acknowledged and taken into account in clinical trials to test medical remedies. There is no doubt that beliefs are a very powerful form of influence on human behaviour. But no, not in this case. The doctor's wife who lost her baby had had no contact with Sara and could not possibly have known of any thought or feeling that Sarah was having at the time. There was another explanation; and it was not coincidence. There were two principals that James had to investigate in order to get to the truth of this, firstly the nature of evil, and secondly the power of a directed thought. But surely this was in the realm of science fiction or fantasy. *Wasn't it?*

The first book that James came across in his search for an answer to this puzzle was written by an American psychiatrist by the name of M. Scott Peck. It was entitled *The Road Less Travelled* and set out to explore the relationships between human love, traditional values and spiritual growth. This was the first book that James had discovered where at last a scientifically trained psychiatrist was actually acknowledging the spiritual dimension of human experience.

The act of willing the death of a child, as witnessed by James during his interview with Sara, was judged by himself to be evil, and M Scott Peck had something to say about evil:

Because most of us have been graced by an almost instinctive sense of horror at the outrageousness of evil, when we recognise its presence, our own personalities are honed by the awareness of its existence. Our consciousness of it is a signal to purify ourselves. It was evil, for instance, that raised Christ to the cross, thereby enabling us to see him from afar. Our personal involvement in the fight against evil in the world is one of the ways we grow.¹

On reading this passage, James was transported back to Crete. He had no conscious awareness of what he was experiencing at that time, but since he had returned and had been educated in the science of psychology, and had gone into therapeutic practice, all the experiences he'd had in Crete were beginning to make sense, albeit very slowly as time passed by. In the beginning he had been shown how to relieve physical pain simply by placing his hand over the affected part. The pain disappeared without his knowing how or why. Then he had progressed to understanding emotional pain, more through his own experiences than anything he had learned at university. Now it seemed as if he were being taken to a new dimension – into the darker workings of the human spirit. His experience with Sara triggered his recall of some of his Cretan experiences as his mind wandered back to that time and place:

She had been like a light in the dark, a beacon of friendship on a strange and foreign shore. Sophia was Greek but had been married to an American and had lived in America for some years. On her divorce

¹ {Peck 1978:299}

she had decided to return to Greece; not to her home in the Peloponnese, but for some obscure reason to Crete. A very attractive 50 something, she had made James welcome at the small taverna in the village in the mountains where he had found his peaceful little campsite. Sophia always had a smile on her face and a friendly welcome for all who passed through the village and stopped at the taverna.

Sophia and James soon became friends and with his van he had helped her with the tasks of collecting stores for the taverna from the town down the mountain on the coast seven kilometres away. Their friendship was strictly platonic. He was still in love with, and very attached to Julia back home in the UK, but Sophia saw in James someone she could trust.

Time passed in the idyllic village up in the mountains, and James became known to all thirty-five of the villagers whose homes were scattered and hidden amongst the olive and orange groves, and he came to hear the local news and gossip of the village. The local people did not like Sophia. She presented herself as a Catholic whereas the locals were all Greek Orthodox. She painted her face with makeup and made herself look attractive to the men, whilst at the same time she wore a full-length black cape and a huge crucifix hanging from her neck. When she went to the church in the town on the coast she would make an open exhibition of herself by walking down the main isle and in front of the entire congregation she would prostrate herself in the shape of a cross in front of the altar. The local people did not like this at all and they were suspicious of her.

James was warned by people to be careful whom he associated with and taking their advice he kept his distance from this woman as far as was practical.

The locals' distrust of the Sophia woman grew until she was eventually thrown out of the village. She came to James' campsite and asked if she could stay with him. He'd had many visitors and guests stay with him at his enchanted campsite, some of them had been young women who had been left destitute by unscrupulous or alcoholic boyfriends. He had helped them and treated them with respect and when they had recovered sufficiently he helped them on their way. There was one such young woman called Anna that he was caring for at the time. But he was reluctant to accommodate the evicted Sophia, so he asked his friend Manolis in the town if he could recommend a place for her to stay. Manolis not only found her a place to stay but also gave her a job in his harbour-side cafe so that she could pay the rent.

James was making preparations to return to England to sort out some of his unfinished business affairs, and to see Julia again. He agreed to take Anna with him because she had been left stranded by her boyfriend without any money and she had no way of getting home. Another Englishman, Dave, who had come to live in Crete with his wife and two children also wanted to return to the UK to collect his car and drive it back to Crete. They were planning their journey at Manolis café when Sophia came and sat with them.

'Oh, are you going to England then?' she asked.

'Yes,' replied James. 'Just for a visit. I have some business to attend to, David here wants to collect a car and Anna needs a lift home as she has no money.'

'Would you have enough room for me then?' asked Sophia. 'I have to get back to the States to collect my divorce settlement and I don't have enough money to fly from here to Athens, and then to London for the connection to America. Can I come with you?' she pleaded.

James and the other two; David and Anna, all looked at each other. Then James looked up to see Manolis beckon him from inside the kitchen. James excused himself and left the table to go to see what Manolis wanted. 'What is it?' he asked.

'If she wants to go to America then you take her. We need to get this woman out of here.' said Manolis.

'Why? What for? Is there a problem Manolis?'

'Yes, there is,' came the reply. 'She isn't trusted here. She is telling people that the villagers on the mountain tried to kill her and threw her out of the village with violence. She goes around showing everyone her bruises, and then there's the business with the children.'

'What business - with what children?' asked James with a rising degree of concern. 'Manolis what are you talking about?'

'She offers to look after children when their parents are busy, but they have learned that she is trying to change their religious beliefs. You know the people here are very strict Orthodox and they don't like the idea of someone trying to teach them different. You have to get her out of here before they do something to her.'

James got the message. He went back to the table and sat down. The other two looked at him and David said, 'What did Manolis want?'

James didn't answer, but turned to Sophia and said, 'You want to go to England with us?' He looked at the other two in turn. He had asked the question as if to say to them that he had already made up his mind to take her. Before she could answer he said, 'OK, we leave on Tuesday morning early. We have to catch the ferry from Chania to Piraeus. It's a five-day journey to England. Pack only what you will need and keep it light.'

Chapter 4

Encounter on a Swiss Mountain

The journey took James and his three passengers from the South West Coast of Crete across the White Mountains to the port of Chania in the North. From there they caught the ferry to Piraeus; the ferry port just outside Athens on the mainland of Greece. The crossing took twelve hours overnight and after an uncomfortable night sleeping on benches in the passenger lounge they disembarked at Piraeus where they took breakfast in the town. Then they had to drive across the Corinth Canal and along the Northern Coast of the Peloponnese, which was the home of the woman Sophia, to the port of Patras to catch the ferry to Ancona in Italy. This journey took the best part of another day, and by the time they had embarked on the ferry to Ancona they were all in need of the good night's sleep they were to receive in the comfortable cabins of the ferry.

The ferry crossing from Patras to Ancona took thirty-six hours, which gave James and his passengers a chance to relax, enjoy the exhilarating ozone of the ocean and to talk.

Anna and David were a little unhappy at having to sit in the back of the van all the time, whilst Sophia enjoyed the comparative comfort of the front passenger seat next to James. It did seem a fair complaint and James had noticed that Sophia had been a little selfish in this respect. The back of the van wasn't too well ventilated and there were no seats. James was used to long distance driving and rarely stopped unless it was absolutely necessary. This meant that his passengers in the back had to suffer long periods without respite. James decided it was time for proper sharing of comfort and discomfort. He told David that he could take a spell of driving when they left Ancona and headed North, and he would take the passenger seat. This would mean that Sophia had to go into the back of the van. From then on, they would all take turns in the passenger seat.

When the ferry docked at Ancona and everyone went to their vehicles ready for disembarkation, James unlocked the van and entered the passenger side. He leaned across and opened the driver's door for David to get in and handed over the keys as he opened the rear compartment for the ladies. He saw the look on Sophia's face. She had a face like thunder and looked as if she would explode in that instant. James looked straight at her and said, 'Come on, chop, chop, we haven't got all day. We'll be rolling off in a minute.'

Maintaining as much dignity as she could muster, Sophia climbed into the back of the van and began to make a fuss over the business of making herself comfortable. She was furious but she knew she had no recourse to complain. Young Anna stepped into the van and positioned herself as far away from Sophia as possible.

From Ancona on the Adriatic they had to drive up the length of Italy and cross the Swiss Alps at a place high in the mountains called Andermatt. The journey had taken all day, and James and David had taken turns driving.

Anna never complained, but as the journey progressed James thought it only fair that she should have the opportunity to ride up front. He called a halt for refreshments, and after they had eaten some Gorgonzola cheese with Parma ham, pitta bread and espresso coffee, he offered Anna the front passenger seat. She was delighted and gratefully accepted, as Sophia silently seethed.

Andermatt was a fashionable ski resort in the Winter, but in the Summer, all was quiet and rooms were available at a good low price. The party booked in with the two men in one room and the ladies in another. After a quick shower, James and David retired to the bar for some food and a quiet beer. After about half an hour had past Anna came into the bar and sat down with them next to James. She was crying. 'What's the matter?' asked James.

'I'm sorry,' said Anna, 'but I just can't take any more. I thought Sophia was my friend. She was so kind to me in Crete, but on this trip, she has done nothing but pick on me. I can't put up with her any more. She's driving me crazy. I don't know what to do.'

James put his arm across her shoulders and ordered her a drink. 'She has to learn that she is no better than anyone else,' said James. 'And you have to learn to stand up for yourself. Tell her what

you have just told me, but not from a position of desperation. Tell her from a position of strength. Tell her that you are not prepared to put up with her attitude any longer and to leave you alone.' He gave her shoulder a squeeze and said, 'Relax and finish your drink.'

Anna finished her drink and went back to the room she shared with Sophia to finish what she had tried to begin, to have a shower and refresh herself after the journey. After a few short moments Sophia came into the bar and sat down beside James in the same seat that Anna had occupied. 'I really can't put up with that young woman any longer,' she said. 'I can't even have a bath in peace without her fussing around and complaining.'

James turned to her and said, 'Sophia. Please listen to me very carefully, because I want you to understand very clearly what I have to say. You are a guest on this journey, just as Anna is. You have paid no fare and you have been treated fairly and equally the same as the others. I want you to stop picking on Anna as if she is in your way. Please treat her with respect, because if you don't; if I have any more trouble with you this night I will leave you here on this mountain. I have no obligation to take you anywhere. I am doing you and the others a favour at my own expense and I expect you all to behave with respect to each other. Have I made myself perfectly clear?' Without waiting for her to reply to his rhetorical question, James continued, 'Now please make your peace with Anna and leave David and I to enjoy our beer.'

He turned away from her and waited for her to leave. She left without saying a word, and the two men breathed a long hard sigh.

James and David had a light supper in the bar without any further disturbance and started up the stairs to their room. As they neared the floor where the two rooms were adjacent to each other they heard a strange wailing sound. They looked at each other wondering what on earth could make such a sound in a ski lodge in the Swiss mountains. Their blood ran cold to the sound of the wailing as they stepped onto the landing and looked through the open door to Anna and Sophia's room. Sophia was sitting cross-legged on her bed and Anna was sat a few feet away on hers with a look of astonishment on her face. Sophia was wailing and rocking herself to and fro.

James and David stood in the doorway transfixed in disbelief. Sophia's wailing changed to a babble in a tongue that James had never heard before. It wasn't a language known to him from all his previous travels through Europe and the Middle East. This language didn't sound right, and as he watched with fascination, Sophia's face contorted into a grimace and her eyes rolled back until the pupils disappeared under their lids. David gripped James by the arm and James could feel him tremble. Anna was transfixed. But James experienced two unusual sensations. The first was a complete absence of fear. He felt the fear in David as he tried to get James away from the door, but James stood his ground and felt the second strange sensation rising through his entire body. He felt as if he were armed with a sword and a shield. His feet were rooted to the spot and he felt a tremendous power surge through his body. He felt fearless and invincible, like a gladiator or an ancient warrior. It was the most amazing sensation he had ever experienced.

After what seemed like a very long time, but was probably only a few moments, Sophia's babbling stopped and she returned to her normal self. Anna looked relieved and David released his grip from James's arm. They all looked at each other. Then James asked Sophia, 'Are you all right?'

'Yes,' she said. 'A little tired perhaps.'

He turned to Anna and wondered how she felt about staying the night in a room alone with Sophia. 'How about you Anna? Are you OK?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'I'll be alright now.'

'Good,' said James. 'Get a good night's sleep both of you. Breakfast at seven and we leave at eight. Good night.'

James and David retired to their own room and closed the door. 'What the bloody hell was that all about?' said David.

'I have absolutely no idea,' replied James. 'Get some sleep.' David got undressed and into his bed and James went to the door and opened it just an inch or so. 'Just in case,' he said in answer to David's questioning look. They slept undisturbed until 6.30 when the internal telephone gave them their wake-up call.

Breakfast was a silent affair, with each absorbed in his or her own thoughts of the previous night. Sophia had been put in her place by both James and, in the privacy of their own room, by Anna. It appeared to James that Sophia's response to Anna's assertiveness had been her transformation into something that he had no understanding of. What still fascinated him was his own reaction to what he

witnessed. It was as if he had experienced similar phenomena before, in another time and place but beyond his conscious memory. The total absence of fear and the feeling of invincibility fascinated and enthralled him.

That day they travelled across the Swiss Alps, down into Eastern France and, instead of making straight for the English Channel, James turned to the North-East to make a diversion and visit his dear friend Renate in Germany.

James had long considered Renate to be, in his modest opinion, the most good of all the women he had met. He knew, from his knowledge of Renate's life and by her actions that she was by definition a 'good woman', in the true sense of the word. When he thought of Renate he thought of the word 'good', and he was reminded what the word spelled with one of the 'o's taken out - god. Renate was good beyond the normal meaning of the word. She was '*Good*', and James often thought of her as an angel in disguise, or as a 'divine human being'.

She'd had no warning of their arrival. James and his vanload of passengers turned up on Renate's doorstep out of the blue, but she welcomed them all with open arms as if she had known them for years. If they were with James then they were OK, was her attitude. She made them welcome, fed them and gave them all a bed for the night. Renate had been a wife and a mother to four children in earlier years. But with her husband gone and all her four children grown up and living their own lives, she lived alone in a large house with room to spare for guests.

When they had all eaten and Renate had shown everyone to their rooms, she and James went for a quiet walk by themselves. Their relationship had been a strange one, but it had a magical quality to it. They had met in Sorrento, Italy when James had been attending a transport conference. Her eldest son Thomas had sent her there on holiday because she had, in Thomas's opinion, been grieving the loss of her dead husband for too long. 'You have to learn to live again Mother,' he had scolded her, and booked her on a bus excursion to stay at the same hotel where James's conference was being held. She had no choice and was packed off to enjoy herself.

James had been dressed for a formal dinner and had walked into the hotel lounge to meet with his pals from the transport press for a pre-dinner drink. Renate was sitting at the bar - *an elegant woman, no - a lady*, thought James when he saw her. He felt that she was out of place sitting at a hotel bar all alone. It made him feel uncomfortable for her. His pals hadn't yet arrived, and he and Renate were the only ones in the room. James offered her a polite, 'Good evening,' and turned to the barman to order his drink.

'Good evening,' she had replied with reciprocal politeness. *An attractive woman*, thought James. *German, I think by the accent.* 'I am waiting for my friends, he said to her, 'they are not here yet and I don't feel comfortable to drink alone. Can I get you something?'

She smiled shyly and raised her hand in defence. 'No thank you,' she said. Just then the press pack arrived and James's attention turned to his friends. 'Have a nice evening,' he had said to the handsome lonely woman sitting by herself at the bar, and he felt sad for her as he joined his friends.

The very next evening, at about the same time as before, James walked into the same bar lounge. There was only one person in there. She sat on a sofa with her back to him and the door through which he had entered, and she was gazing at the incredible scene before her through a huge picture window that occupied the entire wall of the bar lounge. She was watching the sun set behind the volcano of Vesuvius across the Bay of Naples. James stood in the doorway as he too watched the sun setting on the most beautiful scene he had ever seen. They were both transfixed by the scene that was spread out before them through the window as the crimson red of the sun ever deepened as it lowered itself behind the volcano.

She had heard him enter the room behind her, and she knew who it was without having to look round. She had heard his footsteps come to a halt in the doorway and she knew that he too was watching the sun set behind the volcano. As the sun slipped below the rim of the mountain in a blaze of red, orange and gold, she turned her head to address him. 'I'll have that drink now,' she said. 'A tonic-water please.'

James went to the bar and ordered her a tonic-water and a scotch and dry-ginger for himself and returned to where she had remained seated. He offered her the glass and she offered him the seat beside her and they both turned their gaze back to the Bay of Naples, bathed in the golden afterglow from the sunset.

Many years later, and sharing a deep and lasting friendship, James had asked Renate what it was that enabled her to connect with him at that time in Sorrento. 'It was your eyes,' she had replied. 'You

had the most beautiful eyes. They reflected the colours of the sunset over the Bay of Naples, and there was so much peace and compassion in them. I knew then that I could talk to you.'

Renate had been the one who had first introduced James to Crete. She had a daughter who had gone there for a holiday, and much to the horror of her husband, had fallen in love with a local man and decided to stay and marry him. Renate's husband had never been able to accept this and had refused to acknowledge her right up to the time of his sudden death by heart attack. Renate wanted to see her daughter again and to meet her Greek husband and her granddaughter who she had never seen, and her husband's family who lived in the mountains. She asked James to accompany her. That was when James's journey had really first begun. The very first time he had stepped onto the soil of Crete, in 1987.

Renate and James had left Anna, Sophia and David to themselves in the comfort of Renate's house. They walked arm in arm as good friends do, and she asked him what he was up to. He told her the reasons for his own trip back to the UK and the reasons for each of the others in turn.

'That woman is evil,' she said to him.

'What? Who is evil? What do you mean?' he asked her.

'The Greek woman,' she replied. 'She is an evil woman. You must have nothing to do with her.'

James recalled the previous night on the mountain in Switzerland and he began to understand. Not much, but a little. There was something evil about the woman. The locals in Crete didn't trust her and they wanted her out of the way. Even Sophia herself had reported that the Greek Orthodox Archbishop had called her evil, and she couldn't understand why. This is where James education about evil had begun, but there was still a long way to go.

James forgot about his PhD research as his mind focused on Sarah's case. He had been reminded of his first encounter with evil as it had been hidden behind a mask of goodness in Sophia. He hadn't known at that time what to do; only that he hadn't been afraid as David and Anna had been. If he was to learn how to help Sarah then he had to learn how to deal with this dark side that dwelt beneath the surface, or was it something else? Was it something that affected the individual from outside? Was it an evil force?

The search for answers filled the gap that his practical research at the hospital had left, and he began to read all he could find on this mystery. The famous psychologist, Dr Carl Gustav Jung was a good source of material about the 'shadow', or 'dark side' of the human psyche, but the Jungian material he had read didn't have the answers he was looking for. It was much later, when he was researching for his new PhD, that James discovered Jung's little-known writings on the subject, but at that time all he had access to was Jung's popular writings. Freud had been strictly an atheist and his theories didn't recognise the spiritual side of human experience. From what James was reading at the time, he concluded that Freud failed to acknowledge the significance of religious experiences and, as it appeared to James that he was a little too obsessed with aberrant sexuality. Eventually he found a book written by a Swiss psychiatrist by the name of Dr Hans Naegeli-Osjord, entitled, *Possession and Exorcism*. Here was a book with a content that shook James to the core. The sub-title was *Understanding the Human Psyche in Turmoil*, and it was here that he found a solution to Sarah's problem.

James had a consultation with Sarah booked for that week, and he telephoned her to ask if her husband would be bringing her to the clinic. She had replied in the affirmative, and when she arrived at the appointed time he went into the waiting room and asked her husband to join them. Sitting opposite them both, James explained.

'I've had to do a lot of research reading in order to understand the nature of the problem we are dealing with here, and I need you to open your minds to possibilities that you may find hard to accept. But please bear with me. This is new to me too.' Sarah's husband nodded and James sensed Sarah's discomfort in her defensive body-language. He was touching a nerve in her that began to trigger a defensive posture.

'Do you believe in God? He directed his question to the husband.

'Yes,' he replied. 'We both go to church regularly.'

‘Good,’ said James. ‘I want you to say the Lord's Prayer with me.’ Sarah shrank back in her chair and began to show more obvious signs of distress.

Ignoring her reaction, James began and prompted the husband to accompany him in the prayer. Sarah was becoming increasingly agitated, and then James read another prayer that he had copied from the writings of Dr Naegeli-Osjord:

‘In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, I give you a protective mantle against all harmful powers and forces which act internally and externally, and I give you the energy to be yourself again so that you can reach and accomplish the goals given to you by God. And I ask the, Archangel Michael, to come with his Godly assembly, and you too, personal guardian spirit, I ask you to take over this soul fully and completely so that these harmful forces must yield - whoever and of which kind they may be. If you are deceased and have not become aware of your transition from the material to the non-corporeal world, know this: according to the understanding valid here, you are dead and do not possess a material body. You are clinging to a spirit still dwelling in a body and are disturbing this person. You must evolve into a new but only spiritual sphere. Let one of the angels of St. Michael guide you to where you will receive instruction and salvation. If you are of demonic nature, know this: you are also a creation of the Almighty. When the purpose given you has been fulfilled, namely to teach human beings the difference between Good and Evil, by His grace you too will return into the harmony from whence you came. But you must obey His orders. Let Him show you the place where you must now go. Do not lose time, you have no business here any longer because this human being belongs to the Good - belongs to Jesus Christ. Now I command you, disappear, yield, and leave, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.’

As James finished speaking he wondered whether he had done the right thing. Here he was: a pragmatic therapist in a position of trust, giving a solemn prayer of exorcism. Did they think he was crazy? Sarah had been crying throughout the prayer, but now she seemed to be stabilising, and her husband moved to comfort her.

‘Thank you,’ he said to James. ‘Thank you.’

A couple of weeks had passed by when James bumped into Sarah in the street and he very nervously asked her how she was. She smiled brightly at him and thanked him. She invited him to her home for a cup of tea and they discussed the episode as fully as their embarrassment and ignorance would allow. Sarah had accepted the notion that something other than herself had carried out her wish at the time of her anger, and now she was free of whatever it was. She felt free of the burden of her grief over the loss of her child. And James, as he left and began his walk home, pondered on this experience. *Be careful what you wish for*, he mused, *it might just come true*.

Different possibilities began to run through James's inquisitive mind. He had read somewhere that scientists had been investigating the power of prayer. Apparently two groups of seriously ill hospital patients were used in an experiment where one group were prayed for and the other group wasn't. The experiment showed that the group that was prayed for fared better than the group that wasn't prayed for. James hadn't actually read the research report himself so he didn't know the methodology used or the inferred mechanisms involved, but his mind began to form more questions that needed answers. For example, what form of energy is a prayer? How was the energy carried to the sick person? Was it being directed by the mind of the prayer giver, or was some form of messenger carrying it? If a prayer is delivered and carried out by a messenger, like an angel for example, then was a curse delivered in the same way? Were there entities that were the opposite of angels? Did angels exist at all?

James's scientific mind was beginning to form hypotheses for testing. He had been converted in his mode of thinking from his spiritual experiences in Crete to a more scientific one by his university education. His healing art had become an object for analysis and scientific investigation. He had been seduced by science. He experienced the conflict between the deeply-rooted scepticism that our modern society had imposed on his belief systems and the subjective reality of mysteries that were being presented to him.

Chapter 5

The Paradox of Love

Two more clients were to fuel James Parker's curiosity about the power of thought and the emotions. But before these two cases emerged, he had to come to terms with his own dilemmas.

He just couldn't get away from his objective to qualify for his doctorate. After all, what was the point of going to university in the first place? His recent expression of grief over the loss of Julia had made him realise why the doctorate was so important to him. It was because she had been his inspiration. He had left for Crete at a time when she needed him most and he hadn't known why. His realisation that this action had caused her pain was too much for him to accept at the time of their parting, but now he knew how much he had hurt her. He realised that his grief at her loss was not because she had married someone else - it was because he had caused her to be hurt. He had been the cause of pain in someone he loved dearly. That was why he had broken down when the research project had collapsed. The project was a form of atonement, or compensation for what he had done to Julia. His love for her and his regret at being the cause of her distress had to be expressed in something tangible. He had to make amends by dedicating his work to Julia. This was his driving force, and this is why he had caved in when the letter that removed hope of success had arrived. Without the PhD how could he show his honour to Julia, and how could he ever forgive himself? Until he had a chance to express these feelings in his work - work that had begun when he went away from her, he would never be able to forgive himself for the pain he had caused her.

James didn't need to be forgiven by Julia. She was happily married and kept very fond memories of her time with James. He had shown her paradise in more than one form, and she had learned a lot from him, about how to respect herself and her own needs rather than be a footstool to someone else, as had been the case in the past. She had learned what it felt like to be truly loved by someone, and she therefore had a yardstick by which to measure the integrity of any new relationship. Without James's influence she would not have married the right man. But she had forgiven him. She wrote to him and told him she was happily married and she wished him well with her last farewell. All James really had to do was to find a way to forgive himself. But until then he remained driven by the need to research and to try to heal human emotions in others.

Concurrently he had Penny's needs to contend with. Her demands on his time had been getting to be a little too demanding again. During his second year at university she had engineered herself into a position where she thought he would be dependent on her. He had tried to make ends meet on his meagre student loan by working as a part time hypnotherapist at Dr Weston's clinic, and he had also taken a consulting room right across the road from the university. Above the consulting rooms there were apartments to rent, and rather than living with his daughter and her family, he had taken on an apartment. From here he could nip downstairs to his consulting room and administer to his clients and walk across the road for his lectures and the university library. It seemed like a perfect solution at the time, but it turned out to be very, very hard to balance his finances and his therapy work with his student life. He had previously managed to detach himself from Penny and she had gone home to where her family lived. She had landed a good well-paid job as a live-in nanny in London, and one day, instead of going home for the weekend she decided to visit him. James was at a very low ebb and very worried about meeting his commitments to study and paying the rent on his apartment and his two consulting rooms. He had to market his services as a therapist, which interfered with his studies. When Penny arrived for the weekend she saw her opportunity and persuaded him to let her stay and share the rent. She argued that it would be more convenient for her to travel from his place to London rather than from her own family's home. James could not see a way out and was persuaded.

He hated being dependent on her but buried himself in his work to get his degree. Meanwhile the pressures on him shifted from having to make financial ends meet to reconciling his studies with Penny's demands for constant attention. As he neared his final examinations in his third and final year he approached breaking point. Penny had cooked him dinner as usual and they sat down to eat. He was tired and under exam stress, and she asked him what troubled him. He felt that she'd had him trapped for the past year or so and he needed space to breathe. He told her with trepidation, 'There are three things I need to do.'

'What are those then?' she asked him.

'First I need to get these wretched exams behind me,' he began. 'Then I need to earn some money. I am sick to death of being skint.' In past times he had been a successful business man with a nice home of his own, a beautiful Daimler car and holidays abroad in exotic and romantic locations with a woman he loved deeply. Now he was a destitute student sharing rented accommodation with a woman whose needs he was unable to meet. 'Thirdly,' he went on, 'I need my freedom back.'

This had not been the first time he had told Penny that he saw no future for them as a pair, and it wouldn't be the last. After his exams had been completed, the very next day he packed his stuff and went to London to stay with his parents where he could find work and get back on his financial feet. He left poor Penny in emotional shreds.

He had spent the next year in London working as a truck driver and getting on his financial feet again. Weekends he would travel down to the coast and work on his research with Dr Weston. In the meantime, Penny continued to keep in touch with him and even visited him in London on two or three occasions. When he had saved enough money, he returned to the coast where Penny had found him the one-bed-roomed ground floor flat where he now lived. He had succeeded in keeping her at a reasonable distance and refused to allow himself to be dragged into another cohabiting arrangement, but Penny was not going to let him go that easily.

'I don't want to live with anyone,' she had told him. 'I have learned to value my own space and freedom. I don't want to live in someone else's pocket, all I need is companionship and a little bit of love from time to time.' She apologised for the pressure that she could now see had been a burden on him, and James allowed himself to accede to her request once again; more for a quiet life than a need to be with someone. His daughter was furious. She had become very protective towards her father since he had lost his home to the mortgage company and gone to university. She had loved Julia too and she had hoped that she and her father would settle down together. She saw the stress that her dad was under from Penny and she resented her for trying to step into Julia's shoes. She *forbade* him to see her.

James was prompted to take time out from his work and ponder on Penny's emotional needs. Did she really love him or did she have a terrible fear of being alone? Was it love she felt or was it a desperate need to *be* loved. Her cunning had begun to convince him that it was the latter. He put his thoughts to paper:

'The Paradox of Love

If it hurts then it isn't love.

If it doesn't hurt then it has no value - no pain = no gain.

How are we to unravel this paradox?'

A phrase popped into James' mind and he wrote it down:

'The Tao created the One.

The One created the Two;

The Two created the Three;

The Three created Everything' (Lao Tzu, 604 - 531 BC).

James had discovered the writings of Lao Tzu whilst studying for his pre-university entrance exams. Prompted by the dilemmas he faced that had been initiated by the conflicts between his own needs, those of Penny's and the concerns of his daughter, James' thoughts mingled with the teachings of Lao Tzu and a search for solutions. James wrote down his thoughts:

‘Written over two and a half thousand years ago, the Tao Te Ching (The Way and its Power) is full of subtle paradoxes that baffle the mind, yet it never fails to intrigue those with a quest for wisdom and understanding. Hidden beneath these paradoxes lay the subtle truth. To explore the meaning of the Tao and experience the wisdom of its originator Lao Tzu (the Old Master) is to take a spiritual journey towards enlightenment. It takes time to unravel the meanings contained in the Tao, and patience. As we progress, so our perspectives will change, as the consciousness of Man will change on the approach to a new level of understanding.

Those with experience are able to see the mistakes about to be made by those with less experience, and those with knowledge are able to identify those who lack the same knowledge. Those with experience or knowledge have two choices. They can either stand back and witness the inexperienced and unknowledgeable learn in their own way, or they can pass on their wisdom and knowledge in the hope that the inexperienced may learn by an easier and less painful way. The first method of standing back may be applied if either the experienced are too lazy to educate the inexperienced or if the inexperienced are unable to listen or comprehend the meaning. Sometimes, when the experienced one is aware of the pain of learning a hard lesson, they try their hardest to protect the inexperienced from that pain. But often the inexperienced think they know better and are unable to listen. The inexperienced therefore has chosen the hard way and becomes the experienced. At the same time, the experienced relives the old pain with empathy whilst the inexperienced goes through it.

To love is to protect the loved-one from painful experiences is it not? However, if the experience of pain enables one to grow spiritually in self-awareness then pain has its reward in experience and knowledge. Therefore, is it wise, or is it *love* to prevent a loved one from experiencing spiritual growth?

If the witnessing of another's pain brings pain to oneself, one will try to protect the loved one from that pain in order to protect oneself. To protect oneself from another's pain is not love - it is self-protection. To love is therefore to witness another's pain and to re-experience their pain oneself. The joy of love is to share in the knowledge and strength gained as a result of learning hard and valuable life lessons.

For a mother to experience the joy of love for a new-born child she must first experience the pain of the birthing process. For a new-born child to experience the joy of the mother's love it must first experience the pain of its own birthing process and emerge into the world from the comfort and safety of the womb. To prevent the pain of birth for mother and child is to deny them, or at the very least to reduce the joy of mothering love.’

As James committed his thoughts to paper he recalled snippets of information that he had gleaned from his research reading, and incorporated these ideas into his notes:

‘Research suggests that those born by caesarean section are less able to deal with the coming traumas of life, and mothers who give birth under heavy sedation or by caesarean section have greater difficulty in establishing a bond with the new born child.

To not interfere with the natural process of pain, and to witness loved ones’ emotional and spiritual growing pains takes great courage. Love is therefore courage.

When we experience pain and hardship we are likely to pray for God's help, often in desperation. When immediate help is not forthcoming then we are liable to think that our prayer hasn't been heard or there is no one there to listen and respond. As a result, our faith is diminished and we are liable to feel even more alone and helpless and the despair deepens. If I were able to fully understand the principle of love as explained above, where it takes courage to allow a loved one to learn through their own experience, then I will be able to appreciate how much those in the Spirit world suffer with us in our own anguish. They know the value of love and they know the value of experience. They have the courage to allow us these privileges and to stand back and wait whilst we learn painful lessons. Our prayers are always answered, but not in the way we expect them to be. The Spirit world wants us to evolve as they have evolved and to be strong and loving. This we can only know through experience. The Spirit world only allows us to bear the burdens that we are able to bear as we progress to higher levels of awareness, and they know that to develop to our true potential we are to be tested time and time again. It is only when we fail that they step in to save us. When we become sick is when they

step in to help show the way. Sickness is a sign that it is time for us to listen. The healer is there to help the sick listen, and the sick person who learns to listen must in turn teach others who are sick how to listen.

One of the hardest things a father has to do is to give up his little girl when she marries. Likewise, mothers have to give up their sons when they leave the nest to make their own way in the world. Similarly, we may find ourselves helping, caring and nurturing a partner in helping them to discover their own self-identity, until the task is accomplished and they leave. One of the hardest things we have to do in this life is to let go of those we love. To hang onto a loved one's presence in order to protect oneself from aloneness is a crime against love if to hang on to them prevents their spiritual growth. To offer love to another in order to coerce them into loving oneself is to cheat love. To foster guilt in another by threatening to withdraw your love from them is another crime against love. An unloving parent may say to a child, 'I won't love you anymore if you don't do as I say'. This misuse of the word *love* will result in the child growing up with a false conception of what love is. The child will believe that to be loved is to do as one is told without regard for the development of the autonomous self. The greatest crime of all against love is to threaten to kill oneself if a loved one leaves.

Bereavement is painful, but the loss of a loved one must be grieved. To prevent grief is to prevent spiritual growth. If grief is suppressed then sooner or later it will express itself, often in an inappropriate way. To love another is to share their grief and re-experience one's own grief again. The experience and knowledge gained from grief enables one to deal with it more effectively in the future - to accept it and to welcome it for the value it has. Veterans of war know this kind of love. They have witnessed the cruel sacrifice of their comrades' lives in combat. But because they have shared their grief together they have formed bonds of love between them that stretch across generations.

It makes no difference whether the grief of a lost love is through death or not. To lose a loved one for any other reason than through death is also a kind of bereavement. It is the death of a valued emotional relationship, and as such, grief is to be experienced. Some would claim that to lose a loved one through death is easier to bear because eventually one has to accept that they are gone. But to lose a loved one through a parting of the ways is to know that they are still living with the potential to love someone else. To know that they have left oneself for another is probably an even greater grief. The depth of the relationship that has been lost will determine the depth of the grief. If the love we felt for the person who has left is that of a possessive nature, then the love we felt will probably turn to hatred and bitterness. However, if the love we felt for them is genuine love, then after we have experienced the inevitable grief of loss and realise that to love someone is to wish for their happiness, then we can share the knowledge that we have helped them gain that happiness. To release someone from our care into the care of another is to love them. To be able to do this is to grow from the need for possessive love to know a more mature spiritual love. It is all part of the painful process of growing up.'

James' own thoughts, reflecting on his love for Julia, the demands of Penny, and the teachings of Lao Tzu finally led him to open the Bible that another great love of his – Renate, had given him. As he reached for the book on his bookshelf he recalled those very first words from the *Book of James* that he had read that day on the mountain in Crete. He was seeking wisdom, and by reaching for Renate's gift to him he was asking for it. He had no need to search through its pages as the book fell open and he read:

'Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud;
Love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable;
Love does not keep a record of wrongs;
Love is not happy with evil: love is happy with the truth;
Love never stops; and its faith, hope and patience never fail.

Love is eternal. There are inspired messages but they are temporary;
There are gifts of speaking in strange tongues but they will cease;
There is knowledge but it will pass.
Our gifts of knowledge and of inspired messages are only partial;

But when what is perfect comes, then what is partial will disappear.

When I was a child, my speech, feelings and thinking were all those of a child;
 Now that I am a man, I have no more use for childish ways.
 What we see now is like a dim image in a mirror; then we shall see face to face.
 What I know now is only partial; then it will be complete.
 As complete as God's knowledge of me.
 Meanwhile these three things remain: faith, hope and love;
 And the greatest of these is love.' (1 Corinthians, ch 13, v 4-13).

James reflected on what he had read, and after a few moments he again began to write:

'We are often told that we get back what we give out. If we show hatred to another then we receive hatred back, if we give love then we get love back. But if we give love in order to get love back then we are being selfish because we are giving something in order to benefit ourselves. Love is given freely without any expectation of a reward. If there is expectation of a reward then it is not love.'

As he finished the passage he was once again inspired to pick up the *Tao Te Ching* and refer to the writings of Lao Tzu:

'All things spring up, and there is not one which declines to show itself; they grow, and there is no claim made for their ownership; they go through their processes and there is no expectation of a reward at the end.' (Lao Tzu, 604-531 BC).

Although James had no full understanding of what he was doing at that time (as far as he was concerned he was merely trying to resolve the situation with Penny), he was actually writing a reconciliation between Christian teaching and that of Lao Tzu from ancient Chinese philosophy. Without the knowledge of where these thoughts and scribbles would lead – James continued to write down his thoughts:

'This truth cannot be experienced through being taught or by intellectual thought. To learn the reality, to learn the truth of these words, is to experience the grief of loss, to forgive being abandoned for whatever reason by a loved one (forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us), and to mature into a whole person.

Intellect Brings Pain, but Wisdom Brings Peace.

The Tao created the One. The One created the Two; the Two created the Three; the Three created Everything.

To know peace, first one must know pain. To know peace and pain is to be aware. To be totally aware is to understand everything - the highest ideal.

Just as fear is the inhibitor that prevents us from making dangerous mistakes, it is also the inhibitor that prevents us from making discoveries.

Just as intellect enables us to learn about the world about us, it is also the inhibitor to experience. To teach by theory alone is to deny one's self and one's students the value of experience.

To put aside one's fear is to accept the experience. Experience is the true way of learning what is of value. To experience pain is to know the value of peace.

Primitive peoples feared the unknown and were superstitious. Wise ancients welcomed the unknown and learned to harness its power.

Modern man has intellect and is fearful of the unknown. He attempts to maintain control, but only succeeds in creating chaos. He attempts to use his intelligence to avoid pain.

To avoid pain is far from wise, for without pain we can never discover peace. Transit chaos and discover tranquillity. Relinquish your fear and seek no intellectual explanation. Free your mind and allow your pain to bring you peace.

To be a healer one must know pain. To be a healer of physical pain is to be one who has the knowledge and physical experience of being at one with The Christ, and to feel the thrust of a sword into one's side.

To be a healer of emotional pain is to be at one with the bringer of that pain, and to hear oneself say to the bringers of that pain, 'Father forgive them, they know not what they do'.

To be a healer of spiritual pain, one must first have to experience the pain of a wounded spirit; by being abandoned or betrayed by those we love.

To choose to be a healer is the folly of the inexperienced. To volunteer to be an instrument of God's healing love is to be naïve. To respond to the call to be a healer is to have experienced at first hand one's own pain, and then with this knowledge, to agree to experience the pain of others and to feel the anguish of standing back whilst they learn from the pain of growing into a more spiritually aware individual - strong and resourceful and loving. The reward for this work is to be at One with oneself, at One with others, at One with all living things, at One with the Universe, and at One with the Almighty Creator of all that there is. This is Love; the unconditional kind. It isn't love that hurts; it's the lack of it.'

James read what he had written. Then he read it again. Were these his own thoughts, or had they been put there? He had learned enough about the influence of spirit entities on the thoughts and feeling of human beings, and he concluded that his questions had been answered. There was a lot to absorb in what had been written and he pondered long and hard on it. He gave a copy to Penny to see what her reaction would be. After all; it had been written in answer to his questions that had been prompted by her emotional needs. But any message that was relevant to Penny in what James had written went right over her head and she said, 'You should have this published.' So, he did.

A few days after his article had been published in a local spiritualist church magazine he received a phone call from the first of the two new clients that were to influence his progression on this new and mysterious cycle.

Maureen was in her seventh decade, and she had responded to the comment about mother and child bonding and the problems with caesarean birth in James' article. She had been born by caesarean section after her mother had attempted to abort her twice. Maureen suffered from epilepsy. James's investigation of Maureen's traumatic past revealed that she had forgiven her mother for attempting to abort her, but there remained a terrible dread in her unconscious that was not easily identified. As James came close to helping her to reveal this dread, she resisted and withdrew, leaving him with no course of intervention and the mystery remaining. What Maureen did for James however, was to introduce him to an organisation called the 'Medical and Scientific Network.' This introduction was a revelation to James. He had never heard of them, despite the fact that they had been in existence for twenty years in fifty countries around the world. There were over three thousand members, all scientists and healers who were investigating the relationship between science and spirituality. James was astounded at this discovery through Maureen and immediately applied for membership. He was accepted as a full scientific / practitioner member and once again took on the mantle of researcher with the knowledge that with this huge organisation in existence, he would no longer be alone in his quest for answers.

The second of these two new clients couldn't have been more different from Maureen. Katherine was an eighteen-year-old student at university. The one thing she had in common with Maureen was that she too suffered from Epilepsy, and she too had a hidden dread of something that James was unable to reach. *There is something terrible that these two clients are unable to face*, he thought. *What is the connection between fear and disease?* He recalled the experience with Deborah Collins who also had a disease of the nervous system.

Diseases of the nervous system and fear! What is the nature of this relationship? James asked himself. He began to form a hypothesis. Research into epilepsy revealed that there were lesions in the right temporal lobe of the brain – the very same part of the brain that registered spiritual experiences. There was a link. Something of a spiritual nature caused the undeveloped brain of a foetus to blow a fuse. There was something so terrible and so frightening that the unborn child was unable to process it and this resulted in brain damage. This was the idea that gripped James and prompted him to set his thesis to paper.

James used his skills to help Katherine control her fits in exactly the same way that he had helped Deborah control her Dystonia attacks, and it worked.

New questions demanded new research reading, and once again James busied himself with his free time in uncovering what had been written on the relationship between the emotions and diseases of the nervous system. He checked back with Deborah and learned that she had succeeded in reducing her attacks from several per day to only two or three a month.

James worked hard to build his case for new research into the relationship between emotions and diseases of the nervous system and mentioned it to Dr Weston. He was suitably impressed. 'How many patients can you give me?' he asked the Doctor.

'As many as you want,' he replied. With this encouragement James started the process of finding a suitable academic institution and a supervisor to tutor him in the presentation of his thesis. The Institute of Neurological Diseases and St. George's Hospital School of Medicine in London expressed their interest. James was on his way once again to achieve his objective of gaining his much sought-after PhD. But there were forces at work that remained beyond James' awareness, and his plans would be diverted in a direction that he could never have predicted in a million years - despite his driving ambitions. The new mysterious cycle was beginning to entrench itself.

The telephone call that was to precipitate James' headlong plunge into this new cycle came at about four o'clock on the afternoon of August 31st 2000.

Chapter 6

A New Enigma

‘Can I speak to Mr. Parker please?’

‘Speaking. How can I help you?’

‘You have been recommended by another counsellor. You treated her granddaughter for epilepsy and you come highly recommended. I have agoraphobia. I can’t get out the house and I have to take my children to school on Tuesday, but I can’t. Can you help me please?’

‘I’ll do what I can. Let me first take down a few details.’ James opened a file for his new client and began to go through the protocols for first contact; name, address, date of birth, etc. The little voice on the end of the line belonged to Marianne Craven, but it didn’t equate with the age. *She sounds a lot younger than 28*, thought James.

The shy, child-like voice on the telephone had given an address in a village a little off the beaten track, and if she was agoraphobic then he would have to go to her. James consulted his diary and asked when it would be convenient for him to visit.

‘As soon as possible,’ said the little voice.

James looked at the time scale. Today is Thursday and she needs to get the kids to school on Tuesday – only five days. He wondered how well she might respond to suggestion and decided not to leave it to the last minute in case she needed some work getting into trance. He had decided to take the night off from the trucking job. As he worked for an agency and not the trucking company he could do that. He had already decided that with a full clinic the following day it would be better if he got a good night’s sleep first. ‘I could come this evening if that’s OK?’

‘Oh, can you really? Oh, thank you very much.’

They agreed a time – 8 o’clock and he asked if they were likely to be interrupted as he considered the fact that she had children.

‘I’ll ask their father to come over and take them out,’ she said. The little voice on the other end of the phone seemed to change, *or was it his imagination?* The new larger, more confident voice asked if he wanted directions.

‘No, it’s OK. I’ll find it.’

As the conversation came to an end and James replaced the telephone receiver he was left with a nagging thought. *Had the voice changed from a frightened little girl to an intelligent and more confident grown-up?* *Odd*, he thought, and his curiosity had been triggered.

He found the house without any problem and parked his car outside. The house was a fairly large, detached, four bed-roomed house with the front door in the middle. The front garden was neglected and overgrown with high uncut hedges, and as he approached the grubby, black painted door up a litter-strewn path he had to brush aside an overgrown rose sucker that blocked his way. The house had an air of decay about it on the outside. *It’s a bad case of agoraphobia if she can’t even get into the garden*, he thought as he pressed the doorbell. A large man in his fifties with thinning hair came to the door, and with a shy smile and a weak handshake he invited James inside. Three girls peered at him from the room on the right of the front door as he entered and was ushered into the room on the left. He entered a large parlour that led to the kitchen at the back, and stood by the kitchen door, in faded jeans and jumper, stood a barefoot young woman. Her long dark hair was pinned up and looked unkempt. She had beautiful grey eyes set in a lovely face with a delicate dimple in her chin. She peered at him from lowered lids as she raised a hand to hide the lower part of her face and seemed to cower as a timid creature might do. He had seen that look before when he had served as a soldier in the Middle East, in the women who lived in the mountains of Jebel Akhdar in the high mountain region of Oman. The look showed suspicion and fear.

‘This is Mr. Parker,’ announced the man.

‘Hello Marianne,’ said James. ‘I am pleased to meet you.’ He motioned towards her and held out his hand.

She cowered away from him saying, 'Don't touch me.' James stopped half way across the room and then she asked in a matter of fact tone, 'Would you like a cup of tea?' James answered in the affirmative and she busied herself making a cup of tea as the man shepherded the children out the door to leave James and his nervous client alone in the house for an hour.

They sat down at the large wooden table with their tea and James began his initial interview. He learned that the man who had taken the children out was their father, Arthur. He didn't live with them but was on hand to look after them as and when required. Marianne explained that she was afraid to go outside the house because she felt intimidated by her next-door neighbours. They were the neighbours from hell, the boys bullied her three girls and the mother intimidated her. The father was a violent drug addict. James wondered if it was a case of agoraphobia or simply a case of fear of violent neighbours. In any event, this young woman was terrified and he had to help her in some way. She explained that the woman next door had actually come into her home on one occasion and attacked her. She had tried to get relocated but there was a problem with that. The house she lived in was hers, and if she wanted to move she had to sell up and find an alternative. She and Arthur had put it on the market at a very low price but there were no takers. James didn't want to get involved in the domestic difficulties of Marianne, but he decided she needed help with her fears and her seeming lack of self-confidence. Then she put a major obstacle in his way, 'You're not going to hypnotise me, are you?'

'But that's what I do. That's why I am here. If I can't hypnotise you then there is nothing I can do to help you.' said James.

'But I want you to help me.' she said. 'I have had problems for years and this is the first time I have ever had the courage to seek help. It took a lot for me to even speak to you on the phone, and when I knew you were actually on your way here I wanted to stay upstairs until you had gone away again. Arthur made me stay down here, and now that I have spoken to you, you must help me.'

Marianne took advantage of the time talking to James about her depression and anger, and about how she felt like a prisoner in her own home. James simply sat and allowed her to talk freely, perhaps for the first time, to someone who had an ear for listening. Time passed much too quickly and Arthur returned with the children. James and Marianne were still sitting at the table as they came in, all with nervous smiles and deep curiosity. Marianne got up from the table and introduced the children, 'This is Teresa the eldest, she is eleven. This is Tiffany and she is ten, and the youngest is Toni. She is eight. And this is their father Arthur.' She turned to James and asked again, 'Will you help me?'

'I'll do what I can.' said James and promised to call by the next day when his clinic was over. 'I'll see you tomorrow at half past twelve. Will that be all right?'

'Yes. Thank you,' she said, and handed him his thirty pounds fee. He offered his hand to her once more and this time she took it. Very carefully and with trepidation, but she took it. James and Marianne smiled at each other. James bid them all farewell and left.

He always felt embarrassed when he took money from people he knew were not affluent, and he was always being scolded by Dr Weston's wife at the clinic for giving treatment without charging for it. She was the practise manager and insisted that his clients pay at the reception desk on their way out to save James the embarrassment. 'This is a business,' she would tell him. You have to earn a living, and we have to pay the bills.'

James drove home wondering how he was to help Marianne if she wouldn't allow him to hypnotise her and decided he needed some professional help.

The next morning, he arrived early at the clinic and managed to have a chat with one of the other therapists who used Dr Weston's facilities. There was a chiroprapist, a reflexologist, a psychotherapist and another young woman who did some kind of energy rebalancing therapy. The psychotherapist was the one he needed to see, and as he settled down with his mug of coffee in the reception area, she came in. He asked if she had a moment before she saw her first client, and with an affirmative answer she invited him into her consulting room adjacent to his.

'How can I help you James?' she asked. James had always felt that she didn't quite approve of him, or was it the fact that he was a hypnotherapist? There was always an air of competition between different types of practitioner, as each felt that they had some superior knowledge over the lesser trained or, as they saw it – unorthodox methods. James had always seen other practitioners of different methods as complementary and not competitive, and this was an opportunity for him to build a bridge of co-operation with the psychotherapist.

'I have a client,' began James, 'who doesn't want to be hypnotised. I thought that perhaps she might be a case for you to see.'

‘What’s the nature of the problem she seeks help for?’

‘She says she has agoraphobia, but I don’t think it is. She is certainly very nervous and I think there may be some anger or depression. She lives next door to the neighbours from hell and there is a bit of conflict and intimidation involved. She seems very unsure of herself, and yet at other times she is more confident. It’s a bit of a mystery to me and I think you would be better qualified to look at it.’

‘OK,’ she said. ‘Give the client my number and I’ll see what I can do.’

As on previous irritating occasions only the first two of James’s clients turned up for their appointment. That left him with an hour to spare before he had to call in on Marianne Craven. He decided to phone her and ask if it was all right for him to arrive early. She answered the phone with the little girl voice and agreed to see him early. He arrived there at 11.30.

This time she answered the door herself and with a shy smile welcomed him inside. All three children were there and he asked her if it would be possible for him to talk with her alone. She asked her children to go into the front living room and play quietly for an hour, ushered them in there and then put the kettle on.

They sat at the table in the parlour as before with their tea. ‘We have a slight problem,’ James began. ‘You don’t want me to hypnotise you, but that is what I do. But I can recommend one of my colleagues who is a psychotherapist and she would be happy to see you if you agree.’

Marianne looked disappointed and said, ‘No. I want you to help me. I don’t want to see anybody else. I don’t want to go through that anxiety again of having to meet someone I don’t know, and besides I can’t get out of the house and I need to take my children to school on Tuesday. I don’t have the time to make appointments and I can’t go to a clinic.’

She began to get tearful and James could hear panic rising in her voice. She had left him with no alternative but to try something else. A flash of inspiration entered his mind. ‘If you don’t want me to hypnotise you, what if I taught you how to hypnotise yourself?’

She calmed down and smiled at him. ‘All right,’ she replied.

At that moment one of the children came in and asked for something. *That’s all I need,* thought James. *This is going to be impossible.*

Marianne sensed James’s annoyance at the interruption and suggested that they go into the front room and the children come into the parlour where they had easy access to the kitchen. Then they didn’t have to interrupt if they wanted something. They all changed rooms and Marianne sat in an armchair as she offered James a seat on the sofa at right angles to her. She called one of the children to her and told her in a firm but tender way that she was not to be disturbed for any reason. The child went away and closed the door behind her. There seemed to be a good rapport between Marianne and all her children. She spoke to them with tenderness and they all seemed strongly attached to her and obliging in a way that most kids aren’t. They were certainly very curious, and James thought that this was the real reason for the interruption.

James took his hand-held cassette tape recorder from his bag and put a tape into it as he explained, ‘I am going to talk into this and record a trance induction for you to use when you are on your own. All you have to do is put it into the cassette player and sit down as you are now at a time when you feel that you won’t be disturbed. Is that OK with you?’

‘Yes,’ she replied, and James began. He spoke into the microphone in exactly the same way that he used when inducing a trance with anyone sitting opposite him. He watched her as he spoke and timed his induction to match the subtle signs in her behaviour and body language. The trick worked and within moments she was in a good trance. As with all his patients, once he had them in trance he gave them positive affirmations of peace and tranquillity which were always beneficial, especially for someone who’d had no peace for some time. He finished the tape recording with the process of re-emergence into conscious awareness and switched it off. He looked at her as she emerged from the trance with a beautiful smile on her face.

‘How do you feel?’ he asked.

‘You are so clever,’ she replied. ‘How did you do that?’

‘I didn’t do anything,’ said James. ‘You did.’ He went on to explain, ‘I don’t hypnotise anyone. I just teach them how to do it themselves. The idea is for people to learn how to control their own thoughts and feelings and to learn how to heal themselves. All I do is help with the process. All you need to do is sit down and listen to the tape and it will help you to relax.’

‘That’s amazing,’ she said, ‘but how does it help with my problem?’

‘Well, now that you know what it feels like to go into a trance and you know how good it feels, you know that there is nothing to fear, right?’

‘Yes,’ she replied. He then asked her to stand up in front of him. She stood about five feet two in her bare feet against his five foot seven. He asked her to look him in the eye and then gave her the cue word to go into trance. She slipped immediately into an altered state and swayed gently as he put his hand on her shoulder to give her gentle support. He counted her back and she opened her eyes. There was genuine pleasure and amazement in them as she gave the sort of shy smile that one might see from a teenager who has been complemented. She seemed so completely vulnerable. She had relinquished her defences and surrendered herself totally to his trust. He had never before witnessed such a dramatic transformation. He had succeeded beyond his own expectations and she was ready for some direct suggestions that would help her overcome her fear of going outside the house.

James felt very pleased with himself at his cunning but well-meaning deception. He had broken one of clinical hypnotherapy’s golden rules – never hypnotise someone who doesn’t want to be. However, James thought that his deception didn’t really qualify for such a hard and fast rule. After all, he was doing it for her benefit and had only used deception to help her overcome a very real but irrational fear.

James thought that he had accomplished enough with this client for one day and although he still had plenty of time at his disposal he began to consider how best to conclude the session. Just then the smallest of the children, unable to bear the frustration and suspense of wondering what was happening in the next room, interrupted. Marianne must have sensed that the session had come to its conclusion and asked. ‘When can you come again?’ James now felt confident that Marianne would respond to his suggestions to enable her to leave the house and take her children to school on Tuesday, so he suggested five o’clock on Sunday afternoon. That gave her time to arrange for the children’s father to take them out so they wouldn’t be interrupted. She paid her fee and James left, this time with a lot more confidence in his ability to help her than he had experienced the first time.

That night James worked as usual for the agency, but this time for a different client company. Most often he was asked to drive for the overnight parcel carrier in Rochester, but sometimes he drove for a general haulier, sometimes for a supplier of drainage equipment and sometimes for one of the large supermarket chains. This night was for the supplier of drainage supplies and he enjoyed the change of driving to the West Country instead of to Birmingham. His thoughts were occupied by how he was to supplement his income and get away from the truck driving. He knew he had a problem with taking money from sick people, plus the fact that there were those who failed to show. He had been specially trained as a teacher of self-hypnosis, and the professional institute he belonged to had approved and endorsed a course he had designed earlier that year. He had noticed that there had been several of Doctor Weston’s patients referred to him that suffered from work related stress, and they all worked for the same company, one of the big cross-channel ferry operators. The company was under increasing pressure from competition from the Channel Tunnel and it was showing up in the health of their employees.

It was with this in mind that James saw an opportunity to break into the corporate stress management business with Dr Weston. Both Weston and his wife, the practise manager, had approved of the idea, and offered him a group of patients to get the ball rolling. He planned to start the course, which comprised of four weekly sessions, each lasting two hours, on the evening of Friday 22nd September. There were a few final touches to be made to the material to be presented to those attending, plus the design and production of a special certificate. This work would fill his time the next day, Saturday. On Sunday he was scheduled to work for the supermarket chain with a late start at midnight. He had plenty of time to see Marianne Craven and get his work finished on the self-hypnosis course.

After a good, untroubled sleep, James awoke at about twelve midday on the Saturday feeling refreshed and more buoyant than he had felt in a long time. He put his work overalls in the washing machine, breakfasted and bathed, then sat down to work on the final touches to his self-hypnosis course that he had rehearsed in his mind during the previous night’s work on the motorway. As he sat at the computer, a figure passed his window and he heard the tap at the front door. *That’s all I need*, he thought as he rose from his chair and opened the door to Penny. She bounced in, giving him a peck on the cheek and asked, ‘What are you up to today? Are you working tonight? What shall we do? Do you want to go to church?’ Penny did that. She asked more questions in one breath than it was possible for a soul to remember, never mind answer. He went back to his computer without answering and closed the file he had been working on.

‘What’s this then?’ she asked.

‘It’s my self-hypnosis course,’ he replied. I have to get it finished in time for the 22nd when it’s due to begin, and I have to see to a new client tomorrow, so I am a bit pushed for time.’ His hints never worked because they flew right over Penny’s head.

She put the kettle on and asked again, ‘Shall we go to church tonight?’

‘OK, if you like,’ said James. Sometimes he just resigned himself to Penny’s requests and went along with her. It was easier than resisting, and part of *going with the flow*, he thought.

Penny made them a cup of tea and he turned away from the machine to give her his undivided attention. She batted her eyelids at him and asked, ‘So what’s new?’

‘I have a new client that came through a recommendation from another counsellor,’ he said.

‘Oh, that’s good. To get a reference from another counsellor I mean. That’s unusual. Who was it?’

He told her about the counsellor and that fact that she had been pleased with his work with her own granddaughter who had epilepsy. The news triggered a memory for Penny. ‘Oh, I remember you talking about her.’ James sometimes discussed his clients with Penny. Not in any way that compromised the code of professional ethics or the need for confidentiality, but Penny had a remarkable gift. She was clairvoyant and psychic. This gift of hers was in some ways a blessing and in others a bit of a curse. She had used it to find him when he had been at the university. When she felt lonely she would hone in on him and find him wherever he may be, in the library, the student union, anywhere. At other times she was able to use her gift to help him solve problems for clients. She could somehow tap into what was troubling them and give him suggestions on how to proceed. She sipped her tea, closed her eyes and tuned in.

Penny opened her eyes wide and stared at James with a look of horror on her face. ‘You must stay away from her,’ she said. ‘She is dangerous.’

‘Who?’ asked James in astonishment.

‘Your new client. The young woman. She is dangerous and you must stay away from her,’ she repeated.

‘What are you talking about?’ asked James. ‘What do you mean she’s dangerous? In what way?’

‘I don’t know. All I know is that you are to have nothing to do with her.’

‘That’s not possible,’ said James. ‘I have an appointment with her tomorrow afternoon.’

‘Then you have to cancel it. You mustn’t go,’ Penny persisted.

James wanted to change the subject. He didn’t understand what Penny was on about and he wanted to finish his course material. ‘I’ll tell you what,’ he began. ‘You go and do your bits in the town and leave me to finish my course material and I’ll take you to church. How’s that?’

‘OK,’ she said, and after taking their cups to the kitchen she gathered her bag under her arm and kissed him goodbye.

‘See you at about five o’clock then,’ he said as he ushered her to the door.

The church they attended was known as The People’s Church and it held its services on a Saturday evening from six thirty until eight thirty. The People’s Church was a Christian one that had a strong affinity with the Christian Spiritualist Church. It operated in exactly the same way but without any organised hierarchy. Anyone could conduct a service, read a lesson or direct prayers. The congregation were those who believed in the power of healing as a gift given by God and many were practitioners of spiritual healing, as James was. He and Penny had first met in the Christian Spiritualist Church that meets on a Sunday, on his return from Crete. At that time, he had discovered this strange gift and wanted to learn about it. The only place to learn about such things was the Spiritualist Church where these things are studied, practised and understood. James had the gift of healing and Penny had the gift of sight. Sometimes these two gifts could work together, but because Penny had her own agenda as far as James was concerned he often distrusted her motives. He saw that as a great pity, and in his efforts to get Penny to focus more on her gifts than on him he had encouraged her to take a more active role in the Church and leave him alone to get on with his work. This state of affairs saddened him because although he didn’t love Penny the way she wanted him to, he still cared for her in the way that perhaps a big brother would have. But Penny wanted something that a big brother shouldn’t give. She was a grown woman with a woman’s needs and she expected James to meet them. The conflict troubled him.

One of the attractions of any Spiritualist church to newcomers was the practise of allowing visiting clairvoyants to demonstrate their skills in spirit communication. Sometimes a visiting medium would be amazing in their skills and accuracy and at other times they were less impressive. Most gifted

mediums just happen to be women, but the few men who have this gift usually turned out to be exceptional. On the evening that James and Penny attended, there was a man in the chair.

Following the usual hymns and prayers, the time came for the visiting medium to give his demonstration. He selected people from around the congregation and gave them messages from deceased loved ones and development advice for those others who were gifted. Then he came to James.

He closed his eyes and listened to what he was being told by someone in the hidden realms of the spirit. He opened his eyes and looked straight at James. 'You have much experience,' he began, then paused to listen, and then he continued, 'Here.' His hand went to his heart. He went on, 'You have given much, and we are grateful for the work that you do.' There was a pause. 'But you have never been lucky with your own loves.' James felt Penny glance at him from her position to his left. The medium went on. 'We must change that. We will find someone for you.' Penny shot another glance at James and he felt for her. The medium moved on to another member of the congregation and James thanked him, but it left a bitter taste in his mouth. He had been trying to tell Penny for years that he saw no future for them in the way that she wished, and now the message had come from those on a higher plane than ours that what he had felt all this time was true. He should have felt elated, but all he could feel was Penny's pain.

As always, Penny had this ability to shrug things off, and after the service was over they went to James's local for a couple of pints and a chance to socialise, followed by a spicy Indian take-away in front of the late-night horror movie on the television. Penny stayed the night.

Chapter 7

I Have a Fragmented Personality

Because James had been working the night shifts for so long, his body clock was tuned in to his being wide awake during the hours of darkness and sleeping during the morning. His usual time for rising was between 12 and 1 o'clock. Penny rose at about ten and, letting him sleep, she returned to her own flat.

After James had arisen and resumed work on his course material, Penny returned with something to give him. It was a large crucifix about five inches long that she had brought back from a trip to Bethlehem some years earlier. It was precious to her and she asked him to take it with him when he met with Marianne Craven. He thought she was being absurd, but she was deadly serious and urged him to take it. He always carried a small silver Celtic cross with him when working as a healer anyway. Penny had given it to him when they had lived in Canterbury. It was a necklace, but not being one who wears any kind of jewellery, he merely carried it in his pocket. Sometimes he would finger it when he was looking for inspiration.

He gave in to Penny's insistence and put the Crucifix in his bag, more to please her than anything else, and prepared to make his way to see his new client, Marianne Craven at the appointed time of five o'clock. He promised to call in and see Penny on his way to work that night.

Marianne opened the door to him with her shy smile and bade him enter.

The children's' father had already been to collect them and the house was quiet. She appeared much brighter than on the two previous occasions and a lot less nervous. *Just the ability to go into trance makes all the difference*, James thought to himself. Even so, he still couldn't quite believe the transformation in her so quickly. Marianne put the customary kettle on for tea, but James suggested that he wanted to continue with their work first, and perhaps if there was enough time they could have some tea later on.

He settled her down in one of the straight-backed chairs in the parlour and she quickly responded to his trance induction. He gave her simple suggestions on how to tap into her hidden reserves of courage and reinforced them.

The technique he used was to ask her to inwardly recognise two parts to herself; a weak and fearful one and a strong and resourceful one. When she squeezed her left hand into a fist it would bring the weak and fearful one to the surface, and when she squeezed her right hand into a fist it brought the strong and resourceful one to the surface. When the strong part of herself was in control then she could do whatever needed to be done without fear. James took Marianne through a series of exercises where she could feel a marked difference between these two parts of herself and recognise the strength she really had. He told her that whenever she felt helpless or fearful she should simply tighten her right fist and bring her fearless part to the fore.

He brought her out of the trance and put his suggestions to the test. 'Squeeze your left fist for me please,' he asked her. She squeezed her left fist and he asked her how she felt. He could see that frightened look he saw when they first met. 'Now tell me how you feel.'

'This is how I feel all the time,' she said. 'I don't want to feel like this. I want you to make it stop.'

'Now squeeze your right fist,' he told her. She squeezed her right fist and a bright smile lit up her face. 'Now tell me how you feel.'

'I can't believe it. I feel so different.'

'When you feel fearful and you want to leave the house all you have to do is squeeze your right fist, and you can do anything you need to do,' he told her. 'Would you like to try it now?'

'What do you mean, go outside the door?' she asked as a flicker of fear passed over her.

'Yes,' he said as he arose from his seat and made towards the door.

But Marianne remained seated and said, 'Not yet, I want to talk to you.'

James felt that she had absorbed all she needed in order to leave the house, and reluctant to push her too far he said, 'We can have that tea now.'

They sat down at the large wooden table in the parlour with their tea, and James asked her what she wanted to talk to him about.

'I get these feelings that I can't cope with.'

'How would you describe them? Tell me what happens to you.'

'Every aspect of life is starting to go downhill. From the housework to the way I look after myself, to what I do with my time. It's all gradual.'

'What do you feel?'

'I want to be totally alone, because if I'm not strong enough to pull myself out of it for their sake (the children). I don't want them to have to keep going through it, so I try to just throw myself into just me and the kids with nothing else going on around. And taking them to school means I have to go into the outside world.'

'OK, so we are talking about the outcome, the behaviour.'

'Oh, you mean what starts them off?'

'Yes, what emotions do you feel when this starts to happen?'

'All mixed. I'm very mixed up.'

'Tell me what they are. See if you can isolate the emotions.'

'But they are contradictory.'

'They will be.'

'Well I'm angry, sad, happy, everything.' Marianne gave a nervous laugh as she tried to isolate how she felt when she became scared and confused.

'Do they fluctuate?' asked James.

'Yeah.'

'What else? We can do this with hypnosis and it's easier. With hypnosis you can hone in and focus on what you're feeling and you can say this is what I feel at these times. But without hypnosis the conscious mind gets in the way as you try and understand.'

Marianne ignored his suggestion to examine her emotions under hypnosis and continued:

'Well, as I said, it's so confused, that...' She paused searching for the words to explain, and then continued; 'and especially when I know that I'm sort of going up and down, up and down, I'm not even understanding myself any more. When I get to that point when I can't even work it out then I just have to shut down. And I have attempted to find out, and some people have been able to pinpoint it. You've pinpointed a lot, but that still isn't helping, even though I've, mmm, gone through it all I don't understand it. I don't know how I feel; I'm angry and sad at the same time. Angry, happy, sad, and I just don't know any more.'

James could see that she wanted to talk things through and prompted her to continue. 'Do you have any idea why that is?'

'I feel fragmented. And I was thinking that today. I talk to the other one if you know what I mean.'

'Yes, I do,' said James. He was under the impression that he was talking to someone who had become trapped in her own alienated world and had taken to inwardly talking to her alter-ego. Something we all have.

'In my head, and most of my life it's always been the bad one that's got her own way, and now I try to be good, and the only way I can do that is by not putting temptation in my way. Other people are like a temptation to behave badly. I don't know why. And I like the feeling of being good then, but it's so isolated because I have to shut myself away. And then there's always the risk that someone from the outside comes in, or I have to take the kids to school. And that's when I start getting angry, because I feel like saying to everyone and everything, you fucking bastards, I have protected you by shutting myself away, I'm protecting you from me, but you still won't leave me alone. You know, do one thing or the other, either fuck off and leave me alone.... Marianne tailed off before completing the sentence, paused, and then continued:

'Because they keep bringing me in. And I just don't know how I'm going to survive it. Well I am surviving it, and (with a pause), I wish I could find just an easier way.'

'What about what we are doing now?'

'It doesn't feel easier. It's just a lot of stress.'

'It will get easier.'

‘Well I almost cancelled you tonight because of Arthur. Because I can’t stand him the way he is. I told him to fuck off because he mmm.... I swear to God he knows what he is doing, mm...., he’s not doing anything that’s not human, eerrmm...., but even I can see that I put everything aside for my children’s sake, and they should be more important than me and Arthur. I need to get better because it’s damaging them the way I am, and I have, by getting hold of you, that was me trying to get better, and Arthur’s messing it up for me, you know?’

He didn’t know and waited for her to continue.

‘And not only that. See you’re not at the moment reminding me of him, but you remind me of someone else, (she paused), and maybe the way I’m reacting to you, or Arthur can see it in me, (there was another pause), I even got really paranoid earlier, and thought that it was him coming back.’

‘Was it someone else you knew earlier? What happened there then?’

‘I don’t know, I suppose he was a male version of me, but he mmm.....’ There was a long pause as Marianne struggled to explain who she was talking about and what he had meant to her. Then she continued, ‘I don’t know, he was... He seems to have better luck with life. He’s got the knack of not getting himself into trouble. I’m sure he hurts deeply inside, but he manages to put up a better front to the world than I do. So therefore, he hasn’t got that added label of, you know, he’s nuts. But I have, so he manages to conceal his. And we played this stupid game for about four years. And in the end because it got to a point where I thought one of us was going to end up killing each other or something serious I ended it.’

‘So, what’s that to do with me?’

‘I think you reminded me of him, and, the only way I can cope with mmm (she paused, searching for words), see I still feel that he’s going to come back, and I can’t let him back into my life. If he comes to the door I’m going to just have to shut that door. I can’t even talk to him because I know I’ll get roped back in. The last time he came to the house here in May and I turned him away, then he sent me a birthday card in August, but I totally ignored it, but I was obsessed with this man. He clearly was obsessed with me because he allowed it to get like it.’

‘So why do I remind you of him?’

‘I don’t know.’

‘You do really. You can tell me.’

‘I don’t know. Do you know?’

‘You can keep it to yourself. It doesn’t matter,’ said James to put the matter on hold. He continued by trying to get her to trust him a little more, ‘What I might suggest to you is that when you come across someone that you think may be able to help you, and you put your trust in them, that you have a fear that the trust will be betrayed. It sounds to me that you felt betrayed by this man you are talking about, and you don’t want me to do the same. That’s what makes you fearful perhaps. Am I on the right lines?’

There was a long pause, and Marianne replied, ‘Yeah.’ James noticed that she had dropped eye-contact with him and had lowered her gaze. She was escaping the issue for reasons that it would take James quite some time to uncover, and he wondered what she had meant when she said that Arthur was being difficult. He continued talking to her:

‘The difference with me is that what I am doing is a job. And my relationship with you is professional. I want to help you. I don’t want to control you. And when the job is done then I’m away. Maybe I’ll remain a friend of the family, I don’t know, it doesn’t really matter. But all that matters to me is that you get better.’

‘Well that is how I was thinking, but this is where Arthur can put things into my mind, and I said to him, look don’t taint it. I can’t bear anything to remind me of him and.....’

Marianne trailed off and the thread was lost, so James came in on another tack to try to get to what concerned her about her relationship with the children’s father.

‘Let me give you a very simple truism. A simple truth statement. Some people attach themselves to another person in order to fill their own emptiness.’

‘I can’t see the point of that,’ said Marianne.

‘Well some people do.’

‘I might attach myself to somebody, but why would I do it to make myself feel bad?’

‘I’m not talking about you, I’m talking about other people in general.’ He was fishing without wanting to be accusing.

‘Do you mean with him, Neville?’ For the first time she named the other person to whom she had been referring.

‘See where it fits,’ said James. ‘If someone needs to attach themselves to another person, to possess another person, to control another person, we have to ask ourselves the question, why do they need to do that? What is it that’s missing in them that they have to control another person?’

‘Neville treated me very badly, and he knew I was very insecure, and sort of played on that so I began to feel more and more worthless about myself.’

‘See whether the same principal applies to Arthur?’

‘It’s very difficult because I’ve known Arthur since I was fifteen. He was the knight in shining armour that came along. I was fifteen in a nice children’s home then, and I was planning to leave the children’s home and travel around. I always wanted children. I met Arthur.’

‘How old was Arthur at the time?’

‘He was forty There is twenty-five years between us. And once I got pregnant with Tiffany I didn’t need to have sex with Arthur anymore, so it was as far back as that, but the constant pressure of him wanting sex made me resent him, so I really, really hurt Arthur when I went with Neville. And then Neville was a chance to get away from Arthur and I suppose Neville wasn’t strong enough. He tried to say to me, sweep the decks clean, and it’s difficult. I rely on Arthur a lot because I know I could never go to Neville’s house with my problems. He wouldn’t accept them or the children. And never really knew me. But ever since I can remember I’m the very odd and moody person, and the kids know me best – just leave me alone and I’ll come around in my own time. And Arthur’s seen me at the pits and he uses that against me, and he makes me feel like I can’t cope. He fucks off because I tell him to. And then if I do have a problem with the kids, like they need to get to school, or a bill needs paying and I can’t do it because I feel so low I can’t walk out the door, he uses it against me, and says, but you told me to f... off. And he still does this now. But then on the other hand he is very good because I know within a couple of days he’ll come around and he does do all the shopping. He’s very good with the kids. So, on the one hand he is a saint, but on the other hand, and he even admitted this, because even before you came, or just after you left the first time, he said to me, did he tell you I was bad for you? I said no. It’s Arthur’s bee. He is frightened of me getting better and never seeing him again. But I wouldn’t do that. I wouldn’t not want to see him again.’

‘So, who’s the dependent one?’

‘Both of us.’

‘Dependent on each other in different ways?’

‘Yeah.’

‘What he is afraid of, and it’s a very understandable fear, is that when you bring yourself together, shall we say.... You’ve got a fragmented self, you said that yourself. When that all comes together and you feel complete and you can cope with the world and you can do your own thing, his fear is that you won’t need him anymore. And that is absolutely right. You won’t need him anymore. But this brings us on to the subject of what’s important in a relationship. There’s a difference between *needing* someone and *loving* someone. So, it largely depends on what your definition of love is, and I’ll tell you what mine is. When you love someone, your ultimate objective is for them to be happy. Nothing else. For them to be happy. And if they are going to be happiest living their own life without you, if you love them you will let them go. That’s real love as I see it.’

‘He’s sort of done that because he comes around and he doesn’t get what he wants, but he’s still here, so he loves me more than anyone else has loved me but it’s...., and I keep saying to him, it’s still not unconditional, because you still keep bringing the subject of sex up knowing that I don’t want to.’

‘So, you know about unconditional love?’

‘Yes, like the children. I suppose I love him like a father figure, I mean I never had a father figure, and....’

‘But he doesn’t want to be your father.’

‘No.’

‘Well this is all very understandable.’

‘But then he should have known that.... He says I acted older when I was fifteen. I mean look at Teresa, she is almost fifteen. You won’t look at her and think that she is ready to settle down and have children. I say to him. Just because I did that... I was play acting..., I was playing house. He was my first piece of independence away from social services. I had my little house and my little children, and I didn’t go out a lot then, I was trapped on a farm.’

‘So, you escaped from the system?’

‘Yes.’

‘A lot of people do that to escape from their family if they are unhappy with their family.’

James was curious to know more of Marianne’s history in order to fully understand her fear of, not just going out to take the children to school, but her need to remain isolated from the world and everyone in it. Why were other people a temptation to behave badly? She had been in a children’s home and had not had a father figure, but why? She had been in a relationship with a man who reinforced her feelings of inadequacy for four years until she feared serious consequences – why?

James reminded himself of the primary objective – to get her out of the house. Time was marching on and he needed to end the session. Once again, he invited Marianne to put his suggestions to the test and as he was leaving he invited her to step outside the door. He was a little disappointed when with a shy smile she refused. He promised to telephone her at eight o’clock on the Tuesday morning when she had to do it. He would give her reinforcement over the phone. Marianne paid him his fee and he left.

On his way home James began to consider again his experience and training, and he had a nagging feeling that there was something about Marianne Craven that made him feel a little uneasy. Penny’s fears about her being dangerous he could not justify, but he did think that he should try once again to persuade her to see someone else who was more experienced and more qualified than he was. Another thing that troubled him was the fact that she had paid him a total of £90 in cash over the last few days. He assumed that she must be on benefit, and if her therapy was to last for some time, as he thought it might, then there was no way she could afford it. Having treatment from an NHS registered practitioner would be the answer.

He returned home to his flat, ate something and put some finishing touches to his self-hypnosis programme before getting ready for the night shift at the supermarket distribution centre. He called in to see Penny on his way to return her crucifix to her.

‘I don’t think you need concern yourself about Marianne Craven,’ he said as he handed back the cross. She needs help for sure, and I don’t think I am qualified to give it to her, so I am going to insist that she seek help from someone else. OK?’

‘That’s all right then,’ said Penny. She was about to make herself a night-cap and offered him one, but he declined the offer as he had a forty-minute drive to work and he didn’t want to be late.

Chapter 8

Philosophical Questions

James didn't want to risk missing his timed telephone call to Marianne Craven at eight o'clock on Tuesday morning, so rather than go straight to bed and run the risk of oversleeping, when he got home after work at 5.30 a.m., he stayed up. He checked his e-mail, had breakfast and a good long soak in the bath as he pondered her case. There was something about her that he couldn't quite put his finger on. There was something about her that intrigued him and he didn't know what it was. He was a hypnotherapist, he reminded himself, not a psychotherapist, and his treatments were always rapid and short term. The most he expected to see a client for was four times, but he had already seen Marianne three times and the outcome was still not sure. He finished his bath and after getting dressed decided to step out for a breath of fresh air. He lived just five minutes from the town centre and just ten minutes from the harbour. James never really had much time to spare for life's simple pleasures because of his commitment to his work, so when he got the chance for a walk along the harbour it was a rare pleasure that invigorated him. He returned to his flat in time to make his call.

The telephone rang just once before Marianne picked up the receiver, 'Mr. Parker? Is that you?'

'Yes Marianne. How are you doing?' he asked.

'I've been in a trance all morning,' she replied, and I've been walking around with this clenched fist all the time. I still feel a little bit nervous because I suppose I'm afraid it won't work.'

'That's why I really wanted you to test it the last time I saw you,' he told her. 'But not to worry. I can assure you it will work. Are the children all ready to go?'

'Yes,' she said. 'They have all their things and they are waiting for me.'

'Then go now,' said James. 'Right now! Just do it! Put the phone down, go out the door and take your children to school. Call me later this afternoon and let me know how you are. OK?'

'Yes, OK,' she said.

'Put the phone down now Marianne.' There was a click as the receiver went down and James prayed that she would be all right. He undressed for bed with an expectation that the phone might ring with Marianne telling him she had failed. But it didn't ring, and very soon he was in a deep sleep.

James slept peacefully until two p.m. He hadn't long been up and the phone rang. It was Marianne, just as he had expected. The little girl's voice spoke, 'Mr. Parker, it was all right. I took them to school and I came straight back here. It worked. Thank you. Thank you so much.'

'That's all right Marianne. I am just pleased that you are OK. Will you be all right now?'

'No. I want to see you again. There are other things I need to talk to you about. When can you come?'

He was afraid of this, but he half expected it. He had to try to convince her to see a psychotherapist, and that was his clear aim. Now that she could get out of the house he invited her to make an appointment to see him at the clinic but she refused. 'No, I'm not ready for anything like that,' she said. 'Please can you come here. I don't like doctor's surgeries. I can't. Please say you'll come here.'

'Who is your doctor then?' he asked her.

'I don't have one. I can't see a doctor, I don't trust them,' she replied.

Thoughts flashed through his mind. She had no doctor. She didn't trust them? Why? What experiences could she have had that made her not trust doctors? Without a doctor she wouldn't get NHS psychotherapy. He had to talk to Dr Weston. He would help. He needed time to talk to colleagues and arrange for one to see her when she decided to agree, so he told her he couldn't see her until Friday. That would give him a chance to talk to other colleagues and the psychotherapist at the clinic again and have a word with Dr Weston whilst he worked at the hospital. She agreed for him to come and see her at one o'clock on Friday.

Dr Weston was regarded with some suspicion by his colleagues for several reasons. The principal ones being that he not only endorsed complementary therapies but he practised them, and he was the best doctor in the area. He served all the outlying villages, and even held local clinics in some of them. He was a single independent practitioner with a patient list of over two thousand families, and everyone wanted to be a patient of his.

'I can't take on any more,' he told James. 'I'm sorry, but I have a waiting list, and besides I'm fed up with having to take on patients whose own doctors are too bloody useless to deal with them.'

Dr Weston's response was a shock to James. He'd never seen him like this before. He knew he was under pressure, and getting more and more disillusioned with the NHS himself, but he had never seen him spark off like this before. He decided not to push it. As he drove out to Marianne Craven's he wondered how he was going to get her to see another therapist, and what he could do to get her registered with a doctor. She has three girls for God's sake. How did she manage without them seeing a doctor when they were sick? All of James's questions would be answered in time.

Marianne was obviously pleased to see him, and she wasn't the same frightened little girl figure he had met on their first occasion. Marianne Craven never ceased to amaze him and there was more to come.

They sat in their customary places at the parlour table with their tea and James asked her why she didn't have a doctor. He noticed her discomfort as she assumed the insecure posture he had seen before.

'I don't like them. I don't like psychiatrists, or counsellors or psychologists. I've had my fill of them. They always try to treat me like I'm the problem. I want someone who's on my side, someone who will understand me, someone like you. You listen to me, and nobody has ever done that before. I don't need a doctor because I know how to look after myself. Look at me, I'm not overweight, and apart from my depression and my phobias I am pretty healthy. My kids are OK as well. All right - so they are a bit overweight, but that's because I find it difficult to say no to them. When they want something I usually give in and let them have it. I hate shopping and Arthur usually does it, but when I have to do it I take them with me and they choose what they want. I know I shouldn't and I should take more control but I can't. I can't do anything right. I can't cook and I can't even pay a bill on my own. Arthur does all those things. He even does all the housework when I shut down. The kids are used to it and they have learned to look after themselves a lot, but this can't go on. Please help me.'

She had closed down all his options and he began to feel a little trapped. A little lost for solutions James sat back and listened as Marianne gave him a full chronological history. She had been born to a fourteen-year-old who had her adopted at birth by a childless couple who later had their own daughter and a son. At the age of eleven she was put into the care of social services until she was rescued by Arthur at the age of fifteen when he made her pregnant. She had located her birth mother at the age of eighteen and had been rejected by her again. Her birth mother was an alcoholic and she had never been able to trace her natural father. Her adoptive father apparently was a nervous wreck and suffered from depression. At the time she was put into care he had a nervous breakdown. When she was in care, it was in fact a facility for juvenile offenders. She was bullied by the other inmates and beaten and sexually abused by the staff.

James had previously dealt with mothers, who, in their forties had come to him suffering from depression and anger. Some of them still suffered from the guilt of either having their foetus aborted or their new-born adopted, and he had learned of ways to help them deal with that. He had also helped a very few mature women cope with the long-term effects of having been sexually abused by their fathers at a very early age. He had always used hypnosis and his methods had always produced rapid and remarkable results. But Marianne Craven was different. She had never learned to do anything for herself. She had been socially conditioned by a non-caring environment that comprised of people who had either seen her as the problem or had abused her. She had been alienated from what we would call normal society all her life. She regarded the world and everyone in it as a threat, and it sounded like the only two significant males that she had had relationships with had reinforced her feelings of worthlessness for their own benefit. She had decided that James Parker was her only way out.

James sat in silence as he listened, and his humanity and compassion allowed him to be touched by her hopelessness, and helplessness. The strength of his compassion made him a good healer, but it could also be a weakness, as he was soon to discover.

Marianne Craven needed more than a psychotherapist. She needed someone who was skilled at dealing with abandonment, sexual and emotional abuse and inappropriate social conditioning. She didn't need him - she needed a team of specially trained specialists. But she had picked him. He knew he was out of his depth, and he needed to find solid ground again.

'I have some questions to ask you,' she said as he wondered what to suggest next. She had begun to take the initiative.

'Oh?' he said, as he came out of his reverie. 'What are they?'

Marianne got up from the table and opened a nearby cupboard. She retrieved a piece of paper and handed it to him. 'I've written them down for you.'

The note paper she handed him had the headline - Friday September 1st 2000. It comprised a list of very specific questions, and this is what was written:

'I want to learn
Tell me why these things have happened to me.
What is it all for?
Why is our world the way it is?
Are we so primitive?
We hurt each other.
Do any of us succeed.... To be aware of everyone and everything?
Do we have any control?
Where are we going?
Can I go now?
Will I have to come back?
How will I find the way?
Will it always be so hard?
Will I travel alone?
When will I get there?
Will I get there?
Will my children go there? Will it be the same for them?
What is my purpose?
Why am I here? Now?
Am I alone? Are we all alone?
Show me the right way.'

When he had finished reading her list of questions he put the paper down and looked at her. She smiled at him.

The notes were dated the 1st of September. That was a week ago. She had decided that James was to be the answer to her questions on their very first meeting, even before he had tricked her into hypnosis. But who was tricking who?

James was quite taken aback by her written questions. This woman had an intelligence that had not been apparent before. These were the same questions he had asked when he had returned from Crete. He knew how she felt, and his compassion for her deepened even further. She had struck a chord with him and suddenly they were on a similar wavelength. She smiled at him and said, 'Well?'

Her questions had taken him to the dimension of spiritual philosophy and he wondered if she would really understand what he was about to say. It was time to tell her a story.

'These are similar questions to those I asked myself some years ago,' he began. 'I needed answers and I'll tell you how I got them. Are you listening?' She settled herself in her chair, sat back and nodded for him to continue.

He told her, as briefly as possible, how he came to be in Crete and what he learned there. 'It was idyllic,' he said. 'I lived in paradise on my own in the mountains by a cool mountain stream and I found the meaning of true tranquillity. People would come to me with their problems and they saw and felt the peacefulness there. Other people came to share this peace and tranquillity and they wanted to make a life there for themselves and their families. There was an English couple with two children, a German man and his English girlfriend, and another English couple with a baby girl. The man who owned the taverna in the village had wanted me to run it for him and he gave me a house to live in rent free. But I didn't want to run the taverna so the couple with the baby took it on. Well, even though he was a trained chef, he turned out to be an alcoholic and he made a complete mess of everything. When he was asked to leave the village, his wife left him to return to England and he wandered off into the hills. Later, when he also returned to England he got into my house and stole everything of value. The German man was also an alcoholic, and he and his girlfriend stole from my house in the village in Crete. The other English couple took on the taverna but they couldn't cope with it and they ran away without telling anybody. I got the blame for everything. These people had come into my paradise and

ruined it for me and I finished up getting the blame. I had to leave, but I didn't want to. I loved the place and the people and I was learning a lot about healing, but it all came to an end.'

James had to pause as the memory of this heartbreak came flooding back to him. Marianne sensed his anguish and his sensitivity. This was not the reason he was telling Marianne the story. He had a very special message that he wanted to get through to her. He wanted her to know how he got answers to philosophical and spiritual questions, and he knew it wouldn't be enough just to tell her what to do. He had to relate the message with his own experience in order to give it validity.

He continued, 'Well, when I came back to England I found my house had been robbed by one I had tried to help. I had no job, no income, and I had lost the one I loved. I knew that it would only be a matter of time before I lost my house too. So, you see – I asked the same questions that you are asking now.'

Marianne could see the distress he had experienced and she sympathised. He could see it in her eyes as she prompted him further, 'Did you get the answers you were looking for?'

'Yes, in a way,' replied James. 'All I had to call my own was time, and I was suddenly motivated to sit and start writing. Not about my experiences, but about all sorts of things, you know, about how things work, what makes the world and the people in it tick. I didn't really know what I was writing, but within three months I had written an entire book. It was all about cycles and balance. and equilibrium. Yes - equilibrium. I learned that there is a pattern in the chaos, that everything has meaning and purpose, even though we don't understand it at the time. I didn't realise what it was all about until I had stopped writing and then I read it. I couldn't believe I had written this stuff. It was amazing.'

James watched Marianne to make sure she was listening, and he observed that she was hanging on his every word with intense concentration. He continued, 'When I started this book I was experiencing the deepest emptiness I had ever known. I had lost everything I had worked for and lost the one I loved, not for the first time but for the *third* time in my life. It occurred to me during this third and most devastating time that a pattern was being repeated here. If I was to prevent these catastrophes happening again then I had to understand the mechanics of the repetitive cycle.

I sat and wrote the initial draft of this book in just three months. During that time, I was also learning to develop my skills as a hypnotherapist and one of my clients was a young man who lacked confidence.'

James was about to tell Marianne the truth about how the book actually came about, and this was where his message to her really lay:

'As the young man was coming out of his trance he made an observation that he experienced an odd sensation that someone else wanted to speak; someone other than himself. I asked him if he was willing to go back into trance in order that we may investigate this odd sensation and uncover its meaning. He agreed and re-entered his trance state. After a very few moments he opened his eyes and looked at me. His entire countenance had changed from a shy young man to that of an older and wiser person. His physical features hadn't altered, only his expression and the gleam in his eyes. There was wisdom in those eyes. He introduced himself as Xiang Pi, a Chinese scholar from the 14th century AD.'

Marianne listened without interruption of any kind and James was pleasantly surprised to have someone actually listen to him without pre-empting him by asking questions that he was about to answer. This was a trait of Penny's in particular that constantly irked him. Encouraged by his intent listener, James continued with his message:

'I was fascinated by this and engaged this person in conversation. His manner was polite and formal but with a hint of friendliness. He thanked me for inviting him and suggested that we continue our conversation another time. After the young man returned from his trance he related his experience to me. He explained that he felt very restful and relaxed, and it seemed as if he were in a long corridor with someone at the other end who was speaking, although he couldn't quite make out what was being said. I conveyed to him the essence of what had taken place and we agreed that the experience was both interesting and stimulating. We agreed to participate in further investigations.

I had two or three more conversations with Xiang Pi on matters of importance concerning the young man's circumstances and those of others for whom I was providing therapy. All the time he was in deep trance. We discussed things that concern us and I found the conversations most stimulating and rewarding. Then, one night, Xiang Pi asked if I minded and could he invite someone else to talk to me. I agreed and as he left, the entranced young man's countenance returned to that of a man in deep trance, as was usual. After a few short moments he sat up and opened his eyes. Again, his countenance

changed and I knew I was facing yet another person. This one was different from Xiang Pi and he looked at me with even greater wisdom coming from his eyes. He smiled a genuine smile and introduced himself as Lao Tzu. The name meant nothing to me but I welcomed him with the same courtesy with which I had welcomed Xiang Pi and we entered into conversation. At the conclusion of that first conversation with Lao Tzu he bid me farewell and referred to me as 'fellow traveller'. Although I had no idea who he was, this address as fellow traveller gave me a sense of being honoured.' Still Marianne had not interrupted, and James continued:

'For several days the young man was pleased to accommodate my interest in the Chinese spirit who spoke through him whilst he remained in trance and I had the opportunity to engage Lao Tzu in conversation late into the night. He began to offer advice on the book I was writing and suggested areas that could be expanded upon and that I should summarise each chapter. He knew exactly what I was writing, and sometimes even offered very specific advice on points where I was having difficulty explaining myself. The information was valuable to say the least and I was given terrific insights to the workings of something that still didn't have a name. That was to come later.

Having done all I could do on the book at that time, I started college to qualify to go to university. One day in a class on counselling, the lecturer passed out some handouts that included a quote from Lao Tzu. I was astonished to find the name of the person I had been having conversations with here in print. I asked the lecturer who this Lao Tzu was. She replied that she didn't know. A fellow student said he knew and suggested that I may like to borrow of book of Lao Tzu's that he had in his possession. The next day he gave it to me. It was the *Tao Te Ching*.

When I got home, the first thing I did was to ring the young man and ask him to come over. When he arrived I asked him, 'Who is Lao Tzu?'

He replied, 'Isn't that the Chinaman you talk to when I'm in trance?' I said, 'Yes, but who is he? Do you know who he is?' He replied that he had no idea. Then I showed him the book.

The comment on the back cover stating that the *Tao Te Ching* was the most widely translated book second only to the *Bible* was the ultimate astonishment. We had no idea that the name of Lao Tzu was synonymous with one of history's wisest and greatest philosophers.

I asked him to go into trance and prepared myself to talk to Lao Tzu, but this time my apprehension was that of a schoolboy preparing to meet a head of state. As the young man's trance came to its deepest, Lao Tzu emerged, and his expression spoke volumes. His eyes shone and the smile occupied every muscle of the young man's face. 'Why didn't you tell me who you were?' I asked, and he replied, 'Is it not always better to discover things for yourself?'

It was only then that I realised what had happened since I started writing that book. I still don't have a name for it yet. The inspiration was Lao Tzu's. He had put the ideas into my head and it was up to me to convey them to paper with the communication skills and language that were available to me. My lack of knowledge of philosophy and my uneducated mind characterised the perfect empty vessel for this task. What was left for me to do was provide the links between Lao Tzu's philosophy and what modern science has discovered. This is the task that Lao Tzu asked me to carry out, in his own words - to 'build a bridge of understanding'.

Then I came to realise why I had to go to university to study a science. Psychology was the perfect subject because it involves both physical and non-physical scientific study. Full realisation of how the building of the bridge of understanding was to be achieved came when I learned of the structure of DNA - '.... the one created the two, the two created the three, and the three created everything' This was true revelation to me.

At this time, I was aware of three major problems that had to be overcome. The first was; who is going to believe me? The second was; who is this book intended for, or to put it another way, who are the target readership? The third problem I had to face was re-writing the book with all references to the *Tao Te Ching* included, at the same time as studying full time for a degree and keeping my head above financial calamity. All these problems I was aware of, but they were not daunting. In fact, I was greatly encouraged and had tremendous energy and enthusiasm for the tasks ahead. The real problems came during my second year at university.

The process of conditioning the mind to work in the required analytical way at university was interfering with my work as a therapist, and I was losing my right brain abilities. I could no longer work and earn enough to pay the rent. The conflict between what I had to learn in order to pass exams and what I knew intuitively became critical. It was to be more than two years before I could learn to switch back to right brain functioning, to work as a healer and to communicate once again with Lao

Tzu. Such was the price I had to pay for a scientific education. However, this price was worth paying because it gave me the knowledge, from bitter experience, why scientist only think in one way and why they lose touch with another reality – the reality of the spiritual dimension.’

Marianne had sat listening to him without saying a word. She gave James the definite impression that she was genuinely interested. James had always had difficulty with talking about his book to other people because even he himself often had trouble in accepting its origin and the reality of his experience. Then she asked him, ‘So how does it answer these questions that I am asking?’ and she pointed to her list on the table. She had missed the point. James was trying to teach her the value of the trance state and teach her that a spirit-world exists where answers may be found when we ask for them.

He asked her for a page of note paper and drew for her a simple diagram of the yin and yang symbol of Taoism. ‘In this symbol,’ he began, ‘are the simple principals of light and dark, good and bad, negative and positive. See, within the white half of the symbol there is the potential for darkness, the black spot, and likewise in the dark half is the white spot. That’s the potential for good. Out of every experience there is the potential for the opposite. Every bad experience can be turned around to be lesson that is good for us. So, all we have to do is ask the question, then with time and patience the answer will come and we will understand.’

He drew another diagram showing how the yin and yang symbol looks when rolled out over a period of time. There was a positive arc that contained the black spot for negative potential, then there came the negative arc that contained the potential of the positive to come. ‘It just takes time,’ he said. ‘But first we must ask the question, just as I did then, and as you have done now. But there is a way that you have to ask the question.’

‘What’s that then?’ asked Marianne.

James told her what he had discovered from the Bible on the mountain in Crete. He quoted as accurately as his memory and his own interpretation would allow as he reminded himself that it was about time he memorised it properly – word for word:

‘... if any of you lacks wisdom, he should pray to God, who will give it to him; because God gives freely to all who have faith.’

‘You have to ask the question in a form of prayer,’ continued James. ‘Often we do this without realising it, when we call out in desperation, ‘What have I done to deserve this, or please God help me.’

‘Do you believe in God then James? And what about this Lao Tzu? What is he, some kind of guardian angel or something?’ The fact that she addressed him by his first name skipped over James’s awareness as he answered her.

‘Yes, I do believe in God. After all, where does the power come from that enables me to take someone’s physical pain away. It’s not me that does it. I don’t do anything. I just put my hand there and the pain is gone, like some kind of magic. And yes, there are guardian angels or guides as we call them. Everyone has one.’

‘Do I have one then?’ She asked.

‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘We all have one.’

James saw a huge tear drop roll down Marianne’s right cheek, and he leaned forward to brush it away with his thumb.

‘But I’m bad,’ she said.

James looked into Marianne’s sad eyes and asked her, ‘What do you mean, you’re bad? Who says you are bad?’

‘But I am. Everybody knows it. I have always been bad. I was born bad! I hurt people! I hurt everyone I come into contact with. I can hurt you. I want to stop hurting people. I want to find another way.’

‘But how do you hurt people? What could you possibly do to hurt me?’ He couldn’t possibly imagine how she could hurt him, and she didn’t answer the question.

The tears rolled down her face and she stood up from where she had been sitting. Her eyes looked towards the floor, and her arms hung loosely at her sides from hunched shoulders. All James could see was someone who was desperate. He saw no badness in the fragile helpless creature that stood before him. All he could see was helplessness, vulnerability and a need to be cared for. All he could see at that moment was a picture of innocence that would stay fresh in his mind for a long, long time. It moved him.

‘You’re not bad,’ he said. ‘You’ve had experiences that you have been unable to deal with and they have made you angry towards the world and everyone in it.’

‘But I feel so guilty,’ she told him.

‘Good,’ he said, and she looked at him in surprise.

Good? Why is it good to feel guilty?’

‘Because only the good can feel guilty. The bad just don’t give a shit.’

She smiled that shy, coy smile of hers as she wiped her nose on the back of her sleeve and asked him, ‘Can I read it. That’s why it was written wasn’t it – for people to read?’

James couldn’t quite believe what he was hearing. Here was someone who he was trying to help in the best way that he knew how, and she was interested in his interpretations of ancient Chinese philosophy. The only people who had been interested in reading it were two very dear and close friends, one who lived in Australia and a friend from college.

‘Of course, you can,’ he replied. ‘But it’s still not published yet. I’ll give you a manuscript. I’ll run one off the computer. In the meantime, I want you to read this.’ He reached into his bag and retrieved his copy of Peck’s, *The Road Less Travelled*. It was one of the ways he had decided might be a way of convincing her to see a psychotherapist, after all, that was the objective of Peck’s book – to state the case for therapy. She took it and promised to read it. James picked up his bag and prepared to make his way to the door. Marianne stood and faced him. Tears welled up in her eyes as she looked up at him, then she slipped her arms under his, laid her head on his chest and hugged him. ‘Thank you,’ she said. James felt the impulse to put his arms around her and hug her back, but he resisted the temptation, stood still for just enough time for Marianne to express herself, then he reached into his pocket and brought out his silver Celtic cross. ‘I want you to have this,’ said James. ‘It will remind you that you are never really alone.’

‘When will you come again?’ asked Marianne.

‘I’ll call you,’ said James. He left the house with her teardrops on his jacket. He had fallen into a trap that all therapists and healers have vulnerability for, and that is the exchange of emotions between patient and therapist. In order to answer Marianne’s questions, James had referred to his own personal experiences and he had shown his own vulnerability. Rather than remaining detached and neutral, he had shown her his compassion. Some say that vulnerability is a form of strength, but his colleagues would condemn him. However, no harm had been done and James thought that it didn’t really matter that much anyway because Marianne had begun to talk to him, and if she could do that then she could talk to someone else – he would make sure of it. But there was something else: He had given Marianne his silver cross and had told her that it would be a reminder that she was never really alone – that God and the Angels were with her. He had meant it, but he also had at the back of his mind the possibility that Penny had been right. If Marianne was as dangerous as Penny had warned then she was very, very clever. If she were indeed that dangerous that it justified Penny giving him her crucifix for protection, then giving Marianne a silver cross would surely put that suspicion to bed for good.

Meanwhile the forces that determine the evolution of natural cycles moved inexorably onwards – beneath the surface and gathering momentum – unseen and unchallenged.

Chapter 9

A Question of Ethics

Over the course of the weekend James had managed to print off a copy of his manuscript and to consult with two of his hypnotherapy colleagues. Andrew lived close by and often gave James referrals if he was away or too busy to take on a new client, and Jean, who was a bit further away was a gifted, multi-talented practitioner. James had recognised the onset of Marianne's transference towards him earlier and felt that it would be better if she saw a female therapist. Jean was also a very effective medium and spiritual healing practitioner, and if what Penny was fearful of had any foundations at all then Jean was the one to uncover it. Unfortunately, she was about to depart for America and wouldn't return until the 9th October. Frustrated that he wouldn't have a solution to his dilemma until Jean's return, he called Marianne and arranged to see her on Tuesday 12th at 2 p.m.

Marianne greeted James at the door with a radiant smile, quickly bade him enter and returned to the telephone where she resumed the conversation that had been interrupted by his arrival at the door. James took a seat at the table and waited for her conversation to finish. As he watched her he couldn't believe that this was the same person he had first seen just twelve days ago. Her long brown hair shone radiantly as it bounced around her shoulders, and her eyes had a brightness that gladdened him. He noticed for the first time that she had a beautiful smile. He hadn't seen her smile like this before. Her smiles had always been shy, little-girl smiles. Now, for the first time he could see the open smile of a confident young woman. She had put the cross he had given her around her neck. She finished her conversation on the phone and moved towards the kitchen to put the kettle on. As she passed James she told him that it had been her mother on the phone. 'My adoptive mother,' she emphasised. She had been telling her how wonderful she felt and how James Parker was helping her. She hadn't felt so good in years. In fact, Marianne had been telling absolutely everyone she knew how good she felt and what a wonderful man James Parker was. She was telling Arthur and the children, and she even went as far as visiting two old friends she hadn't seen in a long time, just to tell them how wonderful it was to feel human again – all because of James Parker.

She made them both a cup of tea and invited him into the front room. All their conversations had taken place in the parlour with the exception of the time the children were curious and he needed them to not interrupt whilst he hypnotised Marianne. He crossed the room and sat down in the arm chair that Marianne had occupied on that previous occasion. She sat on the sofa at right angles to him and looked straight ahead as she thanked him again. There had been something about Marianne Craven that had nagged at James ever since the first time he saw her standing there like a frightened little creature in the doorway of her kitchen twelve days ago. He looked at her now and he saw a different person, but that nagging feeling was still with him. *What was it about her*?

He opened his bag and produced the manuscript she had asked for and her eyes lit up. He laid it on the coffee table in front of them and took out his pen. 'If this ever gets published then this manuscript could be worth some money in the years to come,' he told her. Then he opened the cover and wrote on the dedication page the message:

'To Marianne Craven. May all your questions be answered.'

He signed and dated it and handed it to her. 'A gift,' he said. She took it from him and looked at the message he had written with the look of a child that had just received her most wished for birthday present from her most favourite person in all the world. She was overjoyed. 'Can I ask you?'

'What?' said James. 'Ask me what?'

She handed him the book still open where he had signed it. 'Please put with love and kisses.'

He took the book and placed it back on the coffee table, then he added beneath his signature:

'With love xxxxxx,' and handed it back to her. Her satisfaction was complete and a tear of joy ran down her cheek.

'Thank you,' she said and got up to fetch herself a tissue. Then she pulled a piece of paper from her pocket and handed it to him as she sat down again. 'I did what you said,' she began. 'I have been asking questions and I have been getting answers.' The note paper read:

'Who is strong can stand alone

Who is patient can wait
 Who loves will be loved
 Who saves will be saved
 Who can't walk this path will be carried.'

He looked at what was written in stunned silence for several moments and eventually asked, 'Where did this come from?' He was in fact asking himself. Was she actually getting answers the same way he did? Could she really communicate with the other dimension without any further instruction or awareness? If this were true then his job was going to be so much easier. After all —a spiritual healer is only a messenger.

In answer to his spoken question Marianne replied, 'Like you said, I asked my questions and then these words came into my head and I wrote them down. But I want to stand alone and I know I'm not strong enough. I need Arthur to help me but I don't want him to be there. I want to be strong and by myself, but I can't. All he wants all the time is sex. That's what they all want. Sex, sex, sex. I hate them all. They are weak and useless and they control everything with this.' Her voice rose in anger as she spoke until she was spitting the words like a venom, and as she reached the height of her anger and the words, 'control everything with this,' she stood up and motioned as if she were thrusting with a penis. 'I wish I had one,' she hissed through clenched teeth. 'Then I'd stick it into everything and control everything. I hate them all.'

She was pacing now, back and forth across the room, her shoulders hunched, her eyelids had drooped and her eyes glared from beneath them with smouldering rage.

'Whom do you hate Marianne?' asked James. She looked at him and her anger subsided for a moment.

'All men,' she said. 'All men are weak. I have never known my own father. He was a soldier, aged about twenty and married when he seduced my mother. She was only fourteen years old when she had me. He was twenty and she was only thirteen. He was just a weak man who saw an opportunity to abuse somebody weaker than he was.' She spoke with contempt and loathing as the corners of her mouth twisted with bitterness. 'Then there was my adoptive father. HA! What a waste of space he is. Father? Father my arse. A father is supposed to protect his children. I finished up being put into an institution for young offenders because this arsehole was too bloody weak to protect me. Then on top of that I get exposed to a whole world of greedy weak men who just want to fuck helpless little girls. OF COURSE I HATE THEM ALL. ALL OF THEM. THE FUCKING BASTARDS. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DID TO ME. YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY HAVE DONE TO ME. I have even told Arthur to his face that he is a paedophile. I mean. What is a forty-year-old man doing fucking a fourteen-year-old girl? I was his own daughter's friend for Christ's sake. He came to visit his own daughter who was in care because he was a useless father and then he fucks me and I get dragged into all his shit. Now I can't cope with him and he wants me to stay like it. I hate them all.'

The tears were streaming down her face by this time and she reached forward to him. 'I don't hate you though. You're not like them. You're not weak, you're strong.' Marianne put her arms around James and hugged him close. 'You are so strong. I can't do it on my own. I know that. Please help me. Show me how to be strong. Please.'

She was right when she said he had no idea what men had done to her. He had absolutely no idea whatsoever. He could not imagine for one moment what kind of torment she had experienced as a child and as a woman. This time he did put his arms around her, as a father might put his arms around a child to protect her and comfort her. He stroked the back of her head with his left hand and told her that he would teach her how to be strong. She had asked him to teach her and now he realised that she had given him no alternative. How could he pass her on to someone else when she had released her feelings to him? She hated all men, but she was willing to trust just this one. He lifted her chin and looked at her. Then wiping the tears off her cheek, he said, 'If you want to learn how to be strong then I'll show you.'

Marianne smiled at him and moved back to her seat. 'Thank you,' she said.

James sat down opposite Marianne and looked again at the note paper she had written on.

'Who is strong can stand alone
 Who is patient can wait
 Who loves will be loved
 Who saves will be saved
 Who can't walk this path will be carried.'

Marianne knew perfectly well what was written on the note paper. After all, she had written it herself. As James looked at the words, she said to him, 'Are you patient James?' This time he realised she had used his first name and he looked up at her. Before he had a chance to answer her question she asked him another one, 'Will you love me?' And another, 'Will you save me?'

Thoughts raced through his mind. What did she mean by 'will you love me'? She hated all men and she didn't want sex. That was good news. If she wanted sex then he would be in a very difficult position. She had previously spoken of her need for what she had called 'unconditional love' from Arthur, but he still wanted sex and that repulsed her. James was getting a little confused and he had to have things clear in his own mind what she wanted from him. He set out to make sure it was clear.

'Tell me what you mean Marianne,' he began. 'There are different kinds of love. There is the kind of love a father has for his child, then there is the kind of love that a brother has for a sister, or a friend for another friend. There is the kind of love that a healer uses to heal. This is very different from the love that is shared between two people who are attached physically and emotionally to each other. Healing love is unconditional and human love is conditional. You can't mix the two. I can give you unconditional love because it is the healing kind. It is a very real energy that exists and can be tapped into. This is where strength and resourcefulness come from. Yes, I can give you this.'

'But I want you to *love* me. I want you to *make love* to me,' said Marianne.

James was taken aback. 'I'm sorry Marianne. I can't do that,' he told her.

'Why not? Are you married?'

'No.'

'Well then. What's the problem? All the men I have known have been weak. You are the first strong and honest man I have ever met and I want to learn from you. I think about you all the time. I can't get you out of my mind. I have never felt like this about anyone before. Look at me. You can see how I have changed since last week. I can live again. I go out of the house and take the children to school and visit friends I haven't seen in ages. All because of you. Say you will James. Please say you will.'

'It's just not possible. I am a therapist, a professional. My relationship with you has to stay that way or I can't help you. There can be no emotional or physical exchange of this kind between us if I am to be of any use to you. Now that you have told me what you are experiencing I have no alternative. I have to refer you to someone else.'

'NOOOO!!!' she said. 'I won't see anyone else. I don't want to see someone else. I want you.'

He didn't want to offend her or cause any damage to her already fragile self-confidence. He knew he was treading on very dangerous ground. Perhaps this is what Penny had meant after all when she had said the Marianne was dangerous.

'But Marianne. You don't seem to understand. If I have any kind of personal relationship with you it will mean that I am breaking the rules and I will be excommunicated from my profession. That means I will never be able to work as a therapist again.'

'But Dr Peck says it's all right.'

'Who? What do you mean?'

'You know,' said Marianne. 'Dr Peck who wrote that book you gave me. He says it's alright to love a client if that will make her better. I read it. He said that.'

Marianne was right. Dr M Scot Peck did write that in *The Road Less Travelled*. *Shit*, thought James. *She's got me cornered.*

'Marianne, I am old enough to be your father,' said James.

'So is Arthur. I prefer older men anyway. The younger ones don't know anything. They just want to get in and out – wham, bam, thank you ma'am. They don't know how to make real love to a woman. But you do James, don't you?'

As the conversation had progressed James had stood up in readiness to leave should the situation start to get out of control. Marianne moved towards him and reached up to put her arms around James's neck and then pulled him towards her. He stepped back and put his hands on her shoulders. She was stood in between him and the sofa she had been sitting on and his hands gently leaned her back towards the sofa so her weight carried her down onto it. Marianne caught hold of his forearms and she pulled him to her as she sank into the sofa. He pulled himself away from her grasp and stood up straight. 'Stop it,' he said. 'I can't.'

Marianne undid the front zipper on her jeans with one hand and slipped the other beneath her blouse. She closed her eyes and whispered, 'Love me James. Make love to me please.' She slipped one of her hands into her jeans and down to her crotch, whilst the other hand teased a nipple under her blouse. James

reached forward and grasped both her wrists to pull her hands away from where she was stimulating herself. Her eyes were closed and her lips had become full and reddened with genuine sexual arousal. He tried to pull her hands away but she resisted with a strength that surprised him. She opened her eyes and looked at him. Her eyes were glazed and half open. She was in an altered state and so aroused that James realised she must have started much earlier than he had been aware of. 'Love me please', she repeated.

James let go of her hands as he realised that there was no way he was going to be able to stop her from what she was doing. All her inhibitions had gone and she was showing the exact opposite of what he had seen at their very first meeting when she had told him not to touch her. 'I have to go,' he told her. He picked up his bag as she continued to stimulate herself. He moved to the door and said, 'I'm sorry.'

James had been physically shaken by the experience, and he was seriously disturbed by the conflict that raged within him. On one hand he was very concerned about Marianne's state of mind at being rejected by him, and on the other hand he was very concerned about his ability to deal with the situation without compromising his professional status. With regard to being tempted by Marianne, James knew that there was no danger. He was experienced enough to know his strengths and his weaknesses as far as the opposite sex were concerned. Temptation had presented itself in the form of vulnerable young women in Crete and he had never betrayed their trust in him and had never taken advantage of them. In fact, it had never even crossed his mind. He had often been offered the opportunity for sexual contact with young women who he had met socially, and there had been nothing to prevent him from enjoying their company and sharing a sexual experience with them without any restriction, taboo or inhibition. But James Parker had looked at these women and seen a person about the same age as his own daughter, and that was enough. He was not the sort of man who found younger women appealing. He was 53 years old and that was that. If he was old enough to be their father then he would behave like their father, and he did.

James drove to the harbour to unwind and clear his head. It was a beautiful summer's day and the fresh air was a complete contrast to the dusky interior of Marianne Craven's front room. He began to examine this contrast. *Wait a minute*, he thought, and his mind went back to her front room to re-examine the atmosphere. The curtains had been drawn and there was a scent in the air. *What was it? Some kind of incense. That was it. She had prepared the room.* James began to realise that she had prepared herself and she was preparing him. Her action wasn't spontaneous. She was deliberately trying to seduce him. He could see that now. She was so self-assured, so confident, so? *What was it about her that?* Then it clicked. She reminded him of someone else - someone from a long, long time ago. It all came flooding back to him. Marianne Craven had the same shaped face, the same figure as someone he had known in his youth. A girlfriend - Helen. The dimple on the chin and the way her lips swelled when she was aroused.

James actually found himself walking around the harbour in exactly the same place as he had then, what...? *When was that exactly?* His thoughts traced the memory. He had been twenty and she was seventeen. The year he was posted abroad to the Persian Gulf - 1967 that was it. My God - that was thirty-three years ago. James stood on the same steps overlooking the harbour that he had stood on all those years ago and remembered his thoughts as they had been then. He had been betrayed by her and he was experiencing the emotions that went with betrayal for the first time in his young adult life. He had been seriously considering the possibility of getting married and settling down after he returned from the imminent overseas posting. The army preferred married men when considering promotion. Married men were more stable. But then Helen had betrayed his trust and he felt the pain of rejection. His platoon commander, the surrogate father to all his men, had told James that there wasn't just one woman who was suitable for pairing with, but there was a type. He explained to James that we are compatible with a *type* of person, and when relationships change we always seem to finish up with the same type.

After James had returned from overseas he had met the girl who was to become his wife and took her to meet his family. His mother had remarked, 'She's a lot like the other one isn't she, you know, the one before you went away.'

He had never seen Helen since, although he had received a letter from her after he had been married for about a year. His wife had found the letter and gone absolutely ballistic. She had written to Helen and told her where to go, and James hadn't heard from her since. But here he was remembering and realising that Marianne Craven was the same type as Helen and his ex-wife. They were all the same type. He still couldn't quite put his finger on the underlying common thread that linked Helen, his ex-wife and Marianne Craven together, but there was a similarity in their physical appearance that he could not deny. He was

attracted to Marianne in the same way that he had been attracted to Helen and his ex-wife. They were like magnets to him, and he began to feel the pull of Marianne's power. It was almost as if he had escaped the pull of Helen and his ex-wife, and had extricated himself from their magnetism, only to be pulled in again by a similar force.

James still did not know that a new and powerful cycle had begun to gather momentum. There was something else he didn't know. His relationship with Helen that had begun thirty-three years ago and had been long-forgotten, was still not finished. James was in for a few surprises. In the meantime, he grappled with the problem of how to help Marianne Craven without allowing himself to be drawn in any further. That was out of the question. But deep down he found it flattering, and that was where real danger lurked.

James Parker was no saint, not by any stretch of the imagination. He had made some serious errors in the past with women and he had been in a very similar situation that he had just experienced with Marianne. But the last time had been a social affair. He had had friends round for a New Year's Eve party. At about 3 am, when most had gone, his own lady-friend at the time had retired upstairs to bed. A married couple who were staying the night had settled down to sleep on the put-u-up in the lounge when James went into the kitchen to clean up a little before retiring to bed himself.

When he passed through the lounge from the kitchen on his way to the stairs that led to the upper floor, he had been confronted by a sight that stopped him in his tracks. He had forgotten all about Karen, his twenty-five-year-old secretary from the office. She was laid back in his wing-backed chesterfield leather arm chair with her legs wide open and her skirt pulled up to reveal black stockings and suspenders. She had one hand pulling her black lace knickers to one side and the other hand stroking her clitoris. Her eyes were closed and she was moaning with pleasure. He stopped in front of her and she opened her eyes. The invitation was in them and she didn't say a word. She just pulled the knickers further to one side. Well, what was James to do? He had no reservations and went in there like a rat up a drain pipe. There had been repercussions. His lady-friend upstairs had caught him red-handed, so to speak; up to the hilt in Karen and had stormed off home in a flood of tears. She later forgave them both and they promised never to do it again.

James had never felt guilty about what had happened. Karen had offered herself to him out of her own needs and James had accepted the invitation. She had used him as she would have used a vibrator and there was no emotional involvement. The fact that his lady-friend at the time had forgiven him and Karen for their indiscretion also meant that he had no need to harbour feelings of guilt. In any event, James Parker was not the kind of man who took advantage of vulnerable women. He never seduced them and it wasn't in his nature to be a sexual predator. If anything, was it possible that it was he who was the 'game' for predatory women?

Memories of Helen and Karen passed through his mind and he felt safe. He recognised his own vulnerability, his strengths and his potential weaknesses, and thus recognising them, he had his defences in place. But he was concerned in case his rejection of Marianne's advances had caused any adverse reaction in her. Any idea that he or his reaction to her advances had a detrimental effect was not something that he would be able to tolerate. He had to check that she was alright, and the predominant thought going through his mind was that he had failed her as a therapist. In response to her plea for him to help her he had made her a promise that he would. But he had walked out on her. To James Parker that was unacceptable. He had made her a promise, and a promise was sacred. He would keep his promise. His own integrity depended on it.

Chapter 10

Common Threads

Marianne's phone answered on the second ring, 'Hello,' said the little girl's voice that James had come to expect from her whenever she spoke on the phone.

'Are you all right Marianne?' he asked.

'Yes,' she replied 'I'm fine. How about you? Are you all right?' Her question about his well-being surprised him.

'Yes, I'm fine,' he replied.

'Oh, that's all right then,' she said.

James was surprised and actually began to feel a bit silly. He had been concerned about Marianne's reaction to his rejection of her advances, and yet here she was being concerned about him. He was mystified and his curiosity, which was first triggered by her seeming ability to switch from a little girl's voice to a more mature and confident one, suddenly became reinforced. His thoughts were interrupted by Marianne's voice asking him if he would still help her as he had promised. 'I'll come and help you only if you promise to behave,' he told her.

'All right,' she said. 'I promise. When will you come?'

He knew that she collected her children from school at about three in the afternoon. He thought that if the children were around then his integrity would be safe. He had to report for work to a general haulier at 7 pm, and he suggested that he come over at about 5. She agreed.

When James arrived at the house and entered the parlour he was greeted by all three children and sitting at the table reading his manuscript was Arthur, their father. He raised his eyes from the page and greeted James with a shy smile then resumed his focus on the page without saying anything. The children gathered around James and made him welcome as Marianne put the kettle on. 'You will have to stay in here with your father,' Marianne told them. 'I need to talk to Mr. Parker in the front room, and I don't want to be interrupted. OK?'

She made them both tea and led the way into the front room, where earlier that day she had made herself available to him. Now, with all her family in the next room James felt safe, and Marianne had adopted another persona. She seemed confident and in control, the affectionate and efficient mother of three children who seemed to respect her and do as they were told.

'I promised to help you,' began James. 'But I need to know how you need help. I can show you how to tap into your own hidden reserves and I can help you learn how to be more in control of your own life if that's what you want.'

'That's what I want,' she said. 'I need to be in control and not be depressed all the time.'

'Good,' said James. 'Now I want you to listen to what I am saying and be aware of what is happening.' But before he could go any further one of the children came in and interrupted.

'Can my Dad talk to you?' she asked. '

'OK,' said James, 'If he wants to.'

Marianne got up from her seat and said, 'I'll get him for you.' She left the room and Arthur came in and sat down.

'I need to talk to you,' he said.

'What's the problem?' asked James.

'No problem. Marianne seems to be fine. She isn't afraid to go out of the house anymore; in fact, we all had a nice day at the ice-rink the other day. It was nice for us to all be out and about as a family again.'

'Good,' said James. 'I am very pleased to hear it. All I have done is to show Marianne how to use self-hypnosis to get rid of her fear, but there is more to be done. In any event what has been done up to now seems to be working.'

Arthur didn't seem to be concerned or worried about Marianne. He seemed to be more concerned about himself as he began to tell James about a problem he had with his throat. 'I have to see the doctor in a couple of days,' he said in little more than a whisper. 'Marianne doesn't know about it and I don't want to worry her, but I think it could be serious.' He didn't actually use the word 'cancer', but James

got the impression that that was what he meant. Then Arthur changed the subject and started talking about his own personal relationship with someone he had just met. James listened with fascination as this man, who was the father of Marianne's three children, and was 25 years older than she was, began talking about an 18-year-old girl he had just met. 'It's a kind of destiny,' he was saying. 'I am drawn to them and it just seems so right, you know?'

James knew what he meant about being drawn to someone, and this made him feel a little uncomfortable. He was being drawn to Marianne and had to resist, and here he was in conversation with her legitimate partner and father of her three children. What James could not appreciate however, was how a middle-aged man was compelled to be drawn to women, or rather girls, much younger than convention accepted. The man sitting opposite him was the same age as himself, and here he was telling of a compulsion to be attracted to an 18-year-old.

'No, I don't know,' said James. 'Why don't you tell me about it?'

Just then Marianne came in and sat down on the sofa next to James. She had a strange kind of smile on her face that James was unable to interpret the meaning of.

'What are you two talking about?' she asked, expecting James to provide the answer. What was he to say? *We were just talking about Arthur's new 18-year-old girl friend and his throat cancer?* What he really wanted to know was what was going on between these two and where was he expected to fit in to their scheme of things. He had to give a reply, so he said, 'Oh, you know, how well you seem to be doing and where we go from here.'

Marianne seemed pleased that she had been the topic of conversation, then she said, 'That's enough now,' and looking straight at Arthur she continued with a somewhat stern timbre to her voice, 'He's mine. You can go now.'

Arthur stood up and left the room. James rose from his chair and followed him into the parlour where Arthur said his farewells to his children.

'Come and see us again Daddy,' they were saying. After he had said goodbye to James and to Marianne, Arthur left and the children crowded around James. They bade him take a seat and one of them picked up the copy of the manuscript that their father had been reading. The little one, Toni, asked him, 'Do you love my mum?' He looked at all the children as they hung in expectation on his answer. He looked at Marianne and he saw the same enigmatic smile that he had seen when she had come into the front room when Arthur had been there. There was smugness about that smile, like the cat that had got the cream. He turned to the child who had asked him the question, 'Why do you ask?' he said.

'Because you wrote in her book love and kisses – look.' The girl showed him his own handwriting on the dedication page of his manuscript. He looked again at Marianne, and she lowered her eyes in a display of coyness.

What the hell is going on here? he asked himself. He was beginning to feel somewhat trapped. It was as if he had been set up, - that there was a conspiracy between all of them, Marianne, the children and even their father. The father had given him a secret about his own health that he didn't want Marianne to know about and then in the next breath he had told James about a new girlfriend he had met who was only 18 years old. It was as if he was giving James the go-ahead to get involved with Marianne - to get her off his hands, and the children were agreeing. That's what it felt like. James felt as if he was being plucked and trussed ready for the sacrifice. It was time to go to work and it was time to get out.

That night he took a trunk up to Peterborough and back, and throughout the journey his mind was occupied with the day's events, and more...

He had learned from his own manuscript, given to him by one of history's most revered spiritual philosophers, to look for the paradox – to look at a situation from as many perspectives as his developing awareness would allow. Everyone has their own perspective on any given situation. All truth could be seen from the point of view of the observer or the experiencer. He looked at the situation from Marianne's perspective, from the children's, from Arthur's and from his own, as a therapist and as a man. He had tried to live his life according to the ancient philosophy of the Taoists and this had given him some amazing insights. He applied these techniques as he drove up to Peterborough and back, and he could see much that had previously been hidden.

Marianne had been abandoned from birth, her trust in her adoptive parents had been betrayed, and she had been abused by care-workers. Arthur had committed a crime against her when she was legally under-age for sex and made her pregnant. Then, it seems to James, that he had tried to keep her

dependant on him in order to satisfy his desire for young girls. Perhaps this could explain why Marianne still behaved in a child-like way sometimes. Neville had apparently abused her until she had reached breaking point and had feared a violent outcome. Marianne, he felt, needed to exercise absolute control in her life but didn't have the necessary skills to do it. James felt that she may have never experienced a proper loving relationship and she had expressed two very clear wishes to James, that he help her gain control of her own life and give her the love she desperately needed. It was apparent that she had discussed this with the children and they had agreed with her that James was the perfect candidate to replace their own father in his relationship with their mother. As for Arthur; it seemed to James that he had recognised an opportunity to escape from the punishment that Marianne was inflicting on him for taking advantage of her vulnerability when she had been younger. It all made sense.

As his automatic pilot guided the truck up the A1(M) and back, James carefully considered his options.

He could abandon his promise and walk away. He could tread a tightrope with Marianne by helping her to take control of her own life whilst maintaining his professional integrity, or the unthinkable – he could give her what she so desperately needed – to be loved by someone who would really care about her. This meant not only taking her on, with all the unknown risks and unforeseen problems, but also the welfare of the children. That was a tall order for anyone. He recalled the fact that Marianne fitted with a type of person that he was either drawn to or they were drawn to him. His mind wandered back through the memories: -

The last time he had been to Crete for a holiday had been that very year, in June. He had met another therapist from Vienna, a very attractive woman who had been staying in the same accommodation as he. They got chatting about what they did and it transpired that they both practised the same kind of hypnosis, so they had a lot to talk about. She was good company, and he had been attracted to her. Their conversations got around to relationships and she announced that she was engaged to be married to a surgeon back home in Vienna. That put an end to any ideas he had about a holiday romance, but the topic led to his own personal relationships. Her psychoanalytic enquiring mind probed him and she was able to bring to his attention something that had lurked just beneath the surface of his own consciousness. All the meaningful relationships he had experienced with women were with those who had lost their fathers at an early or premature age. In the beginning there was Helen. She had no father and had travelled from the midlands to the South coast in search of a new life. Then there was the girl he married. Her parents had split up when she had been only two years old. There was Julia who had been born to parents late in their lives and her father had died when she was just a girl. He remembered her behaviour as being girlish and vulnerable at times. Then there was Penny whose mother had died when she was very young and her father had remarried. She too often behaved very young for her age. The woman her father had married following the death of her mother was demanding of his time and Penny had felt abandoned by him. He realised that there was this one common thread that ran right through all these relationships.

Something else triggered in his memory as he drove back from Peterborough that night, and other thoughts raced through his mind. When he had lived in the mountains in Crete a local man, Vasilis, a bee-keeper from a neighbouring village, had come to seek his advice. 'Why come to me?' James had asked him.

'Because you are everybody's father,' the man had replied.

'What do you mean I am everybody's father?' James asked him.

'Well,' said the man. 'You help everybody and you ask for nothing in return. You helped Sophia when she was thrown out of the village, and you help people with all sorts of things, just like a father does. Everybody calls you *the father in the mountains*.'

James listened to Vasilis with astonishment and he realised what was being said to him. He recalled a time when he had been invited to spend a few days on the Island of Ghavdos with a group of people. There he met others with whom he became friendly; and two of them, a young American woman and a young man from Manchester had an attraction for each other. They had come to him to ask his permission for them to have a liaison with each other. He thought it odd at the time, but now it reinforced the idea that this local man was putting to him. He was a father figure to a lot of people. That's why he got the blame when the alcoholic had ruined the business at the village taverna. He was seen by the locals as the headman of all the foreigners who had come to live there.

On his return from that holiday where he had met the therapist from Vienna, he had experienced an overwhelming compulsion to contact Julia. He realised just how much he had missed her and he realised what her need had been. It was a need that all these women had, and he hadn't recognised it. They all needed him to be their surrogate father. He could even see it in his own daughter. She had experienced the loss of him, her own father at the age of eleven when he had separated from her mother. She had found a man who was twenty-five years her senior and he was a truck driver just like he was. His own daughter had found herself a surrogate father to care for her. It suddenly became so plain to see. He had failed Julia because he had been too stupid to see what she really needed from him. He realised that he had failed in all of his previous relationships because he had not seen the real needs of the women he had been drawn to and they to him.

It had been five years since he had seen Julia, but he had written to her on his return from holiday, just to see how she was. He got no reply. He tried to telephone her but the number was discontinued. *She must have moved house*, he thought; so, he went to the supermarket where she had worked carrying a letter that he hoped would be passed on. He went in to the staff entrance where he had often collected her from work and a receptionist had asked him, 'Can I help you?'

'I don't know,' he had begun, 'but I was wondering if Julia Craven still worked here?'

'Oh yes,' came the reply, 'but that isn't her name any more. She got married two years ago and now she goes by her married name. What was it you wanted with her?'

'Oh, I'm just an old friend of the family and I gathered she had moved. Could you give this to her please?' He handed over the letter and left.

James had driven away trying desperately to hold the pain in his chest. Six years had passed but his love for Julia was as strong as it had ever been. A few days later he received Julia's letter. She had thanked him for enquiring after her well-being and had told him that she was happily married and that it would not be a good idea for them to be in touch as her husband wouldn't like it. She had wished him well. It was the final goodbye, and now he had finally lost her – irrevocably. There were good days and bad days after that. Every time he passed by the turning off the motorway to where she had lived, where they had shared time together, he felt the pangs of grief, but he always kept them in check. Gradually it got better, until that day when he realised that his pet project, his need to get his PhD that had been inspired by Julia had come to nothing. That was the day his heart had broken.

Now here was another one: A fatherless child who needed to be loved and cared for in more ways than one. The pattern was being repeated again, and this time he had recognised it. *Was there no breaking this cycle?* he wondered. All the writings in his manuscript were being validated, and he couldn't ignore them any longer. There was a force that he had no control over and it was taking him to Marianne. She was the same age that his wife had been when they had parted, and it seemed as if he was being given an opportunity to fulfil the need that he had inherited from his own father – to be a family man proper - to be a father.

The Peterborough trip was a quick turnaround and James arrived home at about three in the morning. He sat at his desk and asked for guidance, and this is what he wrote:

Dealing with Rejection

Thrust from the warm protective comfort of the womb into a frightening cold world must be a terrifying experience. The plaintive cries of the new-born infant serve two purposes. One is to clear its lungs and breathe, and the other is to say, 'I am here and I need feeding and protection or I will die. I am totally helpless without you and I need your loving care and attention. Please take away this terrible feeling of being cast out.' The first person to touch the child, skin to skin and to allow it to suckle is usually its natural mother. The bond is formed and both are relieved from the emotional and physical trauma of the birthing process and the cycles of life begin.

If the natural mother responds to the immediate needs of the child with love then the nurturing received becomes the core of survival for the new born infant. Without the love of its parents the child feels that it cannot survive. For this child, the need to be loved is deeply ingrained in its psyche, but there is a deep wound.

No newly born infant that survives has been rejected completely, because the very fact that it survived means that there was someone there to pick it up and feed it. To pick up a new born infant and feed it is an act of love.

Rejection comes later – when the mother either doesn't care or doesn't have the resources to provide the care. Rejection is inevitable at some time during the life-span of every individual, and the natural process of learning how to deal with rejection usually begins during the adolescent years when dating the opposite sex begins. When the teenage girl is rejected for the very first time, her whole world seems to come to an end. This is because she has never learned what it feels like to be rejected and the experience is new. It is frightening because it undermines the security to her survival that was learned through being loved as a new born infant. To be loved and to survive go together – they are one and the same.

If the infant is rejected at birth its will to survive overcomes the absence of parental love and it adopts coping strategies that are learned by trial and error. In short it adopts a strategy for dealing with rejection very early in its life cycle. If one strategy doesn't work then it will try another until it finds one that does work. The strategy adopted may either be one that is appropriate for later life or it may not. For example, if either screaming at the top of its lungs, or cooing and looking cute brings attention then that's what it will do. If a loving parent is in very close proximity and the initial strategy is to coo and look cute then that is the strategy that will always be adopted. But if the infant is neglected and there is not a parent (or any other person) in close proximity then it will have to scream its lungs out to get attention. All this is essential in getting food and protection for survival. Meanwhile the link between the coping strategy and behaviour is reinforced in preparation for the next cycle of development. All subsequent action and all behaviour are the outward manifestation of a powerful emotion that the infant does not have the knowledge or experience to understand. The actions and behaviour are autonomic and reflexive reactions to this emotion, and this pattern of response between the emotion and physical expression are ingrained in the neurological network of the individual. Such is the power of this emotion. This emotion is fear of abandonment, or rejection. Rejection means death. At any time in later life, if the individual who was loved during infancy has never learned to deal with rejection, when they are rejected the fear they experience is their response to the fear of death. Therefore, rejection is unacceptable. The longer this continues into a person's mature years the worse it gets, and so does the fear of death. Coping with this takes on a variety of forms:

To reject others first before they reject oneself is one way.

To refuse love from another person is another way.

To cling to someone although that person may be bad is yet another.

The cure is to be rejected by a loved one and by so doing to learn that to be rejected is not to die. The later this cure is administered the harder it is to take.

James did as he had learned to do whenever he received inspired thoughts. He read what he had written, and his education about what was affecting Marianne had begun. He felt guided and this gave him the confidence he needed to be able to respond to Marianne's request, wherever that may lead him. He finished absorbing what had been written and retired to his bed. It had been a long day and a very busy night.

James emerged from a deep untroubled sleep at earlier than usual on Thursday 21st September. It was decision time. After breakfast and bath, he got dressed and sat at his desk. Marianne had told him that Dr Peck said it was OK to love a client if that would do the trick, but if he was to do that then he would be breaking the rules of professional ethics, and that made him feel very uncomfortable. He went to his book case, selected half a dozen volumes and spent the next hour going through them, researching the subject of personal relationships with clients. He learned that what he was facing was a very common problem and it had been well documented. One thing stood out from all the articles he discovered – it's OK to fall in love with somebody, but it's not OK to take advantage of a vulnerable client. James knew that he was not the type to take advantage, and it was because of his integrity that he was reading this research. He needed to be absolutely assured that if he was to respond to Marianne's needs he had to be doing what was right. His conscience would not permit any other way. At about twelve-thirty the phone rang. It was Marianne.

'Hello Marianne. How are you?' he asked.

'I'm OK,' she replied. 'Can you come today? I need to talk to you.'

'And I need to talk to you too,' said James. 'I'll be right over.'

Forty minutes later James rang Marianne's door bell and as she answered it she peered from behind the door with a shy, nervous smile that reminded him of an expectant teenager. This was a new persona he was seeing. He was intrigued, just as he had been intrigued by the change in her voice from being child-like to being more assertive. His curiosities deepened as she bid him to enter.

She led into the parlour leaving him to close the front door behind him and stood in the middle of the room waiting for him to enter. She was wearing a skirt for the first time since their meetings had begun. She looked demure and inviting, but with a shyness that portrayed a new side to her. He moved towards her and pulled two chairs from the table. He offered her one and sat in the other. She sat and faced him.

'I'll keep my promise if you will keep yours,' he said to her.

'What are those?' she asked him.

'I promise to help you if you promise to be good,' he said.

'OK, she replied.

'Good, began James as he stood up from his chair and walked behind her. 'I am going to stand behind you and place my hand behind the back of your neck, and I just want you to tell me what you are experiencing,' he told her. She sat still as he opened a channel to his higher source and closed his eyes. 'Tell me what you feel,' he said after a few moments.

'I feel frightened. What are you doing?' she asked him.

'I'm doing nothing but allowing positive energy to run through your body. Tell me what you feel. Focus inside yourself and tell me what is happening.'

'There is a feeling in my stomach and it frightens me,' she said.

'I want you to understand what you are feeling,' James began. 'You are feeling an energy within you that is the source of your personal power. You have more power than you think you have. When you squeeze your right fist you bring your positive resources to the fore. You know this works because you have used it to get out of the house. Now I want you to recognise the power within yourself. Squeeze your right fist now and put it over your stomach, over the source of your power.'

She squeezed her fist and put it over her stomach. Then suddenly she got up out of the chair and said, 'I don't like it. I don't want to do that anymore.' She seemed genuinely afraid. He had witnessed similar reactions to this method in one or two other clients. Often the reaction would be an abreaction with tears and sometimes deep sobbing as negative emotions are released. He had one client jump up out of the seat and run out of the room. Whatever it was that was the source of this energy was very powerful and it sometimes took the recipient by surprise. He had to find another way for Marianne to receive this kind of healing. That was the very first time that James had touched a very sensitive nerve in Marianne, and if he had known then what to expect then his relationship with her would have taken a very different turn. But James had no knowledge at that time. Knowledge would come later.

'It's all right,' he said. 'There's nothing to be afraid of.' He resumed his seat and she, surprisingly, sat on the floor with her back to the door of a closet. For a moment he thought she was going to put her thumb in her mouth, but she didn't. She just sat there looking at the floor with her hands in her lap.

'Why are you sitting on the floor?' he asked her.

'I often do,' she replied as she looked up at him. 'I like it on the floor. Sometimes I sleep on the floor.' She still looked frightened, and James thought of another way to get her to open up to the source of positive energy that he knew would clear away any negative energies from her aura.

'I am going to ask you to open your chakras,' he began. Her response was immediate:

'NOOOO!!!' she exclaimed. 'I don't want that.'

'What do you know of the chakras?' he asked her. She didn't reply but looked again at the floor in front of her. James found himself once again confronted by the same frightened person he had encountered when he had first entered her house two weeks earlier. *What is going on here?* He moved to sit on the floor in front of her and she cringed further back into the door at her back.

'Don't touch me,' she said. She was indeed the same frightened person that he had first encountered. He went back to his chair and sat down.

'I'm not going to touch you,' he told her, 'but I am only trying to do what you asked me to do. I'm trying to help you in the best way that I know how. You do trust me, don't you?'

She looked up at him and said, 'I want you to love me. Please make love to me.'

'Come here and sit down. I want to talk to you,' he said. Marianne got up off the floor and sat opposite him.

'I'm not allowed to make love to you as your therapist. You know that, don't you? If I were to make love to you then I would not be able to work with anyone else ever again. I have over thirty people on my books who come to see me from time to time and I have to increase that to over fifty if I am to succeed in what I plan to do. Do you understand me?'

'Yes, you would,' she said. 'You are a good man and a good therapist. You have to keep doing what you are good at, and I can help you. I want you to help me and I want you to carry on helping other people, but I want you to love me, only me.'

'Oh Marianne,' said James in exasperation. 'What am I to do with you?'

'Make love to me now,' she said as she began to rise from her chair towards him. He stopped her and gently pushed her back into her seat.

'Wait and listen please,' he said. She sat down and listened to him. 'If I were ever to make love to you it would be because I love you. I can only make love to you if I were to do it, not just with my body, but with my heart and my soul – my very Being. If I were to make love to you it would be out of a total commitment to you, and I would have to give up everything else that is important to me. Do you understand what I am saying to you? You are asking me to give myself to you, heart, body and soul.'

Marianne got off her chair and knelt before him with her forearms resting on his thighs. 'Then make love to me,' she said. She then straightened her body to rise up to him and kissed him gently. 'Love me please,' she repeated.

'OK,' he said. 'I will love you, but you must do something for me.'

'All right, what is it?' she said with a half-smile.

'I am running a course in self-hypnosis that starts tomorrow evening, and I want you to attend.' He explained the format and who will be there. 'There will only be half a dozen people, all patients from the clinic and they all want to learn the same thing that you do. Will you come?'

'Yes, but only if you make love to me,' she replied as she once again stood up and put her arms around his neck. He felt her warmth against his own body and he let her embrace him. James felt his inhibitions fall away and he hugged her back. It surprised him when it felt right. It felt good. He was allowing himself to let go and fall in love once again, and it felt all right.

She looked up at him and said, 'Not now. I'm not quite ready yet. Come tomorrow and I'll be ready.' She had reverted once again to the persona of the coy teenager that had greeted him at the door, but with a difference. She was in control and she knew it. But James didn't. Not yet.

Chapter 11

Questions of Fear

James had plenty to think about that night as he took another night trunk up to Peterborough and back. All his options for helping Marianne had been closed. He couldn't get her to see a doctor. Even Dr Weston had offered no solution. He couldn't get her to see a psychotherapist, and of his close colleagues, Jean was away in America and Andrew was the wrong gender. Marianne had successfully backed James into a corner. She had managed to avoid being drawn into consultations with James at the clinic and had kept him on her own turf where she was undoubtedly in control. Whenever James had attempted to use his healing skills she had masterfully avoided them. James was no fool and he could see that he was being manipulated. However, what troubled him deeply was the irrevocable fact that Marianne Craven was deeply disturbed and desperately needed some kind of psychological help. Any attempt by him to get her to see someone more qualified and more experienced was totally unacceptable to her, and she had given her reasons. She did not trust anyone.

James's curiosity had been triggered by Marianne's apparent ability to switch her persona. He had been able to identify at least three of them. There was the frightened little girl who desperately needed help. This had been the one that had called him in the first instance and he had first laid eyes on. Then there was the intelligent, adult mother of three children who got depressed, didn't like shopping and couldn't cook. Then there was the one who smiled as if she were the cat who got the cream. This is the one who told Arthur, 'He's mine. You can go now'. Was this the same one who was the uninhibited temptress that had no reservations when it came to open seduction? And finally, there was the shy teenager persona. How many was that? Four? *Yes, four at least, maybe five*, thought James. He nearly forgot the one who sat on the floor and almost put her thumb in her mouth. On reflection he was sure now that it had been an unconscious reflex, but she had stopped herself. That was probably the same persona that was the frightened one. They had both asked him to not touch her. That was the real anomaly; one that said 'don't touch me' and then, almost in the next breath she changed to the one that said, 'make love to me'. James had no experience of witnessing such dramatic 'switching' before and he became fascinated by the phenomenon.

Marianne had several different personas, and he couldn't predict which one he would be dealing with at any given moment until she switched to one he recognised. He understood the principal of people's different parts, where the personality was regarded as many-faceted. Each facet was like one of the facets on a diamond. All the facets combined to make the whole. We all behave according to the persona, or facet of our personality that has the relevant skills and abilities for a given situation. We all have an angry part, a loving part, a creative part, etc, etc. But these different facets of a personality are not nearly as differentiated as they were with Marianne Craven. This troubled James and at the same time it fascinated him. He felt strongly that he would learn an awful lot from Marianne about what made her tick and exactly what her problem was. But she was only going to allow that to happen if he were to agree to satisfy the needs of the seductive sub-personality. He began to feel as if he were being lured into the black widow's parlour. *Come into my parlour, said the spider to the fly*, thought James. It was the same feeling he'd had when confronted by Marianne's children when they asked him if he loved their mother. She had been weaving her web from the very beginning and she was using the children and Arthur to help her weave it. His instinct then was to get out whilst the going was good. That was a fear response. Then he began to think about fear. For this he had to come out of highway hypnosis and automatic pilot. He pulled into the next lay-by off the A1(M) and switched off the engine. It did not pay to reflect on fear whilst driving a forty-four-ton truck.

He had written about fear in his manuscript. He had been uneducated then and what he had written had been from inspiration from a higher source. Then, at university, what he had previously written had been validated by his studies in psychology, and this had taught him to trust his inspiration.

Fear was an autonomic nervous system response to a threat, that was inherited by genetics throughout the evolution of the species when man had been a hunter and the hunted. The 'flight or fight' response was well known in psychology, biology and anthropology. It is an aid to survival in a dangerous world. As a practitioner of stress management techniques James' knowledge of this kind of fear had served him well, and he had also been able to acknowledge its significance from his experiences as a soldier. As a survival instinct this kind of fear protects us from death which is an integral part of the mechanism. We all therefore have an inherited fear of death. His thoughts went back to what he had written recently about abandonment, again from inspiration. To the new-born infant abandonment triggered the fear of death. Abandonment and death meant the same thing. Marianne's fear of abandonment ran deep, and he could not abandon her. He knew that now. But that was her fear and not his.

What then of his fear? He had faced certain death twice. Once when he was shot at as a soldier and the other time when he had turned a truck over. His training as a soldier had conditioned in him a response that allowed him to ignore the threat and take positive action.

He had been twenty-five years old at the time he had turned his truck over and that had been a completely different kind of experience. As the truck began to roll onto its side at a speed approaching forty-five miles per hour downhill with a full load of twenty tons of timber, his mind raced as the events unfolded; as if in slow motion.

His thoughts were of imminent death as there was no escape and no positive action he could take. He held on to the wheel and said to himself, *Lights out, end of story, goodbye world.* The ground came up at him through the shattering windscreen and the truck rolled over spilling its load all around him. He was spilled out through the windscreen, taking the steering-wheel with him and the truck rolled over him and finished up two hundred yards down the road with the cab crushed flat. His own momentum carried him into a forward roll and as he came to his feet he was aware of moving timber beneath them. His immediate thought then was that his feet would be chopped off by the moving timber. All came to rest and he stood there amongst the wreckage of his load and looked at the truck stretched across all three lanes from the soft grass verge to the central crash barrier. He was in shock, but two things surprised him. First that he was still alive, and second, that he had experienced absolutely no fear of his imminent death. In fact, he had experienced the exact opposite – an overwhelming sense of peace. When faced with certain death he had experienced a calm and peaceful tranquillity, and an acceptance of the end of this life without any fear at all. Each day he had lived after that seemed like a bonus to him and his fear of death had been totally obliterated.

This reminder of the paradox between the fear of death and the experience of peacefulness took his thoughts to another time and another place, three years after he had turned the truck over.

He had been driving across the Arabian Desert with another driver in another truck. The two of them had pulled off the side of the road for the night. They had switched off their engines and climbed down to the hard-packed desert floor to brew some tea and make camp for the night, but when they stood together in the gathering dusk a fear gripped them both. They looked at each other and then looked at the scene around them. They stood in the middle of nothingness. The road stretched like a black ribbon, dead straight as far as the eye could see from East to West, and that's all there was. The horizon all around them was straight. They sensed the curvature of the earth all around them and they were in the middle – in the middle of nothing. The feeling of aloneness, reinforced by the silence was crushing to the senses. They could see and hear nothing. The fear and panic they both felt was not the fear of being stranded in the desert, but the knowledge - the actual experience – the truth of aloneness. And yet, after the initial panic, there was this great feeling of peacefulness. It was a similar peace that James had experienced when his truck had been turning over. The only way he could interpret this to himself was to see it as the peace of acceptance. He moved away from his friend and the two trucks and sat down on the desert sand to watch the remains of the setting sun and then, as the sun slipped ever closer to the distant horizon, the peacefulness suddenly overwhelmed him. At first there were silent tears of joy, and then nothing. No emotion, no judgement, no right or wrong, no time. The moment was eternity and eternity *was* the moment. No fear and no need to do or think anything. He had discovered *Oneness*, although he hadn't realised it at the time. As with everything else that James Parker had learned, it all started with an unexplained experience and the understanding would come later. At the time he had turned his truck over he'd had a spiritual experience, and here again sitting in the desert he had another one. He had faced death and fear and he had found something else. But what he had found was very hard to explain, and it would be many years before even he realised what it was.

Again, he found himself sitting in his truck in the middle of the night on the A1(M) thinking these thoughts. *What did all this have to do with Marianne Craven?* he wondered. *Strange how the mind wanders from one thing to another.* He gathered his train of thought back to where it should have been.

There was the fear that was triggered by Marianne's advances and cunning. This was his fear of women who could cause him emotional harm. He had been betrayed twice by those he had loved, Helen and his ex-wife. His response to these experiences had been to avoid emotional involvement until he had met Julia. She had brought down his barriers by her own innocence and her need to be loved. Now Marianne was doing something similar. There was the innocent who needed to be loved, and it was this image of her that he held in his mind. But there was the other one. Perhaps this was the one that Penny had warned him about from her own intuition, and Marianne herself had told him that she hurt people all the time and she could hurt him. James felt that his previous experiences of betrayal had adequately prepared him for this kind of fear and he dismissed it. At any other time in the past he would have acknowledged it and backed away from Marianne, but this time, rightly or wrongly – he dismissed it.

Then there was yet another kind of fear, and this was without any doubt the worst kind. He couldn't remember when this had been. It didn't matter. But he had been dreaming. No, it wasn't a dream, it was a nightmare, a very real, vivid nightmare. More than vivid – it was lucid. He had found himself in a room with a closed door facing him. Behind the closed door was something that wanted to get to him. It was violent and menacing. An unseen and unknowable presence that threatened his very soul. He was helpless and terrified, and as he awoke from the dream, the malevolence of the unseen was still with him. He felt a fear and a dread that was palpable. He could taste it and it enveloped him. It was dark and terrible. He found it impossible to describe, other than it was tangible - real. As he grappled to understand this dread that surrounded him he recalled a similar experience as a child when he had stayed at the home of his grandparents. He had gone to bed and as he snuggled beneath the bed clothes he had experienced this same kind of fear. He had been still wide awake and it hadn't been a dream. He hid under the bed clothes and he had prayed the Lord's prayer. The feeling of dread went away and he went to sleep. After he had recalled this previous experience as a child, and as the malevolence from his nightmare persisted, he said the Lord's prayer and the malevolence had left. Remembrance of this kind of fear led James's thoughts onward to a similar experience. But this time it had been shared by others

It had been shortly after his return from Crete and he had joined a development circle from the Christian Spiritualist Church to help him develop and understand his embryonic healing abilities. The circle had comprised seven people including himself and had made great progress in their abilities to communicate with high-level guides who served as teachers. The guides all had names and each member of the circle had an appointed guide. They imparted valuable information and great wisdom.

One evening they were told by one guide that they would receive a visit from someone else. This message had been forgotten until two weeks later, as they all sat in meditation, a presence joined them. Each member of the circle began to feel uncomfortable, and one of the circle, a young man, began to write whilst in deep trance. As the words were scrawled across the page, all the other members of the group became more and more agitated, pulling faces of disgust and wiping their mouths as if they had been drinking something fetid or poisonous. The only person in the group who had not experienced this disgust was James. He was not in an altered state, but fully aware, and as he looked over the shoulder of the man who was writing he saw these words scrawled across the page, 'James doesn't know. He is helpless. Ha, ha, ha.'

James had immediately called all the others to conscious awareness, and the man who had been writing had to be shaken from his trance. The entire group had experienced the awful malevolence of a dark presence and it shook them to the core. The guides had allowed this to happen as a learning exercise, as part of their education in the nature of the spirit realms. For emerging healers, it was important for them to know that besides the power of healing light and divine love there was also the dark side that caused illness and chaos and mayhem. To be warriors of light they had to know their enemy. Every member of this development circle was frightened out of their wits and gave up. The circle disbanded and never met again. The dark entity that had visited them had succeeded in its work, and the only member of the circle who stayed true to his cause had been James, but he was left without his comrades in the fight and had to continue with his education in solitude. He had come to know

something of the power of the adversary of goodness and light. The power it had was to put 'fear' into the hearts of men, but he still had a long way to go to find the means to defeat it. The entity had been right – James didn't have the knowledge at that time – but he would have it later.

James's remembrance of these different kinds of fear brought him back to where he was, sitting in a truck in a lay-by off the A1(M) at one o'clock in the morning. He decided that the fear he had experienced in the presence of Marianne Craven was of the emotional involvement kind, and strangely enough, he was more afraid of Penny in that regard than Marianne. He had already resolved that kind of fear for himself but his fear regarding Penny was for her. She had been trying to trap him for years and he had resisted. James knew that any involvement with any other woman would have grave consequences for Penny. But was that really his problem? He had tried to get Penny to listen to him and go her own way, but she adamantly refused and continued to be a threat to him. Marianne Craven, he decided, was no threat to him in an emotional sense, and he felt that he would learn much from her, and she in turn could learn much from him. He then looked at the worst-case scenario if he should accede to her request to be loved by him.

If he had been married with a family and an established practise, or employed by the medical establishment as a psychologist, then what he was now considering would be out of the question. This had been his attitude when Marianne had first offered herself to him. But he was a free man. No wife, no established practise, and not a member of the professional establishment, although that had always been his goal. If he should enter into a relationship with Marianne then that goal would be forfeit. He then considered the outcome. He had been progressively disillusioned for some time now by the failure of patients to turn up for appointments and carry through with their prescribed course of treatment. Dr Weston had been the only GP in the area to even consider the benefits of hypnotherapeutic interventions, and the absence of health authority funding further made James objectives hard to attain. He had been left with the self-hypnosis courses which were about to begin. This was primarily aimed at the corporate market and if he should have to resign from being a therapist then the corporate market would still be open to him – perhaps if he had the time. But to commit himself to Marianne and her family would be a full-time commitment. He knew that.

Weighing all these options in his mind he considered that he had very little to lose. In fact, he may even have more to gain in terms of knowledge and experience of the mysteries of the mind. It would certainly put Penny in the picture and get her to let go of him. That would be a big plus. Again, on the plus side there was much to learn about what was troubling Marianne. He had received no training in the treatment of patients suffering from the long-term effects of abandonment or abuse. In the total absence of someone to refer her to, and her refusal to see anyone else for that matter, meant that he was going to have to learn the hard way – by his own experience. But he had always done that anyway. It was a pattern with him. He would experience something, learn from it and then discover that what he had learned was validated by scientific research. What was it then that he was about to learn from Marianne Craven? And why had thoughts of so many different kinds of fear been triggered in his mind? He couldn't see the relevance of that just yet, and his curiosity was far greater than any fears or reservations he may have had.

Some would say he was being a complete fool, and others would think he was being brave. After all; who in their right mind would consider getting involved with a young woman who had what others considered to be an undefined mental illness, three kids and who lacked the social skills and strength to escape a man who had apparently exploited her vulnerability? James's colleagues would be horrified and Penny would have to face a fear she desperately wanted to avoid, but he had always been able to face his own fears – so far.

James came back to the reality of sitting in his truck on the A1(M) and realised that time had passed. He fired the engine and headed back to the depot. James needed to make a decision. No, it was more than a decision – he had to make a commitment that was to dominate his life beyond his ability to see into the immediate future. On his arrival back home, he sat at the computer keyboard and wrote:

'From out of the pit of despair.'

'Is that what I am to do? Reach into the pit of despair and bring you to safety?

Fear, anger, guilt, obsession, loneliness and all manner of emotional hurt can drag you into the pit of despair. My own compassion cannot bear to see that happen, cannot bear to see you there, cannot bear to see you suffer. I have a compulsion to reach in and pull you out. Am I

willing to risk the darkness of my own despair to understand and to snatch you from yours, or do I do it in blindness to my own danger? Am I a hero? Am I your saviour or a naïve idiot? What drives me to do this? Is it just my compassion that will not permit me to witness and turn my back on your despair? Or is it something else? Where does my compulsion come from? Is it just my compassion or am I instructed, guided, compelled by some higher Authority? I am nobody's hero and who wants to be hailed as a saviour? Not I. For I am like any other ordinary man. I have my weaknesses and my failings. Perhaps it is these that guide me.

So why do I ask these questions? Because there is a pattern that has repeated itself; that's why. This has happened before. I pulled others from their own despair and took them into my care until they were safe. Then they didn't need me anymore and they were free to live, as they should. It is when they were set free that I felt their loss. It is a grief – the loss of a loved one. To set them free is to love them.

There is another danger here. The compassion that pulled you from the pit of despair made you another kind of prisoner. You still fear abandonment and rejection. If there is fear then the task is not completed. If you lack confidence or acknowledgement of your own abilities to protect yourself from a world that would exploit you then the job is not done. Perhaps you really do want to reciprocate and love me, to care for me and to bring me comfort in times of despair. Your attention then becomes cloying and you put me in a prison of your making. You want to keep me for yourself and to possess me. If I can pull you free from the Pit then why can't you set me free? I want to be free, as I want everyone to be free. Is it too much to ask, or have I got it all wrong?

The truth may be a different affair altogether. Perhaps I am a deceiver and a user of your despair. Perhaps I brought you out of the pit to use for my own gratification and then discard you when you fail to please me. Perhaps I exercise my power over you and possess you. You lose yourself in a misguided love for me until you realise that I am not worthy of you. Or was I the one being used? If I am to be used in this way, to be an instrument that sets you free then I am willing. This is acceptable. But if my own selfishness is the motivator then this is not acceptable. Forgive me - for I am deeply sorry. It was not my deliberate intention. Or maybe it was? I don't know.

Other men may be led to believe that they have power over others when they cling. This belief is false. The power that makes others cling is their own fear. To exercise power over another is to instil fear into them. To possess them and threaten to cast them out – back into the Pit of Despair is a crime against humanity. Am I guilty of this crime? Was my offer to bring you out of despair in reality my way of filling my own emptiness?

Love is not possession. There can only be love in freedom and without fear. If you are afraid that I will leave you then there is not love – there is only fear.

Learn how to be not afraid. Free yourself from the power of others and from me and learn to live in freedom. If I have exercised power over you it is only because you were afraid. Relinquish your fear, find your inner peace and strength and set yourself free. Set us both free.

When the broken wing is mended the cage has to be left open. The mended wing has a function – freedom. If you are the bird that had a broken wing, the door is open. Take your freedom and be all that you can be. If I was the bird with the broken wing, I thank you. I want to be free. Please open the door and let me go.'

As always, James sat and read what he had written. Was this for Marianne or was it for Penny? He concluded that it was for both of them. But more than that, it was for all those whom he had loved. He'd had his failures and his successes, and Marianne was the latest in a long line that fitted a pattern. The pattern was set and he had to go with the flow. But there was still yet another fear that James had not yet encountered. A fear that he was still unaware of.

James arose at midday on Friday 22nd September and shortly after he had bathed and dressed the telephone rang. He knew who it was before he answered it. 'Hello,' said the little voice.

'Hello Marianne,' said James.

'Will you come to see me today?' she asked.

‘Yes,’ said James. ‘I have to go to the clinic and get the course certificates signed by Dr Weston and get the instructions for working the alarm, then I’ll come over. I’ll be there at about two. Is that all right?’

‘Yes,’ she said. ‘I’ll see you then.’ The voice had changed with the last sentence. It was the temptress.

After James had received the keys to the clinic from Dr Weston and the instructions on how to get in and switch the alarm on and off, he made his way to Marianne’s. She opened the door and let him in. She looked beautiful in a long, ankle-length dress, and her hair shone as it bounced in its fullness around her shoulders. This was definitely not the shy, frightened image that had first met him on their very first encounter. Her transformation was complete. This was a grown woman who knew what she wanted, and she knew that she was about to get it. Her broad, beautiful smile was one of genuine, heart-felt welcome. *Come into my parlour*, thought James, and entered.

Marianne stood expectantly as James moved towards her, but he took a chair from under the table and invited her to sit. ‘A little work first,’ he said as he was about to make one more attempt to counter Marianne’s resistance to the power of healing energy before he allowed himself to be led by her. He put his faith in the power of Divine Love and stood behind her.

James knew, from eight years of experience, that when he put his hand to the back of someone’s neck, the energy that flowed through him was of a divine source, and that it moved to the cause of a problem, whether it be physical, mental or emotional. If it were not to be in the scheme of things for him to allow himself to be seduced by Marianne Craven then this was the time to find out. He waited for her response to the energy that passed through him. His right hand rested gently on her shoulder, and she lifted her right hand to his. She moved it to her mouth and kissed his palm.

The response that Marianne had shown the last time he did this was to feel fearful and to jump up from her seat. This time she kissed his hand and then placed it under her chin and around her throat. She was surrendering herself, not to any healing energy that may have been present, but to him as a man. James had complete confidence and trust in the power of the healing energy, and if this is what was to be then so be it. She raised herself from the chair and faced him, confident and unafraid. ‘Let me show you round my little house,’ she said and led him by the hand up the stairs.

Marianne had to collect her children from school and James had to prepare for the evening’s first session of the self-hypnosis course. They parted, not as therapist and patient. But as lovers.

Chapter 12

Are You the Devil?

James arrived at the clinic at 6.45, let himself in and turned off the alarm, and set the scene for his class in the comfortable reception area. He placed the most comfortable chairs in a semi-circle, plugged in his audio cassette player and waited for his class to arrive. There were six patients of Dr Weston's, all female and there was one male friend of James who was going through a depressive period because of rejection by his girlfriend and the fact that she was expecting a child by another man. James's friend was also a therapist, and he had invited him for his constructive criticism of his teaching style and methods. He also thought that a bit of trance work might help him with coming to terms with his emotions. Then there was Marianne. She arrived on time, as did all the others, and she was the frightened little-girl she had been at their first meeting, nervous, shy and feeling uncomfortable in the presence of others.

James settled the group in the semi-circle of chairs and introduced himself. All listened intently as James explained what they were going to do, and Marianne just watched him fascinated by his professionalism. He took them through the two-hour session with a break for coffee half way. They all responded well with the exception one of Dr Weston's patients who had difficulty in getting into an altered state. James demonstrated his skill as he focused his attention on this one person whilst the others watched her go into a deeper state than any of them had achieved. Marianne observed the skills of this man she had just made love to, and she was in awe of him. She had been entranced by him from the very beginning and now she sat entranced throughout the entire session. But unknown to James, there was another part of her that secretly gloated with the power that she now held over him.

At the end of the session the group disbanded and Marianne waited for him to set the alarm and close up. James had arranged with his friend to go for a meal immediately after it had ended to discuss it. Not wanting his friend to be aware of the relationship he had established with Marianne he bid her goodnight with politeness as he had done with the others and she left. James returned home at about midnight after his meal with his friend and made ready for bed when the phone rang. It was Penny. She wanted to know how things had gone and they chatted for about an hour, as was Penny's ability to keep him on the phone longer than he wished. As soon as he put the phone down it rang again. This time it was Marianne and it was one o'clock in the morning.

The little-girl voice said, 'Hello.'

'Hello,' said James, 'it's late, I was just going to bed. What are you doing awake at this hour?'

'I want you to hurt me.' She said. James sat in stunned silence for a moment. 'You want me to what?' he asked in astonishment.

'I want you to hurt me. I know you will and I want you to hurt me now.' She said.

'I would never hurt you Marianne.' He said. 'Don't be silly. Why don't you go to bed?'

'I don't want to. I want you to talk to me, please. Would you like to know what I am wearing?'

'All right, what are you wearing?'

'Nothing.'

'What if one of the children were to come downstairs?'

'They won't.'

James didn't know what to do. Nothing like this had ever happened before and his thoughts raced for a solution. She said she wanted him to hurt her, but in what way? What did she mean? He didn't want to go down that particular road there and then but made a mental note to pursue her motives for saying that at a more convenient time. She wanted him to talk to her. This, on the other hand, was an opportunity.

'You want me to talk to you Marianne?' he asked.

'Yes please.'

'Do you like the sound of my voice?'

'Yes.'

He deliberately changed the tone of his voice to the hypnotic one and continued. 'It's a nice voice isn't it? A gentle one.'

‘Yes.’

She was going. He continued. ‘It’s a gentle calming voice. One that brings you comfort. Don’t you think?’

‘Yes.’ Her voice was now far away.

‘It is the voice of one who loves you and wants to comfort you. Whenever you hear this voice you feel at ease and nothing disturbs you. You feel OK.’

James took advantage of the opportunity to reinforce his hypnotic suggestions with positive affirmations and to give her post-hypnotic suggestions that would help him in his work when he needed to get her into a trance easily.

‘Whenever you hear this voice you know you are safe. You trust this voice don’t you Marianne?’

‘Yes.’

‘Whenever you hear the sound of my voice you become as relaxed and tranquil as you have ever been. Whenever you hear the sound of my voice you feel good and calm and comfortable. You trust this voice.’

‘Yes.’

‘Good. Now you can rest. You can go upstairs to bed and sleep a deep natural and resting sleep. When you awake in the morning you feel refreshed and ready to meet the glorious new day. OK?’

‘Yes.’

That’s good. Go to bed now and I’ll see you tomorrow. Good night Marianne.’

‘Good night.’

He waited for the click of the receiver being put down at the other end before putting his own phone down. He had accomplished a lot in that little telephone session and feeling pleased with himself he retired to bed. His last thoughts though were wondering what she meant when she asked him to hurt her. He was in the dark with this for now, but he wouldn’t be for long.

Just after James rose the next day the phone rang. Whenever he picked up the phone to answer it to Marianne her response was always the same, the little-girl voice that said very shyly, ‘Hello.’

‘Hello Marianne,’ replied James, ‘did you sleep well?’

‘Yes, thank you. Will you come today? I want to see you.’

‘When would be a good time?’ he asked. His priority hadn’t changed. He saw his response to Marianne’s seduction as the only alternative left open to him to get to the bottom of what disturbed her, and he would have to play her game. Will the children be there?’ he asked.

‘I can get Arthur to take them out if you want,’ she said.

‘OK, call me back when you have made arrangements. I have to be at work tonight at ten o’clock so there is plenty of time. I’ll speak to you later, OK?’

‘OK.’ Said Marianne. ‘I’ll call you back when I have spoken to Arthur. ‘Bye.’

James put the phone down and collected his thoughts. Marianne would want to get him into bed straight away. He knew that, but he wanted to get to the bottom of her problem and understand it so he could keep his promise to help her. He knew he was dealing with more than one personality and he needed time to research this phenomenon. Out came all the text books from his psychology degree, together with all his hypnosis text books. There was a lot of reading to do.

James went straight for the worst type of case he could have to be dealing with. So, the first book he picked up was R.D. Laing’s treatise on schizophrenia, *The Divided Self*. He had read it before during his studies and this time he re-read it with a new impetus. It gave him one or two insights about identity crisis and ontological insecurity, but he couldn’t categorically make the judgement that Marianne was schizophrenic. But then he wasn’t qualified or trained in this area. As he looked at the pile of books he had gathered together on his desk he realised that the commitment he had made was total. There would be no more time to research the link between emotions and diseases of the nervous system, but in a way, he was relieved. He wouldn’t have to go through all that frustrating bureaucracy and rewriting his thesis proposals over and over again. Marianne Craven had presented him with a mystery that gave him energy and resolve. He would succeed in getting to the bottom of this no matter how long it took. That was a promise he made for himself as well as for her.

Marianne rang James at about four in the afternoon and told him that Arthur was coming to collect the children to take them out for the evening. James packed his working gear in an overnight bag and headed over to her house. He arrived at about five o’clock and she opened the door once again with the shy teenager persona. She moved to the centre of the parlour and stood by the table waiting for him to shut the front door behind him and come to her. She had been with the children all day and Arthur

hadn't long been gone so she hadn't had time to change into something seductive or do her makeup, but nonetheless she looked radiant. She did not look ill at all. She looked fine and healthy in body and mind. She looked in control.

She held out her arms to him as he approached and hugged him. Not a hard hug, but a soft and gentle one that allowed her body to mould to his. James was to adopt a habit whenever she did this. He would place his primary healing hand, his left one, at the base of her neck, whilst his right hand went around her waist, and he would ask for guidance and healing energy from the higher powers. Marianne immediately would become more pliable and less manipulative for a time and James could offer her gentle suggestions. He reinforced his suggestions that he could be trusted to help her and asked her to sit down.

'But I want you to make love to me.' She said.

'Later. I want to talk to you first.'

The expression on Marianne's face changed from one of shy anticipation to one of a child sulking. 'I'll make you a cup of tea.' Said James and moved into the kitchen.

After making them a cup of tea and handing her one, he sat down at the table with her and began to ask about her experiences with psychologists whilst she was in care. He wanted to find a way to make his task easier by finding out what she had been diagnosed with by them. He was surprised when she answered his questions without any reservations at all.

'They were all fools.' She began. 'I answered all their questions and filled in their stupid forms and just told them what they wanted to hear. They all had different ideas about me. Some thought I was schizophrenic, others said I was bi-polar, whatever that means. I can't really remember much of what they said I had because for one thing I didn't understand what the hell they were talking about and besides, I was just playing games with them. They are so stupid. I could pretend to be whatever they wanted me to be, and sometimes when I got fed up with them I would just go off – you know. They called it some kind of fugue, whatever that is.'

'Did any of them suggest that you might be manic depressive, borderline personality or anything like that?' asked James.

'Oh yes. And OCD, (Obsessive compulsive disorder). Actually, I know that to be true because when I was pregnant with all my girls I had this compulsion to clean everything. I mean *everything*, even Arthur's tools. I would go all through the cupboards and I couldn't bear to see a spot of dust anywhere. It was terrible really. I don't have that now, I just get really depressed and I can't do anything.' She paused, then said, 'Can we make love now? I don't need all that crap. I just need you to love me. That's all I need.' She moved out of her chair and sat on the floor in front of James with her hands on his knees. She looked up at him. 'I'm not mad.' She said. 'I just need someone to love me. Do you love me James?'

James found himself switching from therapist to lover. He didn't realise it at the time but he was developing an ability to switch personalities in order to be attuned to her needs. This ability was to develop much further as time went on, and Marianne would be the first of them to notice it. She looked up at him as he switched from therapist to lover and said, 'Do you know that you have the most beautiful eyes?'

That evening, whilst Arthur had the children, James and Marianne took their love affair a stage further, learning about each other's bodies. She was definitely a mature woman sexually, nothing at all like someone who had any kind of mental or emotional problem. In bed Marianne was the perfect lover and perfectly normal in every way, and during the course of their love making she asked him, 'Will you hypnotise me now please?' He touched her on the forehead and induced her trance. It is well known in Eastern spiritual philosophies that the ultimate sexual experience is whilst in an altered state of consciousness. Marianne experienced the ultimate sexual experience.

A little later, when they had dressed and gone downstairs to await the return of Arthur and the children, she asked him, 'Where did you learn to make love like that?'

'Well,' began James, 'when I was a boy in the army we all read the *Kama Sutra* and the *Perfumed Garden*. It was a bit of a laugh at the time, and I never got the chance to practise any of it for some years. I was very shy as a young man and a late starter where women were concerned, but when I got the chance I put into practise what I had read, and I have used those techniques ever since. The ability to go into a trance is the icing on the cake. It just takes practise and consideration for your partner. If your partner is satisfied then so are you. It's that simple really.'

'I have never known anyone like you.' Said Marianne, just in time as the key entered the lock on

the front door and Arthur returned the children. He didn't enter himself but said goodbye to the children on the door step and left.

The children fussed around James and showed him their approval that he was there. He was made to feel very welcome as Marianne observed him and her children with a smile that showed an inner glow.

As James made his way to work he too felt an inner glow, and at the same time he was still none the wiser as to Marianne's state of mental health. Maybe she was more intelligent than all those psychologists and she had genuinely been playing games with them. There didn't seem to be any consensus on their diagnoses that offered him any clues. It seemed that the closer he got to her the more the mystery deepened. But he had some clues, obsessive compulsive disorder, depression, and anger that bordered on phobia. And of course, the marked differences in her personas. He needed to read a lot more.

That night was a long one and James didn't finish work until midday. It was one o'clock in the afternoon by the time he collapsed into bed after making sure his answerphone was switched on and slept soundly until the phone rang at about six in the evening. The answerphone kicked in but no one left a message. It could only be one of two people, Marianne or Penny. It dawned on him then that he had a real problem. He had two women that demanded his attention. He jumped up, swung his feet to the floor and rubbed his eyes. Oh shit, he thought to himself. *What have I done?*

He went to the phone and sure enough there had been no message left. He dialled the call back code and saw that it had been Marianne, so he called her.

'I've been calling all day,' she said, 'but I kept getting the answering machine. Where were you?'

'Fast asleep,' he said. 'Sorry, but I didn't get to bed till one o'clock and I didn't hear the phone until just now. Why didn't you leave a message?'

'I don't like those machines,' she said. 'Can I see you tonight. Can you come over?'

James needed time to collect himself, he needed time to work out how to deal with his situation with Penny and he needed time to read up on Marianne's known symptoms.

'We'll have to give it a miss tonight,' he began. 'I have things to do, and I normally go over and visit my daughter on a Sunday. Tell you what; I'll come over tomorrow when you've taken the kids to school and we can spend the day together. How does that sound?'

'That sounds good. We can go for a walk. I'd like that. Can you meet me by the school when I drop the children off?'

They made their arrangements to meet at half past nine by the school and James had just put the phone down when a familiar shape passed by the window just prior to the accompanying knock on the door. Penny had arrived as she always did, unannounced.

That evening was particularly difficult for James. It was almost as if he had seen it coming from afar – his involvement with a mystery woman. He had been trying to get Penny to release her grip on him for years for fear of her being hurt by being betrayed, and he had failed. Now he was in the mire up to his armpits. What would be the repercussions if he told her the truth? Alternatively, what would be the repercussions if he rejected Marianne now? There was not going to be a way out. Somewhere along the line the shit was going to hit the fan. His fear for Penny that she wouldn't have the resources to deal with their parting now paled into insignificance. He now feared for her terribly, and he feared for himself at being an instrument of her betrayal – something he had desperately wanted to avoid at any cost. His mind had been totally focused on Marianne's plea for help and her subtle avoidance of seeing another therapist. His own intentions had been focused on the repercussions to him as a professional therapist and the ramifications towards his work as a research student. He had examined all of his known fears, but he had missed this one completely. He didn't have an answer. He let Penny in.

He could have made it easy on himself there and then by telling Penny that he had met someone else. He could have told her that he was having an affair with someone she didn't know. He could have told her anything except that he was having an affair with a client who had serious emotional problems that had yet to be defined. But he couldn't tell her anything. He was struck dumb. He had never been in a situation before when he had two women at the same time in the same area. There had been a time long ago when he and his wife had separated and he had one girl friend on the coast, one in London and one in the North of England. They would never meet and they were nowhere near as intense as these two anyway. He was treading on new ground and he was really scared. When we are scared we tend to do nothing, so that's what James did that evening – nothing. But Penny didn't call

round just to be sociable, she wanted something. She wanted her own womanly needs to be met, and she wasn't going to go away until they had been. This was a new experience for James. His conscience burned as he responded to Penny's needs and he hated himself for it. His honesty had been compromised through fear. *There lies a message for us all*, he thought.

The next morning James and Penny rose at about seven thirty, and after a quick shower and breakfast James succeeded in ushering Penny on her way to go about her business. He arrived at the school in time to meet Marianne and they left both their cars near the school.

As they began walking towards the town centre Marianne took James's hand into hers. She had that shy teenager look about her again, but this time there was something else. It reminded him of long ago when he had been a shy teenager himself out on a date with a girl. Holding hands then had been an act of intimacy between shy youngsters who had a crush on each other. The two sexual encounters with Marianne were history at that moment in time – or non-existent. She had been a mature woman then, but now she wasn't. She was a kid on her first date with someone she had a crush on. She was embarrassed and he felt it. 'Where would you like to go?' he asked her as they walked along the street holding hands.

'I don't know.' She said. 'I just want to walk with you.' She smiled up at him coyly.

'How would you like to see the university where I studied, and then if you like we could go and see the cathedral. Have you ever been to the cathedral?'

'No.' She said.

'Well, the only time I have ever been to the cathedral was when I was given my degree certificate.' Said James. 'It was all very grand with lots of ceremony and the college choir and all that, and then there was a reception afterwards and photos in our gowns and mortar board hats.'

'All right, if you want,' said Marianne. 'Whatever you want.'

They walked onto the college campus just opposite the cathedral and James wondered what any of his lecturers might think to see him walking hand in hand with a woman young enough to be his daughter. It didn't bother him at all. For some reason James felt at ease with Marianne holding his hand, and he began to feel that it didn't really matter what other people thought. He took her into the student's union building and bought her a cup of coffee. They sat in the lounge on comfy arm chairs and his memories of being a student came flooding back.

'What was it like here?' she asked. 'Being a student, I mean.'

'Well, if you really want to know I'll tell you,' began James. 'I was the oldest one on our course, and there were only four males to forty females. All younger than me. Yet funnily enough all the youngsters seemed to have more trouble with their studies than us older ones. I suppose it's a matter of commitment. The young ones were all involved with boyfriends and social life and all that, you know staying up late, drinking and doing their assignments at the last minute.'

'With all those younger women here didn't you ever have a girlfriend then?' asked Marianne.

'No,' said James. 'I was here to study and I didn't find it easy going either. I was trying to maintain a hypnosis practise across the road in the complementary therapy clinic and juggle with finances, and besides Penny took up all my social time.'

They hadn't discussed Penny at all up to that point. All Marianne was aware of was that James wasn't married. This was a good time for him to explain to her all about Penny, and how he had tried for a long time to get her to go her own way. As far as he was concerned, he told her, Penny's problem was that she failed to listen. And it was true. All Penny's problems revolved around her inability to hear what was being said to her. Talking about Penny like this to Marianne helped James to ease his own conscience about the previous night. Right or wrong it did help, and it put Marianne firmly in the picture. James told Marianne that Penny had always made him feel trapped, but he was a free man. He had free will and he had made no commitment to Penny – ever.

'She'll find out sooner or later, one way or the other.' He told Marianne. 'And I don't want you to worry about that, OK?'

'OK,' she said.

'Come on, let's see the cathedral. I want to see it as the tourists do.' Said James and led the way out of the college campus, across the street to the back entrance that was used by college students and staff.

As they entered the gateway he passed his document case to her. He had brought it for this very purpose. 'Hold this under your arm,' he said, 'and they'll think you're a student.' As he brought out his expired college identity card to show the gate attendant, Marianne said, 'But that's dishonest. You

can't do that.'

'Never mind, Said James. 'The alternative is going all the way round to the other side and cueing with the tourists to pay I don't know how much to get in. Come on, this is the easy way.'

He flashed his pass and led Marianne through by taking her elbow in his hand. The attendant glanced at the pass, nodded at Marianne and smiled as he waved them through. 'You're terrible,' she said as they walked into the grounds of the cathedral.

James thought it quaint that she should consider such a little deception as terrible. Little things like that had taken his notice before, like the way she spoke to her children with consideration, the way she appreciated how he had lifted her cat off a chair rather than shoo it away so he could sit down. He warmed to her.

They entered the cathedral through the main entrance with a line of tourists and stood in awe at the beauty of the sight they beheld. James's interior view of the cathedral during his degree ceremony had not given him this impression of the size and beauty of the place. Now he could take time to appreciate its majesty and its sacred atmosphere instead of having to listen to instructions and for his name to be called. He took her by the hand and led her down the central aisle towards the altar.

He ushered her into a pew in the third row from the front and they sat down. He closed his eyes and felt the power of Divine Love flow around him and it brought him to tears as it always did, whether in a sacred place or when in contact with the Divine whilst in his own trance. He still held Marianne by the hand as he allowed the sacred atmosphere to infuse his being. She withdrew her hand and said, 'I want to leave.'

'But we've only just got here. Sit with me for a while and take it in. Relax and feel the peace of the place.'

'No.' She stood up and with a stern look on her face said, 'I want to go – now.' She made to pass him to get to the aisle. He stood up and let her pass then followed her at a brisk pace towards the exit. When they reached the outside, he led her to a bench and they sat down. The air was freshening and it began to threaten rain. Marianne shivered. 'What's the matter?' he asked her. 'What's wrong?'

She was breathing heavily, almost hyperventilating as if on the verge of a panic attack. 'I didn't like it in there.' Was all she would say. 'I want to go home.'

They walked back to the cars, about a ten-minute walk, in silence as James wondered what had upset Marianne so much about the cathedral. Either she wasn't going to tell him or she didn't know. He let it pass, but the incident would raise itself from his memory later.

By the time they had returned to Marianne's home in their separate cars she had fully recovered and had resumed her mature, sensuous self. This time she didn't wait for him to respond to the previous shy invitation of her gentle embrace. This time she hugged him hard and pressed her body to his. He felt her warmth against him as she said, 'Come on. Now you can make love to me.'

They spent the afternoon in bed, the incident in the cathedral forgotten by James, and they had time to explore each other's sensuality to greater depths. They were getting to know each other very well. At least James was getting to know this mature sensuous woman persona. She could stimulate him and put him at his ease. He couldn't recall ever having been in this kind of physical relationship with anyone before, certainly not so soon after meeting. He felt at home with her and it felt right, as if he had been looking for her all his life.

'How do you know what I want James?' she had asked him.

'What do you mean?' he said.

'Well, when I want you to touch me in a certain way – you do. I don't even have to say anything. I just think it and you do. When I want you to change position or anything like that, all I have to do is think of it, and there you are doing exactly what I want you to do. How do you do it?'

What she was saying fitted in with what he had been feeling. She just felt right, him being with her. He was responding to her needs at an unconscious level. They were achieving without effort or concentration what others would pay fortunes to learn from a Tantric Master, or years to learn by trial and error.

Time was marching on and Marianne had to get the children back home from school. They got up and dressed and had enough time for a cup of tea. As they sat at the table with their tea Marianne, with a curious smile on her face, told James, 'You're bad aren't you. You are as bad as me and I love it.'

'If good sex is being bad then yes.' Said James. He was relieved when she had said that. It had troubled him previously when she had told him that she was bad, but if this is what she had meant then that was OK. 'We can be bad together, then can't we?' he said to her with a relieved smile. The next

thing she said knocked the smile from his face.

‘When did you cross the line then?’ she asked him.

‘What do you mean?’ asked James.

‘You know, when you crossed over to the other side. Or are you really the Devil?’

There is a concept in psychology known as ‘projection’. A person who accuses someone else of something that they themselves are guilty of is said to project onto others. This concept is neatly referred to in a well-known song by Eric Clapton entitled *Before you accuse me take a look at yourself*. There had been just one other person who had accused James of being the Devil, and that had been Sophia the Greek.

Chapter 13

Dangerous Liaisons

James could feel himself being drawn in closer and closer to Marianne on one hand and yet he still had the ability to stand back and observe dispassionately what was happening. He could detach himself and adopt an attitude of a silent witness. He was able to maintain a firm grip on his objective to find out what troubled Marianne and find a solution. He wondered how many other people who had been abandoned at birth and traumatised as a child were walking around without seeking professional help or avoiding it. If Marianne had her way she would have him with her all the time and he wouldn't have the opportunity to study and read. He decided he needed to take time out and study. The next time she rang him he told her he had things to do and he needed time to catch up on them. She was disappointed, but after he had spoken to her in his hypnotic tone and reassured her then she accepted his gentle rebuff. James felt pleased that he could influence her in this way and busied himself with his research reading.

One of the problems James was having in his research into Marianne's problem was that psychology text books and hypnosis techniques all depended on a single diagnosis in the identification of a problem and its solution. None of his reading could incorporate all of the contradictions in Marianne's outward behaviour and attitudes, and none of them could explain the incident at the cathedral, other than it was some form of mild panic attack.

The solution left open to him was the same as the one he had always previously used with his other clients, to gain access to the unconscious and ask. For this he needed Marianne to respond to his suggestions without her being deflected into her sensuous persona. He knew he could get her into trance easily, but he had to find a way to keep her there.

His deep thought was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone and it made him jump. It was his daughter.

'Hi dad, how would you like to give me away?' she asked.

'Give you away? What do you mean?'

'Me and John are getting married and you are my dad so it's your job to give me away.'

James's daughter had been with John for twelve years and they had a son of eleven. They had recently been through a bit of a tricky patch and that had been instrumental in cementing their relationship further. They had decided it was about time they tied the knot.

'Well congratulations. It's about time. Have you set a date yet?'

'Yes, it's the 14th of October at the registry office.'

'But that's only two weeks away. Are you sure we've got time to make all the arrangements?'

'You don't have to worry about anything dad,' said his daughter. 'We are having the reception at the Club and we are doing the catering ourselves to save money. You don't have to do anything, just give me away at the ceremony.'

'You'll need some professional photographs. I'll arrange a photographer OK?' said James.

'Lovely, thanks dad.'

The news from his daughter gave James an opportunity to give himself a break from his reading and he went into town to arrange the photographer. He didn't have to work that night so he took the opportunity to pop round to his local and relax.

The next day Marianne called and asked James if he could come over to her and he agreed. He wanted to get on with the job and access her unconscious mind for the answers to his questions. She looked sullen and guilty as she opened the door and led him into the front room. She sat down in an arm chair and looked at the floor.

‘What’s the matter Marianne?’ he asked her. ‘What’s wrong?’

‘You didn’t come yesterday. You didn’t come and I wanted you. I wanted you so badly.’

‘I am sorry, but I do have things to do you know. You must understand that. You do, don’t you?’

She came out of her chair and sat on the floor in front of him, then looked up into his eyes. ‘I saw Neville yesterday.’ She said.

‘What, the Neville who abused you and made you feel bad? The one you couldn’t let into your life again because you were afraid of what might happen?’

‘Yes.’

‘But why?’

She started to cry. ‘Because you wouldn’t come and I needed you. You made me do it. I didn’t want to because I knew what would happen and it did. It’s all your fault, but I love you and I’m sorry.’

James was transfixed. He didn’t know what to say. Thoughts raced through his mind in the search for meaning and understanding. He was detached, unemotional, silent, watching, learning.

‘I have been writing things to you.’ Marianne said as James sat in silence. She got up from the floor and gathered a bunch of notes together and handed them to him.

He read them one by one. Some were dated and others were not and they weren’t in any particular order:

Can you see me?

Do you know when I am dancing, laughing, smiling, innocent, loving?

Can you see me?

Do you know when it is dark?

Do you know when I’m repentant?

I’m tired. I want to go to sleep and never wake up.

I don’t want to stay here.

Why am I always put where I don’t want to be?

I want to be free to walk wherever and whenever.

I’d walk at night with the stars and moon, my way out.

I’d walk through trees and fields.

I’d climb mountains and dance in rain.

I’d bask in sunshine and smile at animals.

I’d eat good ripe food and drink free flowing water.

I’d wear nothing next to my skin.

I wouldn’t spoil the earth with destruction.

I wouldn’t adorn it because it wouldn’t need it.

That would deface it and it would decay underneath like it is now.

I don’t think we were meant to live together.

I think we should have been solitary, peace loving animals.

How come we all went wrong? Why did he do this to us?

I hate you. You weren’t there.

I love you. XXX

Wisdom

Fear – suspicion – meditate.

Why didn’t you believe me?

It bothers me. Was it you on the phone?

I do appreciate you for what you are.

Thank you for not taking advantage.

Thanks for teaching me. Don’t stop.

You’re great. The greatest substitute shag there is.

In fact, it’s even better than sex.

Put me off.
 Work – pub. Is woman going – then you don't live together.
 Fear of rejection or abandoned woman?
 What is stopping me? Fear of rejection?
 Or trust me.
 Do you know what I'm going to do next?

Let me try ABC
 What are you being, doing when you are you?
 Does it differ from how others see you?
 How could you have answered that?
 Tell me how you stop it.
 Tell me about you.
 Why are we carrying on?
 We know that others would disapprove of our methods of healing.
 Can't you feel the danger, tension, uncertainty for both of us?
 If you insist that it is God who is testing us.
 God doesn't give out easy-peasy guaranteed pass to tests to anyone does he?
 You must have doubts, be at risk.
 You might fail.
 What happens if one of us or both of us get lost?
 I have more to lose. I have children.
 Is it up to me?

When I was driving this morning, I looked at our earth and I thought:
 Why?
 Why do we imprison ourselves and shut out our surroundings?
 Most of us never have the will to take ourselves out of our man-made artificial surroundings and ideas
 and live as nature intended.
 Most of us dream about it and use the excuse of responsibilities to keep ourselves chained.
 The few that do manage to go, what happens to them?
 If you were one of them, why come back?
 You tease me.
 I want to go but I am afraid of guilt. Leaving loved ones behind including you.
 What would you do if you were me?

What did you come for?
 Are you telling the truth?
 If you lie it is heard.
 For every action there is a reaction.
 If you say the truth you are forgiven.
 If you are reading this then you must know you were brought here to me because of love.
 I risk making you angry so you too can experience love.
 Ask yourself, what are you angry and afraid of?
 Take me walking in the woods.
 Come with me and listen.

I was told to tell you all this but no person said the words 'tell him'.
 We are being watched but we are alone.
 If we are to continue to both strive for power we will both fail again.
 Start the straight talking now.
 What is it you want from me?
 Why do you want it?
 How are we both going to be at peace?
 I'm angry because I tricked you into thinking I wanted a shag.
 How could you be so gullible?
 I know you'll want to punish me so go ahead.

Optimism achieves greatness
 An optimistic attitude is the key factor for success. Right from the beginning if you hold a
 pessimistic attitude even small things may not be achieved.
 Signs of Success
 In your daily life as you learn more patience, more tolerance with wisdom and courage, you will see
 it is the true source of success.

I'm sorry, I want to try to be good again. Did you have a nice time?
 What was your favourite part of your weekend?
 Let me sit on your lap and you can hold me tight and I can close my eyes and pretend I was there
 and feeling what you were feeling while you tell me everything.
 I'm sitting on the floor and the kids are asleep in bed. Arthur's been gone since about six or seven.
 He's cross with me. He didn't want to cuddle me even though I made him. He's sad too. Girls
 were angry with me. They all gave me a hard time but I just carried on. I went to the supermarket
 by myself with the kids. I made lunch then went to sleep. Then the kids had a disco. Now I'm
 writing to you. I miss you. But I'm glad you're not here because I'd make you sad and angry too.
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I bet you're screwing her.
 I want you to do it to me.
 It's not fair.
 I want it too.
 It's your fault I went to see Neville.
 It's all your fault.
 He made me dirty because of you.
 I hate you.
 You don't love me.
 You love her more than me.
 I don't care. I got myself dirty to piss you off.
 I hope you're pissed off.
 I hope you're angry and you hit me.
 I don't care. I'll just laugh.
 I want you to hit me. You'll have to touch me then won't you?
 You should have loved me. It's all your fault.
 You should go away.

Don't want you to go. Please. Sorry.
 Forgive me.
 I want to hide.
 I killed 2 flies and hurt a spider today.
 I'm sorry for that too.
 There isn't any hope for me is there?
 I want to die.
 I want to go home.
 I'm alright now.
 I'll go to bed soon.
 I like going to sleep.
 You're a good man.
 Thank you. XXXXXXXXXX

If I am to forgive myself every time I do wrong,
 If I relieve myself of guilt aren't I just saying its OK to be bad?
 Explain this to me.
 If I agree, does this mean our explanation is right?
 If I disagree, am I right, you are wrong, both right, both wrong?
 If I still don't understand how will I find out?
 When will I find out?
 Will I find out?
 Do you disapprove of my behaviour in any way?

James had nothing to say. He was speechless. There was so much here, so much to understand and interpret. Were these all her own thoughts? One of the notes gave references to page numbers, so she had obviously been reading about success from a book. But all the other stuff? Was she being influenced by other forces in some of what was written? Apparently so, but by whose authority? So many questions. So much confusion.

Marianne had sat silently whilst James had read the notes and she awaited his response. There was nothing he could say. She had stopped him in his intention to work with her that day and he had no idea what to do next.

She moved towards him and rested her head in his lap. 'Please don't leave me. Please forgive me. I won't do it again. I love you and I need you to teach me everything. Say you will. Please.'

He stroked her head as she cried in his lap. 'It's all right,' he said. 'Don't cry. I forgive you. I will try to answer all your questions, but you must help me. I need to work with you, to find out what troubles you so.'

She looked up into his eyes with a tear stained face and wiped them away. Then she rose and hugged him. 'Thank you. I won't do it again. Are you hungry? Can I get you something to eat?'

'That would be nice. Thank you.' Said James, and she rose from the floor still wiping her eyes and made her way to the kitchen.

He followed her as far as the parlour room table and sat down as she put the kettle on and made them a sandwich. There was no way he could ponder the contents of her notes at this time so he put his thoughts and questions on hold as he watched her go about her business in the kitchen in silence. He was still detached enough from her emotionally as to not be affected by her admission of what had happened the night before. He was still in silent-witness mode as he watched her. She resumed the shy teenager persona and smiled at him as she came to the table with the sandwiches and sat down.

'I want to know all about you.' She said. 'Tell me about where you live. You do live alone don't you?'

Can I come and see where you live?’

She was unpredictable. That he knew. He had no idea what to expect from her next, and the more he got to know the more questions there were that needed answers. Everything he needed to know was already written down in her notes, but it would take time for him to understand all that they contained. The only way he was going to do that was to continue to play her game. He felt protected by his emotional detachment, and at the same time his compassion for her was growing. He was still developing his own complementary personas to meet hers. There was a battle for control going on and he had to play the game in order to understand its rules, if there were any.

He needed her total trust. He knew that. Without her committed trust in him he would never be able to achieve anything, and she had already demonstrated that if he failed her then she would do something to punish them both. He was absolutely fascinated. His curiosity deepened and he felt the challenge to be irresistible. *In for a penny in for a pound*, he thought to himself, and he told her she could see where he lived. She had drawn him into her world, and now he responded to her need to be drawn into his. He had nothing to lose and he took yet another step in lowering his defences in order to reach what lay behind this mysterious woman’s intentions.

‘You can come and see me tomorrow,’ he told her.

That night James worked for the supermarket distribution division from 6 in the evening until 12.30. He was home in bed by half past one and slept soundly until the phone rang at eleven. It was Marianne on a mobile phone calling from her car. ‘I’m lost. Can you tell me how to find you?’

‘Look around you Marianne and tell me where you are,’ said James. Marianne gave him the name of the street where she had stopped the car and James gave her directions from there. ‘You’re not far away,’ he said. ‘Just around the corner. My flat is on the lower ground floor of the big house on the corner. Come around the left side of the house and the entrance is at the back.’ He had just enough time to wash his face and shave when there was a knock at the door. He opened it to see her standing there with a flushed face and smiling.

‘I always get a bit flustered when I can’t find my way. Sorry.’

That’s OK,’ said James. ‘You’re here now. Come in.’

Marianne stepped inside and James closed the door behind her then led her into his living room that doubled as his study. She saw the desk under the window with a computer on it flanked by bookshelves stuffed with books. There was a convertible sofa in the middle of the room with a coffee table in front of it. A portable sized television stood in the corner, and at the opposite side of the room against the wall that separated the room from the hallway stood a stationery cabinet with his radio-cassette recorder on the top. There was an opening to a small kitchen area and toilet on the opposite side of the room to the window and desk. The room looked cramped.

‘Where’s the bed room then?’ she asked. He led the way across the small hallway that ran between the front door and the bath room to his bedroom.

‘It’s huge.’ She exclaimed. The bedroom was the same size as the living room, but with only a double bed, a wardrobe and a chest of drawers it looked much bigger.

‘Don’t bother to get dressed,’ said Marianne, as she moved towards the bed unbuttoning her blouse. James stood in the doorway as Marianne undressed and slipped into his bed. ‘Make love to me, please,’ she said as she smiled sweetly at him and raised her arms to clasp her hands behind her head.

After a couple of hours in bed they got up, shared a bath and had breakfast. James wanted to do some work with Marianne whilst they still had time before she had to leave and collect her children from school. She remained seated on the sofa and he moved to his desk to assume his therapist persona. No sooner had he sat down when a shadow passed by the window and there was a knock at the door. It was Penny.

James opened the door and Penny stood there with a big smile on her face. She had just bumped into James’s daughter who had given her the news about the wedding, and Penny wanted to talk about it even before she had got herself half way inside the door. He stopped her.

‘We have a visitor,’ he said.

‘Oh, who is that then?’ she asked as she walked into the living room. James introduced them. Marianne this is Penny, Penny this is Marianne Craven.’

‘Oh yes,’ said Penny with a beaming smile and walked towards her. Marianne replied with the little-girl voice, ‘Hello.’

This had been the very first time Penny had met one of James’s clients face to face and she realised she was intruding. In fact, James had always turned her away at the door if he had a client in his flat. But something had prompted him to invite her in. *If the shit is going to hit the fan then let it happen*, he thought. *Let’s see what unfolds.*

Penny adopted a mumsy role and spoke to Marianne as if she were child. ‘I hope James is able to help you my dear,’ said Penny. James had resumed his seat at his desk and waited to see what would happen. Marianne looked across at him not knowing what to say or do. She stayed silent. ‘Only you can know what you have experienced my dear,’ said Penny, ‘but you’ll come out of it all the stronger. I see a butterfly emerging, and its people like you who have had bitter experiences who are best placed to help others. You know that don’t you?’

Marianne looked at her, and in her little-girl voice said, ‘I have to go away.’ Then she glanced across at James and lowered her head.

‘What do you mean, you have to go away. Go where?’ asked Penny.

‘I have to go,’ said Marianne.

James interjected, ‘She has to pick up her children from school. Come on Marianne I’ll see you to your car.’

James got up from his seat and led the way to the front door, and as Marianne got up from the sofa, Penny leaned towards her and planted a kiss on her cheek. ‘You’ll be all right.’ She said. ‘I am pleased I met you. Take care. Goodbye.’

‘I’ll be back in a minute, why don’t you put the kettle on,’ James said to Penny as he led Marianne to the door.

James could see that Marianne had been shaken by the encounter with Penny and he told her not to worry. The second session of the self-hypnosis course was to be the next evening and he asked Marianne if she could arrange to be there. She said she would try to get Arthur to have the children. James returned to the flat.

He found Penny in the bedroom, just looking around. ‘What are you doing?’ he asked her.

‘She’s been in here,’ said Penny. Then she went to the bathroom. ‘And in here too,’ she said.

Penny was clearly agitated. James knew that her psychic abilities had been able to find him no matter where he had been at the university. She was like a bloodhound. Penny went back into the bedroom and sniffed at her own dressing gown hanging on the back of the door. ‘What are you doing?’ asked James in astonishment.

‘Has she been wearing this?’ Her tone was angry and James could see Penny’s face begin to redden with bubbling rage.

‘Certainly not.’ He snapped at her. What he said was true. He would never have let Marianne wear anything of Penny’s. He may have been behaving like a complete arsehole, but he drew the line there. ‘Come and sit down and stop being so silly,’ said James as he went towards the kitchen to make the tea. Penny still hung around in the bedroom. She knew, but she couldn’t put her finger on anything to give her evidence of what she knew.

James made the tea and Penny came into the living room with a face like thunder. ‘Sit down and drink your tea,’ said James. How could he tell her? She knew, but how could he tell her. He felt like a complete and total prick. *What had he been doing?* This was a total fuck up and he knew it. He had made a monumental mistake by allowing himself to be taken in by Marianne’s clever manipulations and now he felt like a complete arsehole.

Penny looked at him and rather than challenge him outright, which may have been the best thing to have happened, she said to him, ‘I told you she was dangerous didn’t I?’ She went on, ‘She may look innocent and she may well be psychologically damaged, but that person is dangerous. I am never wrong about these things. Do you hear me?’ Penny was pressing her point home without wanting to confront James into open conflict. Her psychic senses were telling her that James had done something that he regretted and she did not want to challenge him and lose him. She had already decided to dismiss her instinctive knowledge and

give him the benefit of the doubt. She chose to ignore what she was feeling and decided to press home her point about Marianne being dangerous.

'You said you would find another therapist for her. Why haven't you?' she demanded.

'She won't see anyone else,' replied James. 'I have tried and she just won't have it. At least I have got her out of the house, and if she can come and see me here then she can come to the clinic. Anyway, she is attending the self-hypnosis course again tomorrow.'

'What time does it finish?' asked Penny.

'Nine o'clock,' replied James.

'Are you doing anything after, like seeing Ian again like last week?'

'No. We haven't made any arrangements.'

'Good,' said Penny. 'What if you pick up an Indian take-away on the way home and come over to my place?'

'Good idea,' said James. 'We'll do that.'

James had to start work that evening at six o'clock. He had plenty of time to have something to eat and he asked Penny to stay and join him. Penny calmed down and put the encounter with Marianne behind her and told James how she had bumped into his daughter who had given her news of the wedding.

Irrespective of what had been happening with Marianne Craven, James had no intention of telling Penny about his daughter's planned wedding. It would have given her just one more opportunity to get closer to his family, and his daughter had already voiced her opinion on that score. It came as a shock and a surprise when Penny told him that his daughter had invited her to do the catering at the social club. *The crafty cow*, thought James. *Is there nothing this woman wouldn't do to maintain her grip on him?* He knew full well that his daughter would not have asked Penny to do this. Certainly not before consulting him first. No. This was Penny's spontaneous reaction to the news and she must have offered her services on the spot. James's daughter probably accepted the offer just to be polite rather than tell Penny to get lost. In any case, James's daughter had already told him that she and John intended to do the catering themselves, which meant that all her mother's side of the family would be involved.

That night, as James drove his truck up and down the motorway in and out of London with a load of groceries for the supermarket chain, he reflected on his position with these two women, Marianne and Penny.

His life up to that point had been centred on his therapy work and his research at the hospital. Now, almost without warning, he had no more patients for therapy and the research had stopped. There was a gaping great hole in his life. Penny had been kept at arm's length in favour of his work, but she still had a driving ambition to trap him through fair means or foul. He had used his work as a means of keeping her at bay. This defence had now disappeared and he did have time on his hands. Penny was not a fool and she would have realised this.

Then there was Marianne. *Well..... Where to begin?* James asked himself.

His compassion for the vulnerable and frightened young woman he first met was still very much alive, but that had been compromised by the mature sensuous persona who had succeeded in seducing him. On one hand he felt deeply committed to her and on the other he mistrusted her motives. He was fascinated by her ability to manipulate him and avoid therapeutic work whenever he tried it. He was also fascinated by the mysteries of her relationship with Arthur which were not at all as straightforward as she had at first presented it. Penny was right. She was dangerous. And although he still couldn't identify exactly in what way she was dangerous, this was certainly a dangerous situation to be in. He was both curious and defensive. He had the ability to stand back and observe from his emotionally detached perspective, but the moment Penny came on the scene then the whole situation changed. He was no longer on his own with this. There was Penny to consider, and whatever her motives and whatever his own feelings may have been towards her, Penny's presence made all the difference. The combination was potentially explosive. Besides, looking at his situation with Marianne from a totally different perspective, he realised that what he was doing made him a complete and utter fool. He made up his mind what he must do. Marianne had to go.

Chapter 14

Please Take Me Home

James arrived at the clinic at a quarter to seven to open up and switch off the alarms in readiness for the second self-hypnosis session. He was surprised to see that Marianne and arrived early, and even more surprised to see her talking to Ian, his therapist friend who he'd had dinner with the previous week. He greeted them both, opened the clinic and they all went inside. Within a few minutes all the others had arrived and James started his preparations for the session. He wanted to demonstrate how to go deeper into trance and how to reinforce it. He also intended to demonstrate how powerful the hypnotic state could be when dealing with disease and emotional distress. It was with this in mind that he intended to try and influence Marianne and see what her response would be.

During his research reading he had found references to ideas about emotional residues from early childhood that became personified and emerged when the subject was under stress. The behaviour solicited was seen to be that of a child, and the behaviour of this child showed the response to stress that the child had learned at the time of the forgotten trauma. This response was carried forward into adulthood and repeated because it had the desired effect. However, cases had been cited where the child-like behaviour, or rather the personification of the child actually took over from the adult completely. This inner-child, according to some authors had to be relinquished, or had to learn to grow up by adopting more appropriate coping strategies. James had read that any attempt to relinquish the inner child from someone who had a borderline personality disorder was not recommended. He saw this self-hypnosis session as an opportunity to reinforce his hypnotic abilities with Marianne in order to get to the nature of the hidden personalities, or inner child in her unconscious.

James watched Marianne as the group came together and began to settle down. In complete contrast to her behaviour the previous week, she was chatting to the other participants. It had surprised him to see her talking to Ian outside, and now he could see another facet of her as she talked with the others. The previous week she had been shy to the extent that she didn't communicate with anyone. She had sat in a trance all through the session and not opened her mouth to anyone. This week she was a part of the group. James could have been excused for believing that it had been his work that had succeeded in bringing Marianne out from her frightened shell to reach this stage. But he had learned something about her that a therapist with clearly defined personal and professional boundaries would not have known. She was a seductress and she was dangerous. She could pretend to be anything she wanted to be and she could play anybody's game. But she made her own rules. She looked sweet and innocent and vulnerable, as if butter wouldn't melt in her mouth. Behind this sweet and innocent mask, she was the exact opposite. He watched her very carefully.

The group settled down and James took them through his reinforcement programme, showing them how to deepen their trance and become comfortable with the experience. Marianne helped him with a demonstration by allowing herself to go into a deep trance whilst standing. As she stood there, gently swaying and vulnerable, exactly as she had been on the very first occasion he had induced her into a trance in her own front room, he spoke to the remainder of the group.

'The self-induced hypnotic trance is a tool,' he began. 'With this tool you can change the way you think and the way you feel. You can change your own behaviour and you can change your habits. If you were a smoker and you wanted to stop smoking then this is how you could do it.' James went no further because at this suggestion Marianne came straight out of her trance and stepped back from him.

'Oh, no,' she said shaking her head. Marianne was a smoker and she rolled her own cigarettes. To stop smoking was something she was unwilling to consider. What she had just demonstrated to herself and to the whole group was that you cannot hypnotise someone to do something they don't want to do. This is why direct suggestion hypnosis nearly always fails. With the demonstration ended on that note James declared a coffee break. Marianne opted to go outside for a smoke and James, after getting himself a cup of coffee for both of them, followed her outside.

‘You were early tonight,’ he said to her. ‘What were you and Ian talking about?’

‘Oh, not much. He did all the taking,’ said Marianne. ‘It was all about himself. I wasn’t really listening to him. I was wondering if he might be an alternative if you and I stopped seeing each other.’

Although James had begun to learn to not be surprised at Marianne’s ability to be unpredictable, he was still having some trouble at her openness and directness. Here was a real challenge – a real anomaly. She was open and direct, and at the same time she was deceptive and manipulative. She demanded unconditional love and she expected the giver to accept all of her unpredictability. Her response to his question merely reinforced his earlier decision as to what he must do. They went back inside and he carried on with the evening’s programme.

James tested each member of the group on their ability to go into deep trance and to give themselves suggestions. Towards the end of that hour he explained some principles, and as he did so he changed the tone of his voice to the hypnotic one that he used with Marianne on the telephone. She slipped into an altered state whilst all the others remained in full conscious awareness. As an example of what kind of problem hypnosis could be used for, James talked about the ‘inner-child’.

This was a technique he had used before with great effect. He would address one person, or a group of people about a subject, and at the same time another person would be influenced by his subliminal suggestions at the unconscious level. This bypassed their critical faculty and allowed suggestions to filter in without resistance. It’s a bit crafty really, but James had learned that conscious resistance was the real enemy when trying to help someone who desperately needs it. Marianne had already demonstrated her ability to emerge from a trance the moment her own conscious decisions were about to be interfered with. James was trying to avoid that. He wanted to see if there was an inner child that needed help. As he explained the principle to the group, and as he probed the issues, he watched the entranced Marianne. There was no response. She remained in the trance but remained unmoved. He wasn’t sure if she was fully aware of what he was talking about or indeed whether he had been using the right approach. He would need to be on his own with her and prod her unconscious until he touched a nerve, but he couldn’t do that with a group watching. That wasn’t why they were there. James satisfied himself however, that the change of tone in his voice was enough to induce Marianne into an altered state whether sitting in the same room or over the telephone.

James wound up the session and bid everyone good night. As he was collecting his bits and pieces Ian came up to him and suggested a quick one in the pub across the road from the clinic. Marianne asked James if she could have a quick word in private. James said he’d meet Ian across the road and invited Marianne into his consulting room. She followed him in and closed the door behind her. She looked around. There was a desk and chair for the doctor or therapist and another chair for the patient. She saw the wash basin in the corner and the examination couch against the wall with its clean white sheet and pillow. It was typical doctor’s surgery with a nervous system chart on the wall, a calendar and lamp on the desk and a pile of books stacked along the window sill. James didn’t have a lot of time. He had to get back to Penny with the take-away food. Ian wanted to talk to him and so did Marianne, and James now had his own agenda as far as Marianne was concerned. What happened next only added reinforcement to his earlier decision.

‘I want you to fuck me in here,’ she said to him. He just looked at her. ‘I have always wanted to fuck a psychologist and now I have. But I want to do it in here, please.’

James walked to the door and held it open for her as he switched off the light. He led her out of the building, set the alarm and locked up, and then led her across the street to the pub opposite where Ian was waiting at the bar.

James ordered half a Guinness for himself, a small cider for Marianne and a half of bitter for Ian as Marianne made herself comfortable on a bar stool to James’s left and leaned her back against the wall. James stood between her and Ian on his right. James didn’t want to waste time with irrelevant niceties as people normally do when socialising. He had stuff on his plate and he wanted it cleared away. He had also made a promise to Penny, that he would arrive at her place with something spicy to eat and put her mind at rest that Marianne Craven was no longer a threat to her or to him.

Ian wanted to know how James was getting on with his thesis on emotions and the nervous system. They had discussed it very briefly the previous week.

‘To be honest with you Ian,’ began James, ‘I haven’t had much time to formulate anything on paper this week. I have had other stuff to deal with.’ He glanced to his left at Marianne as he said this, as if to let her

know that she had been prioritising his time. 'But I have developed an idea that I do need to commit to paper. Would you like to hear it?'

'Yes, I would.' Said Ian.

Again, James saw an opportunity to attempt a similar exercise to the one he had tried during the self-hypnosis course. To talk to one person and at the same time to influence another at the unconscious level. At the back of his mind was the message from Penny that Marianne was dangerous. Apart from being a threat to Penny as competition for James's affections, there was more to this message of danger than Penny had been able to explain. James had found himself from time to time since meeting Marianne, examining his fears. Some of those fears were concerned with matters of a spiritual nature, and there was always a danger, when dealing with psychological matters, to neglect the spiritual dimensions. It seemed to James that there were one or two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle free floating around that needed to find a place to fit. He began to explain his ideas to Ian as Marianne listened.

'My idea is very simple,' he began. 'It's like this. Something triggers the fear response in the unborn child, but because the nervous system is still undeveloped, it is unable to process the fear adequately. Imagine that the fear has an emotional energy, a bit like electricity and it has to go somewhere. Like an electric guitar plugged into an amplifier. When a chord is struck the sound travels through the amplifier and out of the speakers. The energy of the chord being struck is transformed into sound, and the amplifier is the medium of energy transference. Now, if the speakers are not connected to the amplifier what happens?'

James directed his question to Ian and turned his attention to Marianne in order to ensure that he also had her undivided attention. He turned back to Ian for his answer, but Ian was shaking his head. 'I Don't know. I suppose there just wouldn't be any sound.'

'Correct,' said James. 'But that is not the complete answer. The power generated from striking the chord on the guitar needs to go somewhere. It passes into the amplifier and if there is no way out it simply blows up the amplifier. Well, that's what would happen if the amplifier were not fitted with an adequate fuse system.'

'So, what's all this got to do with emotions and the nervous system?' asked Ian.

'Don't you see?' The question was directed at both Ian and Marianne. 'The striking of the chord is a trauma to the unborn child, the brain, or rather the nervous system is the amplifier and the senses are the loud speakers. When the unborn child is traumatised, its own nervous system is inadequate for the job of processing the trauma or allowing the emotional energy to be transformed out through the senses and the child's own brain blows a fuse. This is what causes brain trauma in the left temporal lobe. It isn't a malfunction in the brain that causes epilepsy, no, the epilepsy is caused by emotional trauma that can't be processed. You see how simple the idea is? Another thing to consider is this. An unborn child has no means of communicating its traumatic experience to anyone outside of its own world. It has no loud speakers. It is on its own in the dark and unable to communicate its terrifying experience to anyone. It is in fear in the dark on its own. No wonder it's brain blows a fuse. Don't you think?'

'So, this is what causes things like epilepsy and other diseases that can be identified by lesions in the brain?' asked Ian.

'Exactly,' replied James.

'Then what could be so frightening to an unborn child that would cause this kind of lesion?' asked Ian.

'Attempted abortion is a good one,' replied James. 'I have had clients with epilepsy whose mothers attempted to abort them. I am sure there is a link, I just need a chance to prove it. But there is something else linked to all of this that some kind of research project could well highlight.'

'What's that then?' asked Ian.

'Some patients show signs of epilepsy but don't have any brain lesions, and there are others who have an unidentifiable fear or anxiety, actually they are the same thing.'

'What are?' interrupted Ian.

'Fear and anxiety,' said James. 'Anxiety is just a posh word for fear. Let's talk about fear. It is the most powerful negative emotion in humans. That is my belief anyway,' said James. 'And fear creates emotional energy that has to be expressed in some way in behaviour – this is action. When we are afraid we run away or fight. It's the fight or flight response.'

'Yes, I know all about that,' said Ian.

‘OK, good,’ said James. ‘but when we talk about stress and the fight or flight response we are usually talking about how to deal with the effects of the build-up of negative emotional energy if there has been no adequate release, right? In other words, we are concerned with the negative effects of inadequate coping strategies, yes?’

‘Yes,’ said Ian. James looked to his left to make sure that Marianne was still listening. She was. He turned back to Ian to continue.

‘I have been looking, but not at the outcome or the problems caused by inadequate coping mechanisms,’ said James, ‘I have been looking at the *cause*. No one looks at the cause. What is it that frightens people so much that they cease to function? What frightens an unborn child so much that it grows up to be dysfunctional, or violent or manipulative to the degree that it makes everyone’s life a misery?’ As he spoke he remembered the case of Sarah and how she had cursed the doctor when her child had been stillborn. ‘Fear is a powerful emotional energy.’ James said with conviction. ‘And emotional energy is power. Emotional energy is food and there are some forms of entity that use this power, use this source of food to survive. These entities are attracted by the fear in the unborn child and they attached themselves to the energy field of the individual and remain with him or her after they are born. They are born with a devil inside of them that they have no knowledge of. They do things they themselves don’t like doing, don’t want to do but can’t stop themselves. They are possessed and they don’t know it.’

Marianne hadn’t said a word all the time James had been speaking, but now she spoke. ‘Stop it you’re frightening me,’ she said. James looked at her and saw the same look of fear that Sarah had shown when he had first broached the subject to her and her husband. Was this the fear of someone who saw the possibility of being affected in this way and was actually afraid that it applied to them? Or was this the fear of an entity that had been discovered, as was the case with Sarah?

Ian was interested in James’s hypothesis, but he placed no value on it as a practical avenue to pursue. However, the suggestion had elicited a response in Marianne. Everything that had occurred since the previous day when Marianne and Penny had met all reinforced James’s decision. Marianne had told him that she was weighing up Ian as an alternative to him as a source of sexual satisfaction. She had told him point blank that she had always wanted to have sex with a psychologist. This was probably her way of getting back at them for the way they had intimidated her or failed to meet her real needs when she had been in care. She was using James to punish psychologists and she was using him for her own selfish sexual needs. Now she was showing signs that Penny’s fear of her being dangerous could mean that she was dangerous beyond James’s ability to maintain control of the situation. He was anxious for Ian to leave.

James patiently waited for Ian to finish his drink and say his farewells. After he had left James turned to Marianne.

‘Now I know what you are up to, and I know you,’ he said to her. Marianne remained silent and looked at him quizzically. James continued, ‘This has got to stop. It’s already gone too far and it stops now. I cannot continue to see you on a personal basis. If you want me to continue to help you with any problems you may have then you must make an appointment with the receptionist at the clinic.’ Marianne sat in stunned silence. James got off his bar stool and left her sitting there without waiting for an answer.

He walked out of the pub, crossed the road to the clinic car park and put his hand in his pocket for his car keys. He didn’t have any warning of Marianne’s approach. As he felt a strong grip around his arms and chest he heard a strong determined voice spit out the words between clenched teeth, ‘You don’t think you’re getting away that easily.’

Marianne spun him around and pinned him to the side of his car. James was so taken by surprise at the force of her attack and by the abnormal strength of her grip that he had no time to react. She had him pinned there against his car, unable to move.

‘What are you doing?’ was all he could say.

Marianne wailed, ‘Don’t leave me. Take me home.’ She began to weep uncontrollably, all the while maintaining a vice-like grip on him.

James tried to collect his thoughts and his strength. He tried to prize Marianne’s arms from around his body. He was astonished at her strength and he failed to move her arms from him. She repeated through her wailing, ‘Take me home, take me home, please take me home. I want to come with you please take me home.’

'I can't take you home,' said James. 'I have to meet Penny. I'm not going home, I'm going to Penny's. Let me go and stop this at once.'

'Take me home,' Marianne continued to plea.'

James relaxed and stopped trying to pry her loose. He had to calm her down and reason with her, but Marianne was having none of it. She dropped to her knees and tried to undo his belt. 'Oh no you don't,' James told her. 'You don't need to do that. Stop it.' He tried to lift her back up to a standing position and she resisted, still trying to undo the zipper on his trousers. With a superhuman effort he managed to raise her to her feet and once again she pinned him to the car, the full weight of her small frame pressed against his.

Marianne's face was pressed against his chest and as she wailed the tears gushed out of her eyes and began to soak his shirt. It was his best shirt. He had bought it in Crete and he could feel her hot tears through it on his chest. Now her nose was running too and staining his shirt.

Fuck this. Now what am I to do?

Again, he relaxed and tried to reason with her, but all the time she was trying to reach his belt to undo it. He relaxed completely, giving her a chance to concentrate on her task. When he had enough freedom to move he quickly turned and grabbed her by the left arm with his right and brought her left arm up behind her back. Then he pinned her against the car. She wailed louder, 'Take me home, take me home pleeeeeeaaaaase!'

Marianne struggled with him to the point of being violent and rather than allow the situation to deteriorate further he allowed her to regain her position in front of him as she pressed him against the car.

'Stop struggling and let me talk to you,' he said. Marianne sobbed against his increasingly wet shirt, her tears flowing freely. She dropped to her knees again and made another attempt to undo his belt. This time he dropped down to her level and looked into her tear stained swollen face. He saw despair and intense fear. 'Who did this to you?' he half asked her and half asked himself. 'Who did this to you Marianne? Who was the one who first caused this to happen?'

Marianne squatted in front of him and wept. He put his arms around her and held her tight, comforting her. Was she the victim of childhood abuse that caused her to behave this way, or did he touch a nerve in his conversation with Ian. She had come up behind him with strength beyond what such a small frame would be expected to have. Was this the strength of a desperate young woman or was it something else? She had spoken the words, 'You don't think you're getting away that easily,' with a determination that was threatening and menacing. It was pretty obvious that his rejection had been Marianne's desperate emotional motivation, but this form of attack? He was at a loss to know what to do, but he *had to do something*. If she was being affected by a dark force entity as Sarah had been???? As he held her close to him he repeated the exorcism prayer as best he could remember it. As he spoke Marianne began to calm down. Was it having an effect or was she intrigued as she listened to his words? In any event, she calmed down and stopped fighting him.

'Come on now,' he said. 'Listen to me please.' Marianne looked at him.

'Please don't leave me. Please take me home with you.'

'I can't,' said James. 'I really can't'. She started to cry again. There was no reasoning with her and no way out. There was no way he could take her home to his place. Arthur was looking after the children and he would be getting worried that she was already late, and Penny would be wondering what was delaying him. 'Come on,' he said. 'Let me take you home to your place. The children are there and Arthur will be wondering where you are.'

'No,' said Marianne. 'You will get in your car and drive away. I won't let you go.'

'OK,' said James. 'Get in my car and I'll drive you home, but that means you'll have to come and collect your own car in the morning.'

'That's all right,' she said. 'Just take me home.'

'Come on then,' said James and made to get his keys out of his pocket.

'No,' said Marianne. 'You'll drive off and leave me.'

'All right then, I'll let you get in the car first and then I'll get in, OK?'

James stood up and fetched the keys out of his pocket as Marianne stuck to him like glue. He remembered the look on her face as he escorted her to the passenger side of his car. It showed deep mistrust, as if she expected him to make a bolt for it and leave her standing there. She was ready to pounce on him at the first inkling of a false move on his part. He opened the door for her and she slipped into the passenger seat. She

never took her eyes off him as she felt the fear of not having him within her grasp. James got in and started the car. He looked across at her and assured her, 'It's all right. I'm taking you home.'

James drove to Marianne's house and parked outside the door. The lights were on in the living room and he had visions of Arthur waiting and wondering what had caused her to be so late. It was half past twelve. James was shocked at the time. He had been trying to negotiate with Marianne for more than an hour and a half in the car park of the clinic. His shirt was stained with tears and snot and Marianne looked terrible. He waited for her to get out of the car.

'Please come with me,' she asked him.

'Wouldn't it be better if you just went in Marianne?' he suggested.

'No. Please take me in.'

Reluctantly James switched off the engine and got out of the car. Not until he was completely out of the car and had closed his door did Marianne get out. She led the way up the garden path and put her key in the lock. James wondered how Arthur was going to react. He followed her through the front door and she stopped outside the living room. The television was on and James stepped passed her into the living room to see Arthur sitting on the settee. He looked up at James with an angry expression on his face. James spoke first. 'I need to talk to you Arthur,' he said. With that Arthur rose from his seat and as he passed James to make his way to the front door he said angrily, 'You are supposed to be helping her. Look at the state she's in.' He put on his coat and without another word stepped out of the house and slammed the door behind him.

James and Marianne stood and looked at each other, not knowing what to say or do. Then she put her arms around his neck and placed her tear stained face against his tear stained shirt. 'Please don't leave me,' she said.

James needed time to consider his next move. She was full of surprises and he had no experience of this kind of behaviour before.

'How about a cup of tea?' she asked him. He thought that was a good idea. His throat was parched from trying to persuade her to be reasonable, and at last she had calmed down enough for him to talk to her. Marianne made her way to the kitchen and James fell into an armchair and pulled his hands down over his tired and troubled face. The phone rang and Marianne came from the kitchen to answer it. She looked at James with a troubled look on her face and took the handset from her ear. 'It's for you,' she said and held it out to him. It was Penny, and she was babbling.

'What are you doing there? Do you know what time it is? What are you doing? Come away from there. She's dangerous. I told you she was dangerous and she is. You don't know what happened tonight. Are you all right? Come away now.....'

James was caught off guard and didn't know what to say. Marianne just stood dispassionately and waited. 'I'm sorry,' said James, more to shut Penny up than to really apologise. He had two hysterical women on his hands and he could only deal with one at a time. He had never bargained for this. 'I'll be there as soon as I can. Don't worry.' He put the phone down and turned to Marianne. 'I have to go,' he said to her.

Marianne finished making them a mug of tea each and came to sit with James. She looked at him with calmness and sympathy. 'You've got two of us now,' she said. 'What will you do now?'

Her calm confidence should have surprised him. She didn't seem to be concerned about the distress that Penny was obviously experiencing. 'I wanted to tell her about us yesterday at your flat,' she said. 'It's always best to tell the truth.'

James was defeated and she knew it. She had him, and she knew it. He knew it too. Then she said something else that was to stay with him for a very long time. 'You have the two of us now, and one day you will have neither of us.'

The telephone rang again and this time he answered it himself. It was Penny again. 'Are you coming or what?' she demanded.

'Yes,' said James. 'I'm leaving now. I'll be there in half an hour.' He put the phone back in its cradle and turned to Marianne. 'I have to go now,' he said. She came to him and put her arms around his neck and said, 'But I don't want you to go. I want you to stay here with me and love me.'

'I know you do,' said James, 'but I have to go. You do understand, don't you? If I don't go then she will come here and create a big fuss. Let me go now and I'll come and see you tomorrow.'

'Promise?'

‘Yes, I promise.’

‘All right then,’ she said, and let him go.

It was half past one in the morning by the time James arrived at Penny’s flat. He should have been there by ten.

Penny answered the door and he could see just by the look on her face that she had been fuming. He raised his hand to prevent her from going off on a tirade in the hallway. She had a flat in a house where the owners lived and he did not want her to disturb them on his account. She led the way upstairs to her own door and ushered him in. Then she started.

He felt like a little boy who had been caught stealing. He had no defence as Penny broke into her tirade. ‘You have no idea what I have been through tonight,’ she began. ‘When you didn’t show up I asked my guide to let me see what was going on.’ Penny explained to him what she had experienced. She had been given access to Marianne’s mind at the time he was trying to persuade her in the car park to let him go. She experienced crimson rage and black horror, and it had descended on her like a blanket, choking her. She had seen violence, a knife, murder and mayhem. She had feared that James was being attacked and killed by a black tortuous violence that terrified her. ‘She is dark and dangerous. I told you she was and now I know. You have to keep away from her. What happened? Tell me. I need to know what was happening.’

James told her, but he didn’t tell her everything. He was still too much of a coward to tell her the whole truth. He told her that he had told Marianne to make an appointment at the clinic, that he wouldn’t see her under any other circumstances. That much was true. Then he told her what had happened in the clinic car park and how Arthur had stormed out when he had returned Marianne home. ‘Look at my bloody shirt,’ he said. ‘Look at what she has done to it. She is not going to let me treat her in the way I want to and she is not going to see another therapist. If what you say is true about her being affected by some dark entity then I have to find a way to deal with it.’

What he was saying was also true. He began to believe that she was possessed by something that he did not understand. She had responded to his exorcism prayer by being calmed, and this experience of Penny’s whilst in an altered state only served to reinforce a glimmer of suspicion. Marianne had trapped him and he had to see it through, but he had to see it through on her own terms. He told Penny that he would be careful, but he had to see it through to the end. Penny said, ‘She knows where you live and she is dangerous.’ She went to her handbag and retrieved her spare key. ‘Take this,’ she said to him. ‘If you need a safe place to stay then come here.’ She was deadly serious.

Chapter 15

A New Way of Working?

James was treading a knife edge. Penny saw real and threatening danger and wanted him to be safe, and Marianne had him trapped. He had to play Marianne's game to the end, whatever that may be, and at the same time he had to be on his guard against any threat to his safety. He put his faith in his ability to influence Marianne with his hypnotic skills and he put his trust in the powers that guided him in his work and on his constantly evolving cycles of change and development. He knew he was stepping into the unknown, but he felt safe. He felt protected in some way. He had total faith, and he felt safe.

It was Saturday and he had to work for the supermarket from 6 that evening until 2.30 in the morning. He had to take the initiative, so he phoned Marianne to see how she was since the previous night's events.

She answered the phone with the little-girl voice and he asked her how she was. She said she was fine and asked him if he could come over. She had to collect her car from the clinic car park and the children wanted to see him. He packed his working clothes in an overnight bag so he could go straight to work from her house and made his way over to her.

The little one, Toni opened the door to him with a big smile on her face and welcomed him inside. Marianne was in the kitchen and the other two children sat at the parlour room table with their homework. They made way for him to sit down and Marianne stood in the kitchen doorway with a contented look on her face. 'Would you like something to eat?' she asked him. 'I could do you a sandwich or a bowl of soup. I'm not very good at cooking properly.'

'A sandwich will be fine,' he said and the middle girl, Tiffany, asked him if he could help her with her homework. He set about showing her how to do long division as he rummaged around in his memory of how to do it himself. Marianne brought him a sandwich and a mug of tea and sat and watched as he allowed himself to be drawn into the world of her children. She still had that contented look about her and watched him in silence.

The children finished their homework, put their books away and began to amuse themselves with their play things. James finished his sandwich and Marianne invited him into the lounge. She put the television on and they sat down beside each other on the sofa. Marianne leaned against him with a contented sigh and said, 'Thank you for helping Tiffany. She gets all upset with herself when she can't do something. She just needs someone to show her the way with a bit of patience. Like me. Thank you.' She looked up at him with her big grey eyes and cuddled into him. 'Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to have someone like you around all the time, but then I get frightened. I don't want to feel trapped and dependant on anyone, but at the same time I want to know what it feels like to be normal. This feels good. You know, to sit in front of the tele whilst the kids are amusing themselves. I feel safe with you.'

James began to feel that by going along with Marianne and meeting all of her needs he would be able to achieve a lot in helping her to resolve her hidden issues. There was no way that she would ever let any therapist anywhere near her in that sense. He was on the inside now, in the enemy camp and he had to build trust with her. He felt comfortable and he nestled down with her on the sofa, her head on his chest, and they watched the television as if they had been together for years. He felt her relax beside him and he too felt a contentment that he hadn't felt for a very long time. He began to feel at home in this house.

After taking Marianne to collect her car from the clinic they returned to the house and James got ready to leave for work at five o'clock. He wanted to see his daughter the next day being Sunday and he had the night off, so he suggested that he come over after the visit to his daughter's and spend the evening with her.

'You can stay if you want,' said Marianne. 'I want you to sleep here with me. Please say you will.' There was no reason he could think of to deny her request, so he agreed.

The next day after he had risen and bathed to the sounds of Vivaldi's Four Seasons, James was about to make his way over to his daughter's to discuss the wedding plans and have Sunday lunch. Then Penny turned up.

'Oh, are you going out?' she asked him.

'Yes, I'm going over to see Angie and John about the wedding arrangements.'

'Oh, can I come too? I need to talk to her about the catering.'

'Well, she is expecting me for dinner and I don't think it would be a good idea for you to arrive without being expected. Besides I need to talk to her about some other stuff. I hope you don't mind?' James prayed that she would not press him. She didn't.

'Well, what are you doing tonight then? Are you working?'

The knife-edge.

He couldn't tell her that he had agreed to spend the night with Marianne, although she had accepted that he was committed to helping her as best he could as a therapist.

'Yes,' he lied, and his conscience pricked him again. He hated telling lies.

James's daughter, Angie, could see that her father was a little preoccupied during dinner and after the table had been cleared away and John sat to watch the football on the television she asked him, 'What's the matter dad? You look as if you have something on your mind.'

'I have,' he replied. 'I wasn't going to tell Penny about your wedding because I didn't want her to be there. I've got involved with someone else.'

'Oh, who's that then? Do I know her?'

'No, you don't know her. I think I may have mentioned a couple of weeks ago that I had a new client who was abandoned at birth and abused as a child. Did I mention it?' he asked

'Yes, you did. It isn't her is it?'

'Yes.'

Without going into any specific details James explained to Angie that his relationship with Marianne had developed from a therapeutic one into a personal one. 'Penny doesn't know yet,' said James. 'Well, she has a good idea but she's not certain because I haven't told her anything. But she will know soon enough, and, well, if she is involved with the wedding it could..... you know'

'I know,' said Angie. 'You do get yourself in a pickle don't you dad? What am I going to do with you? Do you know what your trouble is?' she asked him. He looked at her without answering. 'You are a good man and it's in your nature to help people. When someone is in trouble you just can't say no. Look at what happened in Crete. You helped people and then when it all went wrong you got the blame. How could you ever forgive those people? I don't know how you can even talk to that one who robbed your house. When you and mum split up it was you who got the blame. It took me years to find out the truth.'

She was right of course. When James and her mother had split up it was because she was unfaithful to him when he was working abroad. Angie was only eleven years old at the time and her mother told her that he had abandoned them. This was why she had come to be with John, a man much older than her and a lorry driver to-boot. When Angie had discovered the truth about the reason for the divorce she was furious with her mother and wanted nothing to do with her. She had been her dad's best friend ever since and took a serious interest in his emotional welfare. The rift with her mother had healed a little over the years and being a compassionate soul herself, Angie felt sorry for her mother and her shortcomings. Her mum was in her third marriage now and she had a good man. Life for Angie and her mum had calmed down a lot, but there was a part of Angie that still hadn't quite forgiven her mother for those lost years as a teenager with her dad when she had needed him.

'Well, I can't just tell Penny to bugger off, now can I?' said Angie.

'No,' said James. 'I wouldn't expect you to, but I just wish it hadn't happened. Life is going to be very unpleasant when Penny knows the truth about Marianne and I don't want your wedding to be spoiled.'

'You aren't thinking of bringing her, are you?' asked Angie suddenly in horror at the very idea.

'No of course not. I wouldn't dream of it,' said James. It wasn't as if he had met another Julia or someone he could introduce to his family. Marianne was a unique case and he had to solve her mysteries. It had never crossed his mind that he could ever have a normal type of relationship with her and it was unlikely that his daughter would ever meet her. Besides, what would she think if she knew that Marianne was younger than she was?

They discussed the arrangements with the photographer and cars and guests for the reception, and James got up to leave.

'Take care dad. And try not to get into any more trouble.'

'Bye Angie,' said James and made his way over to spend the night with Marianne.

James spent that evening with Marianne and the children, sharing in their lives and being accepted by them all. Marianne displayed a contentment that showed James how much she needed somebody to depend upon. She busied herself in the kitchen making an evening meal for them all and then apologised for cooking too much rice and not making it attractive enough. James told her not to worry, and Marianne told him how Neville had always made her feel inadequate in the kitchen because everything had to be perfect.

When the children's bedtime arrived, she asked him to come with her to tuck them in and kiss them all goodnight. After she had settled them all down for the night she came to him in the living room and they watched television. She cuddled into him and made him feel valued as a friend, a companion and a lover. They retired to her room and after making love they slept together peacefully.

The next morning the children rose early, at about seven o'clock and came into Marianne's room to rouse her and James from their sleep. Even they were excited at having him stay and sleep with their mother. They busied themselves with getting breakfast ready and when Marianne and James went downstairs the middle girl, Tiffany, fussed around James and served him a breakfast of cornflakes. James kept out of the way as Marianne got the children ready for school and then she invited him to come with them. They drove to the school and dropped the children off and then made their way back to the house.

'This is the time I hate the most,' said Marianne. 'I like having the children around, but when they are at school I get so lonely.'

All that week James stayed with Marianne and the children. He went to work from her house and she left her front door key under the mat for him to let himself in. Each morning he returned from work he undressed and slipped into bed beside her. She welcomed his presence in her sleep and nestled into him. Each morning when the children arose they would awaken their mother. She left James to sleep whilst she made breakfast for the children and took them to school. She would return to the house and do a little housework, knowing that there was someone asleep upstairs in her bed who cared for her and her children. At about midday she would make a cup of tea and bring it up to him, wake him and climb in beside him. She loved him and he returned her love.

The shit didn't hit the fan until the evening of the third session of the self-hypnosis course.

James had taken the group through some self-hypnosis exercises and asked them all to put what they had learned into practice. He asked them all to give themselves an objective that they wanted to achieve, nothing big like achieving a life-long ambition, but just something small as a first step. They all went into trance and he asked them to focus on achieving their goal, to visualise it and feel it happening. When the session was over they all made their way home, and when James had locked up and put the clinic key back through the letter box he and Marianne slipped across the road to the pub for a quick one before going home. Arthur was sitting with the children as usual.

'What was the objective you focused on in that session?' asked James.

'Being with you,' replied Marianne.

He smiled and said, 'But you already have me.'

'I know,' she said. 'They all want you but I have you.'

'What do you mean,' James asked her.

‘They all want you, can’t you tell?’ said Marianne. ‘Especially the one in the dark suit. They are all eating out of your hand, but that one is creaming her knickers for you. You must have noticed. I bet you have women throwing themselves at you all the time.’

‘No, I don’t,’ said James. ‘And even if they did, I don’t notice. I have a job to do and I get on and do it. OK, there have been some times when I notice that a client has made herself up a bit more than usual or is wearing a slightly shorter skirt, but I ignore it and get on with the work. One client baked a cake for me once, which was a nice gesture, but I didn’t think for a moment that she had any designs on me. It’s not the sort of thing that occurs to me.’ Just then Marianne’s mobile phone rang in her hand bag. It was Arthur, and as Marianne listened to him her eyes widened and her jaw dropped. When the call ended she put the phone back into her hand bag and looked at James.

‘That was Arthur,’ she said. ‘Penny has been talking to him and now she knows what’s been going on. The children told Arthur that you have been staying at the house all this week and now Penny knows.’

Marianne made her own way home and James did the same – back to his own flat, and as he did so he wondered what Penny had in store for him. His question was answered when he heard the message on his answerphone. Penny went ballistic, and he hadn’t heard the last of what she had to say. Life for James was going to get very, very uncomfortable indeed.

Back on home ground James was able to focus on how he was to help Marianne with her core issues. First, he had to find out what they were and he knew he needed help and support from his colleagues. Jean, the hypnotherapist and spiritual healer was due to return from her trip to America and he had made a note in his diary to phone her on the Monday. He also arranged a consultation with Keith, another hypnotherapist with whom he’d done some work some years previously. Keith was also a spiritual practitioner who used the Tarot cards for inspiration. James had a lot of faith in Keith’s abilities. In fact, he had introduced James to the mysteries of the Tarot and James had used them successfully in Crete. There are a lot of misconceptions about the Tarot that James had been able to unravel during his quiet times on the Cretan mountainside. He came to learn that each card has a symbolic meaning that is open to interpretation. What aids with the interpretation is what the spirit guides inspire in the reader. To read the cards accurately, the reader looks at the card and waits for the inspiration to enter his or her mind. When the reader is tuned in to the right altered state mental frequency the results are astonishingly accurate, just like some kind of magic. Sceptics are often converted when they experience this accuracy for themselves. James made the appointment to see Keith on the Tuesday of that week and suggested that he may bring a client with him. He had to try and get Marianne to see either Jean or Keith.

The weekend slipped by with James having to start work much earlier than usual at three o’clock on both Saturday and Sunday. Whilst driving, his mind shifted focus between his personal relationship with Marianne and her children, Penny’s reaction and what she may do, and his own objectives as far as Marianne’s emotional and mental health were concerned. He knew he had stepped into the breach, joined with Marianne in her own pit of despair and now he had to find a way out for her and for himself.

On Monday he spoke with Jean and she agreed to see Marianne if he could persuade her. No sooner had he finished his conversation with Jean, the phone rang and he answered it to Marianne.

‘How was your weekend?’ she asked him. ‘Did Penny give you a bad time?’

‘No,’ replied James. ‘It has been very quiet since she left a message on the answerphone on Friday night. But I don’t for a minute expect that to be the last of it.’

‘Can you come over today,’ asked Marianne.

‘Yes,’ said James. ‘I’ll be right there.’ He put the phone down and after collecting his working gear he made his way over to Marianne’s house.

Marianne refused point blank to see another therapist so James had to use another approach. ‘How would you like to have your cards read?’ he asked her.

‘What cards? Do you mean the Tarot? Oh yes please. I have my own, would you like to see them?’

‘Yes, I would,’ replied James. ‘Do you know how to read them?’

‘No not really, I just follow the instructions. Do you know how to read them?’ asked Marianne.

James didn’t want Marianne to get the idea that he could read them because he wanted help and support from a colleague. As Marianne searched out her own deck of cards James suggested that he take her to a professional reader. To James’s delight she jumped at the chance. As Marianne spread her cards and read the

symbolic meaning from the instructions he explained to her that to read the cards accurately was a gift and took much practice to perfect it. As Marianne looked at her cards and interpreted them James made his own interpretation but kept it to himself. His own interpretation was nowhere near the negative result that Marianne saw. He didn't challenge her reading but looked forward to the consultation with Keith the next day.

James had to start work that day at four o'clock and Marianne had to collect the children from school, so they left the house together in their separate cars. For the first part of their respective journeys they travelled together with James leading the way. He could see Marianne in his driving mirror as they stopped at road junctions and traffic lights. She had the look of a teenager very much in love.

James finished work that night at two in the morning and was back at Marianne's by three. He let himself in quietly, washed and went into her room to undress. The curtains were drawn back and the full moon cast its pale glow around the room. As he undressed he looked at her sleeping peacefully laying on her side with her thumb in her mouth.

James stopped undressing and sat very gently on the edge of the bed so as not to disturb her. He saw the face of a child. He felt himself change. He saw her as a father would see a sleeping child and he couldn't bring himself to continue to undress and slip into the bed beside her. He sat on the edge of her bed and silently wept for her.

After a while James went downstairs and made himself a cup of tea. He sat in silence with his tea and recalled the incident when Marianne had sat on the floor and he had detected an impression that she was about to put her thumb in her mouth. What he had just witnessed confirmed his suspicion that one of her personas was indeed a very small child. There was no way he could sleep with her whilst she had this persona.

James was half way through his tea when he heard soft footfalls on the stairs. He looked up and Marianne entered the room, her eyes glazed with sleep.

'What are you doing down here?' she asked.

'I'm early,' he said. 'I'm not tired enough to sleep yet and I didn't want to disturb you.'

Marianne came and sat on his lap, putting her arms around his neck and kissed him. He loved her natural scent and it stirred him. He buried his face against her neck, savouring her sweet scent and hugged her close. She had resumed her persona of a woman in love and told him, 'I don't want to sleep either. Come, let's go to bed.'

She led the way upstairs and they went to bed to make love. James had already switched from the protective father in him that had emerged to return to the lover that Marianne wanted him to be. James's ability to become a chameleon was given a further boost as he learned to unconsciously adjust to Marianne's ever-changing needs.

James and Marianne arrived at Keith's house at the appointed time of one o'clock in the afternoon. He had allocated two hours for them. He welcomed them both and ushered them into the comfortable front room of his home. James hadn't given Keith any briefing of any kind, and he certainly hadn't mentioned anything about his relationship with Marianne. He didn't want Keith to be influenced by any of his own ideas, so Keith asked him what he wanted from him. 'Marianne would like you to give her a Tarot reading, and then if you like you can give me one,' said James.

Keith addressed his next question to Marianne. 'Would you like Mr. Parker to wait here whilst I read your cards in the next room in private or do you want him to be present?' Marianne looked across at James and gave a shy smile.

'Can he come too?' she asked in her little-girl voice.

'Of course,' replied Keith and he led them both into the next room where he conducted his business.

He indicated a seat to Marianne and asked her to sit down. In front of her chair was a small round table and Keith pulled up another chair and sat opposite her with the small table between them. He asked James to sit on a chair at the edge of the room and asked him to not interfere in any way. James sat down to observe.

Keith unwrapped his cards from their silk covering and spread the silk over the table. He then spread all the cards on the table in a long line face down and asked Marianne to choose twelve of them at random and

place them in a small pile. He then gathered up all the unpicked cards into a pile and placed them face down on the table. Then he took the pile that Marianne had picked and spread them in a circle around the table face up. He read the cards.

The whole process of reading the cards and interpreting them took Keith about three quarters of an hour, and James sat fascinated as Keith exposed three significant issues.

1. A seed has been planted that needs watering and nurturing for it to grow.
2. There is a great fear to be overcome.
3. There is a devil on your shoulder.

There was much, much more, all of which James could identify as accurate and appropriate to Marianne, but these three core issues struck a major chord, especially the third one.

The seed that had been planted was their relationship. The fear that had to be overcome was still not identified, but it was real and powerful. The devil on her shoulder, as presented by Keith, was symbolic. But was it? Another piece of a very disturbing picture had been put into place, and James didn't like it – not one little bit.

In summary, Keith assured Marianne that her cards were good and that she had much to look forward to, but at the end of the day it was up to her. 'You have all the support you need,' he told her. 'But you have to use that support to help yourself. You'll be fine.'

The reassurance he gave her put a wonderful broad smile on her face and Marianne looked across at James in acknowledgement of his support – all the support she needed.

Keith asked James if he wanted Marianne to be present during his own reading, and James answered in the affirmative and they changed places. Keith took James through the same procedure of choosing twelve cards and then proceeded with his reading.

Although James had already acknowledged from previous experience both the uncanny accuracy and relevance of a good Tarot reading, and his faith in Keith's gift, he was still stunned by what these cards told him. Again, the reading took all of forty-five minutes and there was a lot to digest, but three key issues were raised for James's attention.

1. What he was doing took a great deal of courage. He was stepping into the unknown on a new cycle, and he had to consider if what he was doing may be foolish.
2. The way he worked was to change.
3. There would be those who would resist and try to deflect him from his task and it wasn't going to be easy, but he had the diligence and persistence to succeed. It was also said that he had the support of a woman but he had no idea who that could be yet. This was the real mystery, and James would certainly unravel it in time.

The only thing that Keith could be specific about in relation to these three issues was that James would never be able to achieve his objective of gaining his Doctorate. This is something that had to be sacrificed in order for him to change the way he worked. In what way was he to work then? Keith couldn't say, and neither could James. He was a hypnotherapist and a spiritual healer, but he had to learn a new way of working. This was something he had been told before. He hadn't understood it then and he still didn't understand it now.

During James's second year at university he decided it may be a good idea to gain his certificate in clinical hypnosis at London University in readiness for when his psychology degree was completed. He had to be in a position to step straight into NHS approved work as soon as he was free to do so. He enrolled for the course which ran concurrently with his existing studies, but at weekends. As a trained hypnotist already, he didn't have to go through the first year, but joined the course at the end of the first year where his abilities and aptitude for the second and qualifying year would be assessed. This assessment triggered a strange and frustrating series of events.

James was invited during his assessment to demonstrate his skills with a small group of three people. He had been asked to induce them into trance and take them through a guided imagery exercise that had been written down and had to be followed. But James, being a bit of an individualist, strayed from the written

protocol. His group had an experience they will never forget. His method opened their chakras and they experienced a connection with the Divine Light. Immediately following the experience one of the participants asked him where he had learned such a powerful method and this question, together with the overall response from the group, drew the attention of the course instructors to James's abilities. James was shocked and surprised when he was invited for his assessment interview and told that there was no place for him on the course. He was given no reason. In a state of disbelief, James returned to the training room where other members of the course were having tea. A man came up to James and introduced himself as Richard. Richard told him, 'You made a mistake my friend.'

'Oh, what was that then?' asked James.

'You demonstrated the fact that you are a spiritual healer, and they don't like that. They want students to learn things their way and you are not allowed to show any special gifts. They don't understand and it makes them fearful.'

Richard explained that he too was a spiritual healer, but he had learned to toe the line just to get his certificate. James had blown his chance of working with the NHS by being a non-conformist. He was devastated. However, this chance meeting with Richard proved to be a solution to another problem that had been bothering James – Penny's demands for his attention. Richard and James became friends and they discussed Penny's mediumistic abilities. Richard, as well as being a spiritual healer was also what is known as a platform medium. He would demonstrate the reality of life after death to large audiences in theatres around the country, and he introduced James to Derek his agent and promoter. Derek had been an agent for many well-known names in the world of show business in the past but had discovered the amazing realms of spirit existence. He ran a very successful spiritual church in London and put his best mediums on the stage. He agreed to meet Penny and offered her an audition in his church. Penny was great and Derek offered her the chance to support one of his stars at a large theatre. It seemed as if James's assessment at the school of clinical hypnosis was just a means of meeting Richard, which led to Penny meeting Derek. Penny now had a focus on her own work that allowed James to focus on his studies. It all fitted into place so well that James was able to overcome his own disappointment at being expelled from the course. *God does indeed work in mysterious ways*, he thought to himself.

It was at the time of Penny's audition at the church, whilst Richard was demonstrating his own skills that James was told by Richard, 'You are not doing what you are meant to do. You will find a different way of working.' James didn't understand this message then, and the same message was being repeated by Keith four years later.

Keith's reading was relevant and accurate in everything about James and his current state of affairs, but how he was to work in the future was still a mystery that was to remain for some time to come. His adventure with Marianne would teach him much and he would indeed find a new way of working as a healer. Marianne was the key and their meeting was not random chance. But James still didn't know that and he was still in the dark – for the time being.

Chapter 16

Multiple Personality or Spirit Possession?

The reading given by Keith to Marianne and James gave both of them a great deal of encouragement to permit the natural evolution of their new relationship. Marianne showed signs of real happiness, perhaps for the first time in her life, and James came to realise that he was indeed embarking on a new and exciting cycle. His doubts were put to rest and he realised that any new cycle began with the symbolic Fool of the mysterious Tarot. He knew he was in for a rough ride but he had faith in himself and his abilities and it dawned on him that this was his chance to prove the power of love over adversity. But before he would be able to do that, first he was to experience at first-hand what it is like to be involved with someone who lived in a state of perpetual confusion, and a storm was well on its way.

James had made an error with his work schedule. He had finished one trucking run late and had to start another one earlier than usual and this left him little time to sleep. He was about to go to bed at about eleven o'clock in the morning in his own bed when the phone rang. It was Marianne asking him to come over. He told her that he had to sleep before going to work again that night and he was unable to come to her. Marianne was insistent and James had a bit of a job to persuade her to let him go to bed.

'But you can come here and sleep here,' she said with persistence. James knew that there was no way she would let him sleep, and he told her so in the nicest way he could. Suddenly she became very angry and told him, 'If you don't come now then don't ever come here again. I don't want to see you anymore.' She slammed the phone down leaving James with the sound ringing in his left ear.

Marianne's abrupt ultimatum took James by surprise. He had seen her express anger when he had first met her and she had told him how much she hated all those who had abused and betrayed her. This much he understood, but her reaction to his reasonable request was the reaction of a spoiled child. His priority was to get to bed and sleep in preparation for the night's work. It was very unwise to drive a forty-ton truck through the night when deprived of sleep, and although he had committed himself to helping Marianne in every way he could, there was no way he was going to endanger himself by being tired at work. He went to bed and slept peacefully, putting the incident behind him.

Three days drifted by without a word. Not a phone call – nothing. She must have meant what she said, 'If you don't come now then don't come at all.'

James didn't call her but took advantage of this free time and plunged into his research reading, looking more specifically at multiple personality disorder and possession. What he found disturbed him a great deal, but he was unable to fully accept that what he was reading actually related to Marianne. It was a kind of defence mechanism that we all use. When we are faced with something that we don't really want to acknowledge or accept then we go into denial. Everyone does it. Alcoholics do it and parents with dysfunctional children do it. People who are diagnosed with a terminal illness do it and spouses who are told that their partner is being unfaithful do it.

Several pieces of a puzzle had been hovering around waiting for James to fit them into place, but the idea that the disturbing picture they were building actually applied to Marianne was not yet acceptable to him. He had no way of dealing with any of these ideas – yet.

Whilst sitting at his desk and discovering the possibility of multiple personality or possession, and struggling with himself over these issues, a shadow passed by the window and there was a sharp and aggressive series of raps on the door. It was confrontation time. He opened the door to see Penny standing there with a countenance that spoke volumes. Her previous mask was off and James hardly recognised the person in front of him. Stood before him was a human volcano of rage. Her face was red and puffed up. She had dark rings around eyes that appeared smaller than they really were. Her eyebrows were turned downwards into a knotted chevron at the top of her nose and she was hyperventilating, her ample bosom rising and falling with every breath she took.

‘WELL?’ she shouted at him. ‘Are you going to let me in, OR WHAT?’ The shout hit him in the face, and he stepped to one side allowing her to enter.

Penny marched into the living room whilst James closed the front door, and when he entered the room she was stood there with her hands on her hips waiting to let loose.

‘What do you have to say for yourself?’ she screamed. Not even waiting for him to answer, Penny went into her condemnation of him. There was nothing he could say even if he had wanted to. Penny let rip with a stream of anguish and rage that James had only once before witnessed.

It had been at his own divorce proceedings when his wife sued him for desertion. This was her own justification for replacing him with another whilst he was working his guts out under the unrelenting sun of the Saudi Arabian desert. To keep things simple James had not contested her case and went along with it just to get it over with. His wife had claimed half of James’s assets and half his income in settlement, and the magistrate, in consideration of her request had asked James to submit a statement of means. He presented his notarised statement that declared he was unemployed and had no assets. James added to his written statement by saying to the court, ‘I have fifteen thousand pounds of debt. If my wife wants half of everything I have then she can have half of that.’

As James watched Penny launch herself into her tirade he was reminded of that day in court. At his statement his wife suddenly flew into a rage and launched a volley of expletives that took everyone in the court by surprise. Her own lawyer looked across at James with a pained countenance that said, *‘this woman has presented herself to me as the poor abandoned wife, left destitute by her husband with a child to bring up on her own. What is this I am hearing?’* In answer to this unspoken question, James leaned across to her lawyer, and in a voice that could be carried so that the magistrate could hear what was said with a nod towards his wife and a knowing smile, ‘I was married to that.’

The magistrate awarded James’s wife custody of Angie and for James to pay her one pound per annum. Then she went into orbit and the magistrate had to order her to keep order.

James made the comparison as Penny raged at him, her face became redder and redder. He could see veins standing out blue on her neck and temples, and he began to fear that she may burst a blood vessel. As she raged at him she wept, and hot floods of tears ran down her swollen red cheeks onto her coat.

He cursed himself as he watched and listened to Penny vent her emotions towards him. He was guilty as charged and he had no defence. He had nothing to say. He sat down at his desk as Penny raged and he sat silently and watched her. He had caused this. Once again, he had caused someone to feel deep emotional pain and he cursed himself for it. There was nothing he could do but wait until Penny simply ran out of steam, but it seemed as if she never would. She repeated herself over and over again, ‘You lied to me! I trusted you and you lied to me! How could you do this to me? I saw all the signs. I told you she was dangerous and you ignored me. I knew there was something happening but I ignored it because I trusted you. I never thought you could ever do such a thing to me. How could you do this to me?’

As Penny went on and on, over and over again, James sank deeper and deeper into humiliation and guilt. He waited for the tirade to stop. Eventually it did and Penny shouted at him the same sentence she had begun with, ‘What do you have to say for yourself?’

He had no defence.

‘Nothing,’ he said.

‘Nothing?’ Penny screamed. ‘Nothing? You bastard. You did this to me and you have nothing to say?’ Penny went off again. She wasn’t spent yet and James had to sit through another five minutes of verbal battering. If Penny had been the physical kind she would have beaten him with her bare hands, but she used her mouth instead.

As James sat through a second tirade he slipped into silent witness mode, detached, unemotional, non-judgemental. He became a disinterested observer to his own verbal abuse. It was a kind of protection that he would come to understand more about as his new cycle of experience progressed. He had written about the silent witness perspective in his manuscript and had named it such. It was a way of looking at the world with objectivity, seeing it as it really is. He began to see his own situation with objectivity and no emotional involvement. He saw Penny’s rage and his own guilt, but from a position of non-judgement and he began to understand in a different way. As Penny’s assault on him ran out of energy he returned to normal

consciousness with new insights and now it was his turn. Penny asked him again, this time with less venom, 'What do you have to say for yourself?'

This time he could answer her.

'Have you finished?' he asked, wanting to make sure he wouldn't be interrupted.

'Yes.' She said. 'For now.'

James began slowly and deliberately so that Penny could understand what he was about to say. He didn't want her to do what she usually did when he spoke to her, and that was to consider what she was going to say next. When a person is thinking about what they are going to say in reply, in reality they cannot be listening properly. To listen properly takes focused and undivided attention. He made sure he now had it from her.

'Understand this,' he began. She remained silent.

'I am not your possession. I do not and have never belonged to you. I have never made you any promise or commitment of any kind. I have never told you I love you. I am, and always have been since my divorce, a free man. You have no right to determine my life for me.' He stopped to see if there was going to be a reaction. There was none, so he continued.

'Your so-called trust in me was only your own expectation. You *expected* me to belong to you. It was your wish that I be your possession. Well I'm not and I never have been. Your expectation was not mine and never has been. Am I making myself clearly understood?' Again, there was no reaction. What Penny was hearing was a truth she had always fought hard to resist, another form of denial.

Penny had raised the question of trust in her volley and James had answered it with his own interpretation. Trust had been an issue between them before. As he had approached his final exams and Penny's demands on his time had pushed him to the brink, he would escape to the pub after he had finished his evenings course work to relax and unwind. Penny often followed him in after a few moments, much to his chagrin. On one occasion she had walked through the pub door as he was relaxing with a couple of friends and stood a short distance from him. She had a troubled look and instead of coming to join him as was usual she stayed distant and asked him, 'Can I talk to you?' and glancing at his friends continued, 'In private please.'

James had led the way to a quiet corner of the room and asked her what the matter was. Penny said, 'Are you having an affair with someone?'

'Why should you ask that?'

Penny reached into her pocket and brought out a pack of condoms. 'Because I found these,' she said.

'Got you!' exclaimed James. Penny looked stunned. What did he mean?

'I deliberately put those in my brief case,' he told her. 'I suspected that you had been going through my things and I planted them there to see if you would find them. Now I know.' He kept his voice down so as not to embarrass her and continued as she looked at him with surprise and guilt. 'You have never trusted me and now I know. All I have had time for these past months is to get my course work done. When would I ever have the time or the energy for an affair? This is just the kind of pressure I do not want to have to deal with and now you have shown me your true colours. If I ever met someone else and started an affair then you would be the first to know.'

At the recall of this incident concerning trust, or the lack of it, James came to realise that he was indeed guilty of betrayal. He was having an affair and he hadn't told her. He had no defence, but she wanted an explanation. She deserved that much and James tried his best to give her one.

'I have tried many times to tell you this without hurting your feelings, but you refused to listen. I have tried to get you to focus on your work instead of me. I even went out of my way to help get you on the stage in front of hundreds of people so that you could contribute something to other people's lives and give yourself some self-worth. But no. You insist on possessing me.'

The volume of James's voice rose, imperceptibly at first, but now he was beginning to express an anger and frustration towards Penny that he had been reluctant to expose before.

'This last few years have been a bloody nightmare for me. What with having to struggle through the degree and make ends meet at the same time. You sticking your oar in when I didn't want you to and then holding me to ransom. I didn't ask you for anything and I don't owe you anything. Now I have my work to do, and this is my work.'

He waved his hand in a sweeping gesture over the books scattered across his desk.

'It is not the way I would have chosen it, but I have a job to do and you are in the way. Get out of my way, get out of my life and let me get on with it.' Now James was shouting. 'Do you hear me?'

James's anger was beginning to give way to the frustrations of the past seven-year cycle and beyond, as powerful emotions started to rise to the surface. His chest tightened, his voice was breaking with straining vocal chords and his eyes glazed. Penny saw the tell-tale signs of a hardening at the edges of James's mouth and started to move towards him. He threw his hands in front of him in defence and said, 'Don't touch me!' Penny stayed where she was and sat down, and he covered his face with his hands as bottled up frustration and grief were given vent. To be comforted by her now would be to give in and accept her. He didn't want to be comforted. He wanted to cry.

There had been a lot to grieve for that had never before been expressed. He grieved the loss of his business, the loss of his lovely home, the loss of Julia, and the traumas experienced in Crete. He grieved again for the loss of his aspirations to get his PhD, and he cried with the compassion he felt for the lost childhood of Marianne Craven. They all rose to the surface in that instant and James, unable to keep any of it contained any longer cried into his hands in front of her. James grieved for the breakdown of his marriage. He grieved for the loss of his little girl Angela when she had been only eleven years old. Every seven-year cycle ended with the loss of everything James had worked so hard for and each new cycle had started again from nothing. And he cried for what he had done to Penny.

His body rocked and he cried aloud, great sobs racked him as he tried hard to hold it in, but it was time to let go. It was time to grieve all his losses and all his failures.

James was surprised at his own outburst and the extent of his own grief. Eventually he calmed and reached across his desk to the box of tissues that were kept there for the benefit of his clients. He blew his nose and wiped the tears from his face and hands and they both sat silent whilst he fully recovered.

'I'm sorry,' he said.

He said sorry for embarrassing himself and he said sorry for what he had done to her. But she still needed an explanation for his behaviour. Through clogged sinuses that thickened his voice in his own ears he said, 'Now, if you really want to know what's going on I'll tell you.' There was a pause, then he said to her, 'Let me make you a cup of tea.'

As he rose to go to the kitchen the phone rang. Fortunately, the answerphone was on, but the caller left no message. There was a click as the receiver went down at the other end. James knew instinctively who it was. It was as if the click made by the replaced receiver had a signature all its own.

Penny sat in silence as James put the kettle on and a thought passed through his mind. He had told Penny not to touch him. Those were the same words that Marianne had spoken when they first met face to face. She had cowered in the corner of the room as he had approached her and she had said, 'Don't touch me.'

Why had she said that? He wondered. Was it for the same reason he had said it, meaning, *I don't want to be comforted, I want to be alone, I am not worthy, I don't want to be loved by you or to love you*. Or in Marianne's case was it just fear of the unknown, or fear of a strange man who could interfere with her desperate need for control?

So many questions all tied up with knotted emotions. As he made the tea the phone rang again. Two rings and the answerphone kicked in. No message- then a tell-tale 'click' as the receiver at the other end went down. He gave Penny her tea, sat at his desk and focused his mind on giving Penny an explanation.

'I didn't ask for this,' James began. 'She came to me for help and you said she was dangerous. To me that's like showing a red rag to a bull. How was she dangerous Penny?' he asked her. 'Was it because she was a threat to you? No, I don't think so. I think you saw in her something that is dangerous in another sense. You experienced it yourself that night she cornered me in the clinic car park. It terrified you. At the same time, I had confronted her and told her that her game had to stop, that I had to stop seeing her. I was determined but she attacked me in the car park. She came up behind me without warning and I heard a different voice tell me, 'You're not getting away that easily.' It didn't sound like her voice and there was malice in it. Then she reverted to being child-like and desperate to not be abandoned. On one hand she was threatening and on the other she was desperate. There were two of them.'

James went on to describe the incident at the cathedral and he told her what Keith the tarot reader had said about a devil on her shoulder. He reached across his desk and picked up a book to read from it. As he thumbed the pages looking for a passage to read to her he continued, 'She told me herself that she is bad.'

She told me there is a part of her that hurts people and she tries to keep it subdued, but it always gets its own way. She needs help and she has asked me to provide it, but I need to understand. She refuses to see anyone else and she refuses to let me help her unless I agree to sleep with her. I know it breaks all the rules but she left me no alternative. I know it sounds silly but I agreed to go along with her game just to get to the truth. But this is the truth of what happened.’ He found the passage he had been looking for and began to read.

‘Drastic, abrupt changes in personality are frequently encountered among patients receiving psychotherapy or psychiatric care. The behaviour patterns of these patients change so abruptly that many mental health professionals now use the term ‘multiple personality disorder (MPD) to describe this phenomenon. Clinical case studies often reveal histories of suppressed anxieties, fears and hostilities which can be traced to traumatic experiences, such as physical and sexual abuse and molestation, buried in the subconscious. From this it is hypothesised that one or more distinct, alternate personalities have been created by the patient to cope with their traumatic experiences.

In his book, *Multiple Man: Possession and Multiple Personality*, Adam Crabtree, a psychotherapist, wisely points out that this phenomenon should not be viewed exclusively as possession or multiple personality, but that some cases may be the result of dissociated personalities, while others are more likely to be cases of harassment by the spirit of a deceased person.

Crabtree’s clinical experiences have led him to conclude that both multiple personality and harassment should be considered when viewing the entire range of such disorders. He also cited the Swiss psychiatrist Dr Hans Nsegeli-Osjord, who says:

‘My own clinical experience has also caused me to conclude that the role of external entities should be considered. I know that the trauma of abuse and other shocking experiences results in scars on the psyche which are generally suppressed and emerge later in unusual disturbed behaviour. In cases of weakened ego or extreme stress, external entities may invade or harass the person to the point where counselling or treatment is indicated to enable the patient to return to a normal state. Unfortunately, in my judgement, those clinicians who cannot conceive of a post-mortem existence, limit their diagnosis of such abnormal behaviour.’ (Naegeli-Osjord, 1988, pp.135).

James put the book down and looked at Penny.

‘It is possible that Marianne Craven has MPD, and it is also possible that, from what you and I have experienced, she could be influenced by an external entity.’ He waited for Penny to respond.

‘I knew something had been going on that day I came here and she was here. I just knew it. You told her it had to stop the next day, didn’t you?’

Instead of responding to what he had read to her, all Penny was able to do was focus on the fact that at the time she had met Marianne she had shared his bed. The same bed she had shared with him. Penny simply wasn’t interested in anything else. She got up from her seat and made towards the door as the phone rang again. This time there was a simple one-word message left on the answerphone in a little-girl’s voice, ‘Sorry.’

‘Sorry?’ spat Penny. ‘She’ll be sorry and so will you. I promised your daughter to help with the catering for her wedding, and I will. But you don’t have to worry about me being there on the day. I wouldn’t even walk on the same side of the street as you.’ As Penny spoke these words her face snarled and he saw her other side. It was not a pretty sight. She opened the front door and before she left she faced him and with vengeance in her breast she said, ‘I will see to it that you will never work as a therapist again.’ She turned on her heel and left.

James went in and sat at his desk. He hardly had time to reflect on Penny’s threat when the phone rang again. He didn’t pick it up but waited for the mechanical voice to invite the caller to leave a message. A very distressed Marianne left one, ‘You bastard, you don’t know what you’ve done.’ The phone at the other end slammed down.

Only three or four weeks had passed since he became involved personally with Marianne. At that time, he had two women demanding his attention, but now he had both of them calling him a bastard. Then he must be.

He picked up the phone and dialled Marianne’s number, and as he did so he became aware of a simple little fact. He knew her number from memory, but he had never remembered Penny’s. *Curious*, he thought.

Marianne's phone was picked up at but no one answered.

'What's the matter Marianne?' asked James. Marianne had calmed down and she answered him in the little girl voice, 'I've smashed the place up. My dad is on his way over.'

'I'll be right there,' said James and put the phone down.

When he arrived, he was let in by one of the girls and he went in to the parlour to find Marianne sitting on the floor in her dressing gown. It was three in the afternoon and she hadn't got dressed all day. The room was a mess with toys and paper strewn all over the floor. The table and chairs were overturned and all three girls sat quietly watching their mother on the floor. She looked up at James from a tear stained face as he walked into the room and her lower lip quivered.

'I'm sorry,' she cried gently and tears started to flow again. James bent down and put his arms around her.

'It's all right, I'm here now. Where's your dad?'

'He left,' said Marianne between sobs. 'He can't cope when I'm like this. Nobody can. I don't want to be like this. Please help me.'

'Let me get this place sorted out,' he said as he stood up and surveyed the room. Marianne jumped to her feet and said, 'No. I don't want you to do that. I'll clean it up.' She switched in front of him from the distressed child to an industrious mother clearing up after the distressed child. He helped anyway.

On his way to her the next morning after work he stopped for petrol and bought her a bunch of flowers. When he arrived at her home he put them in a vase of water and placed it on the parlour room table before joining her whilst she slept. In the morning the children were the first to discover them and they came rushing upstairs to tell their mother that there was a surprise waiting for her downstairs. James would never forget the look on her face when she saw the flowers. No one had ever bought her flowers before. She blushed bright pink and a tear formed in her left eye. She had no words to express how she felt, but then she didn't need them. Her look said it all.

At the end of the week James called in to the clinic to check to see if there had been any appointments booked for hypnotherapy and to collect the keys so he could gain access to the clinic for his fourth and final self-hypnosis course session. The receptionist seemed uncomfortable when she saw him enter the clinic, and with a little difficulty she announced to him, 'We have a bit of a problem James.'

'Oh? What is it?' he asked. 'We have received a complaint from a woman who says you have abused your position and seduced a patient.' She didn't wait for James to answer. The look on his face showed his surprise and horror. She continued, 'Dr and Mrs. Weston are away on holiday for a couple of weeks and I don't know what to do. This woman is threatening all sorts of things and I'm worried.'

James recovered his composure and said, 'Try not to worry. I know who has made the complaint and why. She is someone I know and she is angry that I have entered into a personal relationship with someone else. Neither of them is a patient, I can assure you of that.' It was true. Marianne was not a patient and there was no reason for anyone at the clinic to be concerned over James's professional indiscretion.

'Try not to worry,' James reassured her. 'I'll sort it out before the doctor gets back.' James collected the keys and went to his own flat to prepare for the evening's session. He'd had no inkling that Penny would do such a thing, but she did threaten something when she said he'd never work as a therapist again. It was beginning to occur to him that she could do a lot of damage to his reputation and his relationship with Dr Weston.

The final session of the self-hypnosis course went well and the group were well satisfied with what they had learned. James issued each of them a certificate that said they had passed the course. It was an official certificate approved by the professional organisation of which James was a member and it was signed by Dr Weston. As James bid them all farewell and thanked them for being such good learners, he had an uncanny feeling that this was to be his first and last course. He and Marianne went across the road to the pub. This was also to be the last time that Arthur would have to sit with the children and await Marianne's return. He told Marianne what the receptionist had told him about Penny's complaint and they discussed the implications.

James could see his relationship with the doctor, together with all his past efforts at building trust with him going right out the window. He could also see himself sitting in front of a professional ethics tribunal at the Institute for Hypnotherapy. Marianne told him that she would stand by him and even offered to speak to the doctor herself on his behalf.

'I'm not a patient of his,' she said. 'And I have no complaints. Surely they will be able to see that Penny's complaint is just sour grapes.'

'Perhaps,' said James. 'We'll just have to wait and see which way the wind blows.'

The next day was the day that James had to give his daughter away to her husband.

It was a glorious day. The sun shone and so did Angie. As with all weddings this was a family reunion. James's own parents had come specially to see their first granddaughter married, and there was James's sister with her husband and their children. Angie's mother was there with her third husband and Angie's half-sister from her mother's second marriage, together with her grandmother, aunts, uncles and cousins. James felt proud as he gave his daughter away, and after the ceremony the whole party walked across the road from the registry office to the public gardens where photographs were taken by a tranquil pool under the shade of a weeping willow.

The main reception was to be held that evening at the social club, but as the wedding ceremony was early, at midday, James had arranged a small informal reception at his local pub. After the photographs they all made their way there for refreshments and James made a toast to his daughter and her husband. Everything went smoothly and James had a chance to socialise with his ex-wife and those relatives of hers who he hadn't seen for a long time. After a very satisfying episode everyone made their way to their respective homes to rest and prepare for the main reception that evening. James's sister and her husband took their parents back home. They were a little too old for a long day and to attend the evening reception would have been a little too much for them. James went home to rest, feeling good about the whole day and about himself and his relationship with Marianne. He would attend the reception and then go to her later.

James enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of the reception that evening, the music, the dancing and sharing in his daughter's happiness. Angie had wanted nothing to spoil her day, and James was pleased that Penny hadn't shown up. He didn't realise that Angie was protecting him from Penny. That is until the next day.

James had spent the night with Marianne and had left to visit his daughter as a courtesy after her wedding. It was then that he found out what had happened when Penny had been helping to prepare the reception catering. She and James's ex-wife had got together over the sandwiches and categorised his crimes against them. John had moved out of the way as the shit began to fly and poor Angie heard these two women tear James to shreds. They talked about how deceitful he was, how much he was a philanderer and a cheat and how immoral he was. How he had abandoned Angie and her mother when Angie had been only eleven years old, how he had seduced a poor girl with a mental illness, and so it went on. Angie knew the truth about her father, and to hear this decimation of his character was more than she could bear. She exploded, and in a fit of rage she forbade either of them to speak such lies. To Penny she screamed, 'How dare you speak that way of my father? He is my father for God's sake, and you have the audacity to stand there, on the eve of my wedding, and crucify him between you! How dare you? Get out of my sight and never show your face near me or him ever again!'

'That woman is evil,' Angie told her father, referring to Penny. 'No Angie, she's not evil. She's angry, and I'm sorry for her. I just wish it hadn't happened this way, but there's nothing I can do about it now.'

'I don't know anything about this Marianne,' said Angie. 'But I don't want anything to happen to you because of her. I don't want to see you hurt again. Promise me you'll be careful.'

'I promise,' said James, knowing that he may not be able to keep his promise, but he would do his best for Angie's sake.

James could do nothing about Penny's complaint against him at the clinic until Doctor Weston returned from holiday. He was not in a position to plan for another self-hypnosis course, and all referrals for hypnosis had dried up. He had time to himself, and he and Marianne settled into a comfortable routine with each other and her children. He had time to discuss many things of importance with Marianne about what troubled her and

he found the time for a lot of reading. During the following couple of weeks only two events marred their domestic contentment and his research. A confrontation with Penny, and a confrontation with Arthur. And Marianne had something very important to put to James. But first she wanted him to meet her family.

One Saturday morning, when the children didn't have to go to school they went into town to meet Marianne's adoptive father Kenneth. He worked as a steward in a hotel bar. At eleven o'clock in the morning the bar was still a little quiet and Ken had the time to be introduced to James. They shook hands, and James noticed a similar loose handshake to the one he had received from Arthur when they had first met. James had learned long ago that the strength of a man's handshake usually gave a very good first impression of the level of confidence in the man behind it. Ken was aged about sixty and overweight. He looked and sounded nervous. Marianne had talked about James a lot to her family during the first two weeks that they had met, and as far as she was concerned the sun shone out of James's arse. Marianne's adoptive father looked into the eyes of the man who, according to her, was her saviour and held the answer to all of their problems.

Life with the adopted Marianne had been a nightmare from the very first day for Ken and his wife Jean. Only eighteen days old when they took possession of her at the hospital, the infant Marianne was irritable and unable to settle. Nothing they did could comfort her. The infant child was angry, frustrated and inconsolable from the start. Ken's wife Jean was a children's nurse at the time, and they had decided to adopt because of their failure to conceive their own child. Being an experienced children's nurse gave Jean the confidence to deal with any infant child, but with Marianne's inability to accept their love Jean's confidence had been shattered and Ken became a nervous wreck. About a year after adopting Marianne, Ken and Jean had their own first child, followed a couple of years later by a second. Of the three children, Marianne had always been the most difficult. At about the age of eleven she was completely off the rails, into sex and alcohol. Ken and Jean had never had any control over Marianne from the start and finally they had her put into the care of the social services. This was when Ken had his nervous breakdown, and it still showed.

James bought the children a soft drink and for himself and Marianne a cup of coffee. There was no real opportunity to discuss anything of importance with Ken because he was on duty, but he extended an invitation for them all to come to tea the next day.

As they left the hotel Marianne explained that she didn't often take the children to see her adoptive parents because she had no respect or regard for them. She despised them for the way they had not protected her and had put her into care. She only took them occasionally out of a sense of duty for birthdays or special occasions. For James to meet them would be a special occasion. But James could already begin to see the conflict between Marianne and her adoptive parents. They blamed her for being an uncontrollable brat and she blamed them for not protecting her.

They walked into the city centre to find a key cutting shop. Marianne wanted James to have his own key to her house, and as James walked along the street with a child clamped to each hand Marianne followed on with the third child's hand in hers, and she smiled. She was happy and she had something to look forward to.

After they had a key cut for James they walked back to the car where it had been left at the hotel car park. The children grouped together and James and Marianne walked hand in hand. Marianne's earlier smile and warm feelings of contentment gradually changed as she pondered the relationship with her adoptive parents, and she asked him, 'Do you think it's possible for someone to be born bad?'

The question stopped James in his tracks and he saw the troubled expression on Marianne's face. It showed her concern for those who had been harmed by her own behaviour, and she needed answers. Her expression was in stark contrast to the one she had shown when, it seemed like a long time ago, she had told him that she despised her adoptive parents for what they had done to her. Marianne was torn between blaming others and blaming herself for the chaos that they had all lived with for the past twenty-eight years. Marianne was looking to James to answer all of her questions. But first he needed to find them himself.

Marianne's question sparked the memory of the incident in the clinic car park and Penny's experience that night. Pieces of a puzzle continued to slot into place, but it was a disturbing picture that they made. James needed to find answers, but at the same time he didn't want to trigger a situation he was not yet prepared to handle and he certainly didn't want to risk frightening Marianne into hibernation or some form of denial before he had a solution.

James was completely at a loss to answer Marianne's question with honesty, so he did his best to reassure her.

'No,' he replied. 'Events and circumstances make us react the only way we know how at the time. When we are hurt we hurt back. You mustn't blame yourself, or anyone else for that matter. Don't worry, all will be well.' He squeezed her hand and gave her a reassuring smile as they resumed walking to catch up with the children. He may have given Marianne a reassuring smile, but who was there to reassure him?

Much later he would take Marianne's question very seriously and he would spend a lot of time searching for the answer. Eventually he would find it. Eventually the picture that was beginning to emerge would be complete, but there was a long way yet to go.

The next day Marianne's adoptive mother fussed around in the kitchen with a cake she had baked specially for the occasion. She always baked a cake when the children came, as every visit was a rare one and as far as she was concerned each visit was special. Her fussing was in reality a mask for her anxiety. Marianne always made both Ken and Jean anxious. She could be unpredictable and fly into a rage without warning and this frightened them. Marianne's rages as a child had brought extreme distress, especially as she got older and the police became involved. There had been one time, when Marianne had visited them from the care home. She was about fourteen at the time, and they had been so afraid of what she might do that they called the police, just out of sheer fear of her. The police had arrived and at the mere sight of them Marianne had flown into a rage. This prompted the police to restrain her, which prompted a more violent rage, until eventually she was arrested and locked up. She had done nothing wrong, only attempted to visit her parents, and she had been locked up for it. The family had lived in fear of her ever since, right to the present day, and Marianne had never forgiven them, right to the present day.

James had met the family and they had approved of him as their adoptive daughter's friend and saviour, and perhaps even *their* saviour. If he could take her away from them completely then they would finally be free of that fateful decision twenty eight years ago when they had agreed to adopt a little baby girl.

Chapter 17

Writings – But Whose?

There was no going back. James had tried to end the affair with Marianne and had tried to protect Penny from the consequences and he had failed on both counts. Marianne had made an attempt to end it herself but had suffered in her own way, a way that James needed to understand. One part of her had demanded his attention and had given him an ultimatum, and another part had trashed her own home when he took her for her word and stayed away. Her plea for him to help her was genuine, and not of the persona that seduced him.

There was no doubt in his mind that Marianne was switching from one persona to another and that they were in conflict with each other. Then there was the sleeping child that sucked her thumb. James's real problem was that he had no one to turn to for help. He'd had no training in the diagnosis or treatment of multiple personality and all his assumptions were based on what he witnessed and the meagre information in his text books. It wasn't enough. His only course of action was to do the best he could with the skills he had and to respond to the differing needs of Marianne as and when they emerged.

He had met the family and they had accepted him. The children enjoyed having him around and the two younger ones found comfort in sitting on his lap and getting a fatherly cuddle. Arthur was staying away, and Marianne was getting worried that as the children's father he would lose contact with them. She urged him to visit them, and one Sunday afternoon he did.

James was sitting in the living room with the children watching television when Arthur arrived. Marianne let him in and they went into the parlour to talk. After a few minutes she came and asked James to join them saying, 'Arthur wants to talk to you.'

James left the children and joined Marianne and Arthur in the parlour and sat down at the opposite end of the table to where Arthur was. Marianne sat across a chair, back to front, with her arms rested on the back of the chair. Arthur looked across at James and began with an accusation. 'You are a fraud and a charlatan.' He threw an envelope across the table at James. 'You're no therapist. You're just a chancer pretending to be one. I bet you have a great time telling all your lorry driving mates at work how you've tricked a twenty-eight-year-old girl into bed.'

As Arthur spoke, James opened the envelope and found a letter from Penny. She and Arthur had got together to discuss what had been happening and they had joined forces in James's condemnation. The letter from Penny was written in a hand that could only have been done at the height of her anger. The letters were etched onto the page as if she had held the pen in her fist. They were oversized and child-like. The letter was an accusation of him as a betrayer and of Marianne as a whore who should be charging him for her services. He showed the letter to Marianne and she just laughed. James put the letter away and listened to Arthur.

'I paid good money out of my own pocket to you to help Marianne and what have you done?' Said Arthur in increasingly angry tones. 'I want my money back, you fraud and I want you to pay rent for staying here.'

The house where Marianne lived had been purchased on her behalf in Arthur's name with money that had been paid to Marianne as compensation for the physical abuse she had received whilst in the care of Social Services. They had paid her a settlement out of court of £30,000. Part of the money had been used as a deposit on the house and part for its furnishing. On receiving the settlement Marianne had decided that she wanted her own home as security for her children and that she wanted to be alone with them. She hadn't wanted Arthur to be there with her, but she still needed him to be a father to her children. It was becoming clearer to James that Marianne was not your average single-mother who had been abandoned by the children's father. No. Arthur was being manipulated by Marianne to stay at arm's length and to be there when she wanted him.

James could see that Arthur had been living his own nightmare and that he wanted it to be over. He could see that Arthur was torn by his own conflicts and that he was very angry with him for stepping into Marianne's life and taking his place. In a situation that was similar to the one he had found himself in with Penny just a few days before, James knew that there was nothing he could say to Arthur whilst he wanted to vent his anger. So, James found himself staying silent and slipping into silent witness mode. He became the detached observer, non-emotional and non-judgemental, and he watched both Arthur and Marianne as Arthur expressed his anger.

Arthur's anger turned from James to Marianne. 'She's nothing but a whore,' spat Arthur. 'She always was and she always will be. The only thing that's important to her is that thing between her legs. That is all the power she has and she uses it on everyone she meets. She's fucked them all, every man that comes within reach she offers herself to. That's why she hasn't got a doctor. She strips off in front of them and asks them to fuck her, there in the surgery. None of them want to know her. She is the original black widow. She is evil. She sucks them all in and when she's done she destroys them and now she'll do it to you.' Arthur's voice rose as his anger and his own hurt at her hands was expressed. 'I'll bet she has told you that you are the best hasn't she?' He mimicked her as he mocked James, 'Oh darling how wonderful you are in bed. You are the best that ever was.'

James's in silent witness mode watched and listened. He saw Marianne rocking on her chair back and forth in glee with a satisfied smile as she said with abundant pleasure, 'Don't you just love it.' She was really enjoying herself at Arthur's expense and she had no regard for what James must be thinking about Arthur's condemnation of her.

'She tells me all bout it you know.' Arthur had moved his address from accusing Marianne to informing James. 'She tells me what you do to her in bed and how you abuse her the way she likes to be abused - in the arse.' Marianne was still rocking on her chair and giggling to herself. This brought James out of silent witness mode as he realised that what Marianne had been doing was to deliberately antagonise Arthur with lies about what James did to her. Or was she engaging in some kind of perverted exchange with Arthur to satisfy some sexual need that Arthur had?

It was time for James to respond. 'I have never abused her. If she told you that then she lied to you.' Marianne got off her chair and went into the kitchen to potter around and put the kettle on. She stayed there for a while whilst James and Arthur continued their conversation.

'Well if you want her she's yours,' said Arthur. 'I've had enough of it and now it's your turn. I would wish you luck but I won't. You deserve each other and I want no part of it.'

Arthur said goodbye to the children and they asked him promise to come and see them. He made no promises and left.

After he had gone Marianne acted as if nothing had happened and James made a mental note of all he had witnessed and heard. He had observed Marianne really enjoying the power she had exercised over Arthur all the years they had been together and not together. It was a love-hate relationship. On one hand Arthur despised her and on the other he got some kind of pleasure from her sexual exploits which she shared with him. James balanced this persona of Marianne's with the one who had pleaded with him to help her as she sat on the floor surrounded by the wreckage of her own tantrum. He now had further evidence of Marianne's fragmented personality. There was a part of her that was wicked and punished Arthur without remorse, and now James had seen it for himself. But the moment he had left, Marianne returned to the persona that loved James, and once again they settled down with the children as if nothing had happened.

The next day James sat at his desk in his own flat and made a cheque payable to Arthur for the money he had received earlier in payment for his services and posted it to him.

With the confrontation with Arthur and the confrontation with Penny behind them, James and Marianne settled into a quiet routine of domestic harmony. He spent more time with her than he did in his own flat, and on one or two days a week she would come to him and spend time with him in his home. She liked his little flat and it took her away from the familiar surroundings of her own house. One day, as they left James's flat and walked to their respective cars, he to go to work and she to collect the children from school, she asked him, 'Do you feel guilty?'

The question could have had many meanings and many answers. Guilty about what they had done in relation to Penny or Arthur for example.

‘Guilty in what way?’ asked James. ‘About what?’

‘Well, whenever we make love I really enjoy it and I need you all the time,’ she said. ‘But afterwards I feel so guilty. I feel as if everyone we pass knows what we have been doing and it makes me feel ashamed.’

‘No. I don’t feel guilty about that’, answered James. ‘I feel guilty about how Penny is feeling, but not about what is between us.’ Again, James made a mental note about what Marianne had said about feeling guilty about having sex with him and weighed it against what Arthur had said about her being immoral and a sexual predator. Again, there was more evidence of a major conflict and differences in personas.

James’s relationship with Marianne was two-fold, one as an emotionally detached observer and one as her friend, confidant and lover. The two roles would help him to help her, but only if complications from external influences remained at bay. Penny had been a thorn in his side and now that she knew all about Marianne and the confrontation was behind him, James felt that he could concentrate on Marianne’s core issues. Having Arthur confront him and categorically tell him that he was glad to hand Marianne over to James was another thorn removed.

James sat down with Marianne and they discussed their position. There was another persona to Marianne that James was becoming aware of, a mature sensible one that wanted a solution to the conflicts that raged within her. This one was pragmatic and James could discuss things with her as he would have discussed with a colleague if he’d had one who would understand. It crossed James’ mind that this was this sensible, mature persona that Keith had referred to in his tarot reading. She would give him all the support he needed in trying to understand the other personas of Marianne. For the time being at least. But that was a false assumption. The person that was to help James was still a long way off.

Life for both of them and the children took on a more comfortable feel, and Marianne used some of the knowledge she gained from James about hypnosis. One evening when the children wouldn’t settle down to sleep she had gone to them and took them on a magical fantasy journey. Telling them a story that they became involved in, and using subtle suggestions, she lulled them to sleep. She was pleased with herself and pleased that she could learn from James things to benefit her children as well as herself.

At weekends, when James didn’t have to work, he would read a bedtime story to them and Marianne would sit on the floor in their bedroom as James read the story. She was a child herself at these times, and she was beginning to capture the semblance of a childhood that she never had. It made them all happy.

One day, the eldest of the children, Teresa, came into the living room in hysterics. She was carrying her beloved cat and crying. James looked at the cat and saw its lower jaw hanging off. He asked Marianne if she knew where there was a vet and she said she did. James wrapped the cat in a blanket and they all piled into Marianne’s car to go to the vet. James sat in the back with the cat, with Teresa and the little one, Toni, as Marianne drove with Tiffany in the front. They arrived at the vet’s and after waiting a short time the cat was taken for surgery to its jaw and they all left to return home. Throughout this episode Marianne was the sensible non-flappable mother. At no time did she show any signs of stress or any of her alter-egos.

The cat stayed with the vet for a few days and was later returned to them with a repaired jaw. The next day the cat went missing and poor Teresa was beside herself with worry. James tried to reassure her that the cat would come home after it had recovered properly in its own time. ‘Cats are very independent creatures,’ he told her. ‘They like to go away somewhere quiet and lick their own wounds. She’ll be back when she is ready.’ What he did not tell her was that when a cat knew it was going to die it usually went away to die alone. *He said a silent prayer for the cat to return.*

After a few days of the cat being missing, and Teresa getting used to it not being around, James was invited to go with Marianne to pick the children up from school. Marianne had her own reasons for suggesting that they went in separate cars. She wanted James to be as close to Teresa as the other two children were, and when all children had been collected she told Teresa to ride with James. Teresa did as her mother told her and sat in the back of the car. The fact that she didn’t sit in the front told James that she wanted to maintain just a little distance from him, after all he wasn’t her father, was he?

James wondered if she missed her father and asked her, ‘Teresa, if you could make a wish, what would you wish for?’ She made no mention of her father, but instead she said, ‘I want my cat to come home.’

After they had returned home, the children went to watch the television as Marianne prepared something to eat. James went upstairs and something made him look under the beds in the children’s room. There was the cat. He went downstairs and said to Teresa, ‘When you want something really badly what do you do?’

'I don't know,' she said. 'I'm not sure what you mean.'

'When I want something really badly do you know what I do?' he said. The other children were listening and so was Marianne who had come in from the kitchen.

'No,' she said. 'What do you do?'

'I ask God,' said James. 'When I want something I pray to God, and if it is possible for me to have what I have asked for then my prayer is always answered.' James directed his response to Marianne to reinforce what he had told her before about Renate's bible. He continued talking to Teresa. 'On the way home in the car you told me that you wished your cat would come home didn't you?'

'Yes.'

'Go and look under your bed.'

Teresa jumped up and ran upstairs. They all heard her shriek with joy as she found the cat under the bed. She came back into the front room clutching her cat to her and tears of joy ran down her face. 'Oh, thank you, thank you,' she squealed.

'No,' said James. 'Don't thank me. Thank God and remember to say your prayers.'

Each of the children, at one time or another, benefited from James's healing and hypnotic skills. If one of them had a headache or felt unsettled in some way then James would sit quietly with them and make the pain go away. Marianne's contentment grew as she witnessed James's ability to relate to all her children and she thanked him for being their friend as well as hers.

There were subtle changes in Marianne with this new peacefulness that had come to the family. One night, when the children had been put to bed, Marianne said to James, 'Will you make love to me please.' This was not a new request and there was nothing unusual in Marianne wanting James attention when they were alone, but there was something different about the way she had said it. They went upstairs to her room and undressed, and instead of sliding into bed to wait for him, Marianne stood beside the bed, seeming a little shy as she covered her nudity with her hands. She had left the light off, and James noticed these little oddities. When he had finished undressing he moved towards her. Marianne placed her hands on his shoulders and said in a shy tone, 'Please be gentle with me.'

She was behaving as if it was her first time.

James made love to her exactly as if it had been her first time, and she was not the same mature experienced woman that he had made love to on all previous occasions. The shy teenager persona that had greeted him at the door several times during their earlier meetings had always given way to the mature and knowledgeable woman who didn't need to be taught anything about sex. But this time the shy inexperienced teenager had remained. It was a totally different experience for James, and it further reinforced his notions of different personalities at work.

The sensuous woman was the predator. The black widow. This one was very, very different. This one was a younger Marianne, one that had been bypassed as she had leaped from childhood to sexual maturity without going through the necessary rites of passage and emotional development of puberty. James was helping Marianne to grow up, and what was really interesting to James was that another persona, the sensible mature one knew it, and she told him so.

'Thank you for helping me to grow.'

Each day James spent at Marianne's house they followed a routine. James would come home from work, let himself in with his own key and join Marianne as she slept. Sometimes she would wake and ask him to make love to her, and other times she would remain undisturbed as he fell asleep beside her. Each morning the children would rise first and wake them before going down stairs for their breakfast. James would stay in bed to sleep and Marianne would get the children ready for school and then take them there. She would return to the house and busy herself with chores as James slept. Then at about midday she would make them both a cup of tea and join him in bed so he could make love to her. Then they would get up and go downstairs where they would talk about her issues before going to collect the children and he going to work again. They had plenty of time for love and discussion without interference from anyone on the outside or from the children.

Marianne knew full well that she had a psychological problem that needed a solution and she had no reservations in telling James about what troubled her. One thing she was sure about was that she never wanted him to leave her. She had kept Arthur at arm's length, and although a part of her wanted to punish

him for exploiting her vulnerability when she was only fifteen years old, another part of her wanted him as a father figure to herself and a father to his own children. But for James, she never wanted him to stop loving her and never to leave her. She asked James to promise that he would never leave her and never stop helping her to find a solution to her problems. He promised.

Marianne explained to him that she knew things would be difficult and that there would be times when he would want to leave. 'I will get angry with you and tell you to go away and leave me alone, but I won't mean it,' she told him. 'Promise me you'll never leave me.'

James promised Marianne that he would help her to not be afraid. They had discussed her different parts and Marianne had accepted that they existed.

'When all your parts come together and you are one, and only then, you will be able to decide what you want for yourself and your children. When that time comes you may decide that you don't need me anymore. If you want me to go then, I will.'

'Even if I get better and I don't need you, I will still want you to stay,' she said. 'And if you want to leave because I am well then I'll just pretend I'm not OK, just to keep you with me.'

As the days had slipped by, James had some of his things around the house. He had a change of clothes in Marianne's wardrobe, his coat in the cupboard under the stairs and a box of bits and pieces in her room.

'In my box upstairs are some things that are very precious to me,' he said. 'All the time that box is there, then so will I be. If you ever want me to go away then you have to move the box yourself.'

With this promise, and as her confidence and trust in James grew, Marianne was able to share more of what she had been writing. Each day that went by she showed him more, and what she showed him gave him grave cause for concern.

Dated Monday 23rd October 2000

To Marianne.

Leave them all, let them leave.

It's no good anymore. It's rotten.

Children need you.

Don't grieve too long for them.

Don't give them a second thought, a second glance, or utter a single word to them.

They want to hurt you and make you suffer.

Do it. But do it alone.

They all needed to use you.

Don't give them any more.

They must learn that when they make me suffer

They will suffer tenfold.

Never forget if you allow them in, they'll try to break you.

In their weakness they turn the blame around.

Leave them be.

Look to the love of your children. It's more than enough.

You are free and alone.

It is what you wanted.

James tried hard to understand what Marianne had written. *Who was telling her to leave them all? Who was saying, 'let them leave?'* Was this one of her hidden parts or something that was not of herself? Who must suffer tenfold? This was all very troubling for James and he knew full well that he had stepped into seriously uncharted territory. There was more:

Not dated

Heal the world
 Make it a better place for you and for me
 And the entire human race

There are people dying
 If you care enough for the living
 Make a better place for you and for me.

Not dated

'To Marianne

You don't have to do this on your own. I'll help you. I'll be with you all the way. I won't let go, I won't let you go. We'll be side by side. When you're tired I'll carry you. When you're hungry I'll feed you. When you're thirsty I'll give you water.

When there is pain, I'll take your pain from you and cast it away. When you need love, you need only ask. When you need the truth or advice, you need only say. I'll hold you, I'll bear your pain, I won't let you fall.

I won't let you down. I promise. You'll become stronger and then you'll want to be strong for your girls. You'll do it. Soon I promise. Hold them, soothe them. Tell them.

Cast out your devils. We'll comfort them until they stop being sad and angry. When they become calm, we'll let them back in. Love thy neighbour. Tell anger to be still. Tell anger to be quiet. Let sadness come forth and tell us what makes her so sad.

Tell her to smile. Tell her to warm the world. Tell her not to fear. Let her tears be tears of happiness and joy. Tell her to love and never stop. Say your prayers for your loved ones.

Say your prayers for world peace.

Are you ready for destruction?'

Tuesday 24th October 2000

'No room for anger?

Then why come back?

YOU BASTARD

Go away, leave.

It is you who are hostile.

You have threatened me twice with what I am most afraid of.

You come to me now because you are lustful and afraid.

You think you need me.

You don't.

I'll prove it.

Go away.

I'll suffer for as long as you choose to.

You'll see if I want to.

You have nothing to fear.

I still love, I'm still here.

I cannot not love you.

But you hurt me.

You must suffer the consequences for as long as I choose to.

Surrender yourself to the children and to me and we will set you down free
Back home where we all belong.'

31/10/00

'For James.

I started off with the intention of doing housework.

Boring.

So, I danced and thought of beautiful things.

PEACE.

I'm alone. I'm free.

Freedom is being alone.

I've thought of you, beautiful you.

So, you see, when I cry and say I'm lonely it's just fear.

Fear because I know I have to choose to live this side or that.

I have to learn how to be alone and free, not alone and lonely when I'm among people, including
my children and you.

I have to go away first though don't I?

Lift me up.

Must not talk. I must not talk – this means going away doesn't it?

I need to create something but I don't know what it is, so I can't start building or even collecting
materials until I know what it is I must build.

Do you have to search?

Shall I stay here?

I love you. You're so pretty inside and out.

I hunger for you.

Why do you let me take you?

Have you taken me?

Why don't you tell me?

Tell me now what's going on.'

Not dated

To Marianne

'Tell him everything.

Ask him to explain.

Ask him to help you listen.

Ask him to help you understand.

Ask him to help you become strong.'

Not dated

'It's messy because I like chaos.

I feel guilty because I've hurt all of you.

I want you all to go away and stay away.
 I don't feel safe anymore.
 The longer you stay, the weaker I become.
 Why do you all stay?
 Go away.
 Don't come when I ask you to.
 I don't want you to love me.
 I don't want you there.
 I'm going to keep on hurting you until you go away.
 Please leave me alone.
 Please leave me alone.
 Please leave me alone.
 I need some time for me.
 My children need me.
 You can't have me.
 You mustn't talk to me or look at me or touch me.
 If I come to you, you must not let me in.
 Turn your back on me. Put your hands over your ears. Hit me if I touch you.
 I feel pain when you're near me.
 Let me go.
 Don't wait for me.
 I'm gone forever.
 I'm only little.
 I need to grow.
 I need to feel safe.
 I only feel safe alone.
 Don't love me.
 Let me go.
 Let me be still. Let me heal. Let me be free.
 I want to be one.
 I wanted you all to listen. To be quiet and good.
 I ask too much of you.'

2/11/00

'James

This is in case I'm quiet and can't tell you.
 I need space but I want to be with you. It means I don't want to talk much.
 I want to watch you, and I want you to talk to me all the time.
 I don't really want to speak, so don't ask me things.
 I'm tired and need to rest.
 I need to give what little energy I have left to the kids.
 I need you at the moment.
 Please don't frighten me.
 Not yet.
 Can you not touch me or come too close?
 Can you keep your devils away from me?
 If you need sex can you go elsewhere?
 Don't test me. I love you.

Don't make me angry. I'll hurt you.'

'I see a deep, deep pool. It's dark. It's so deep if I fell I don't know if I'd ever reach the bottom. There's a long fat snake in this pool hiding, waiting to get me. It's so long and it's ugly.

I'm naked and alone on the surface.

There are huge cliffs and mountains completely surrounding me. I know humans are there but they're hiding. Watching me die.

I've been in here a long time, but you knew that didn't you?

The only way out is down.

To look him in the eye.

Are you down there? Are you waiting for me?

When I dive down I'm going to find you and wring your neck.

Are you in the pool with me?

Where are you?

Who are you?

Are you taking me to the snake?

What will you do if I ask you not to save me?

What will you do if I try to kill you?

What will you do if I refuse to go with you?

I'm so tired, I expect you'll do what you want.

Tiffany just asked me, 'Does James want sex all the time?'

I said, 'all men do.'

Then I said, 'well I don't know. I don't know him well enough yet.'

She said, 'James is a nice man.'

Not dated

'Have you noticed how GOD himself is obsessed with sex?

He's always telling us not to do it. He made me do it. Teresa hasn't done it yet.

I'm so bored. I hope Teresa doesn't get bored. I hope she has lots of friends.

I get on OK with her friends, it's their parents I don't like.

I'm fed up being miserable. It's boring.

I like being naughty.

I wish Arthur would look after me properly.

He still thinks about sex with me.

I hate hurting him. He is lovely.

But I shout abuse at him a lot.

I hope this petrol thing leads to a WORLD WAR / CATASTROPHE. *

They should have fucking listened, shouldn't they?'

* There was a petrol tanker strike at the time.

'Everyone is horrid. I know I'm horrid.

Some people aren't horrid.

I wonder if you really want to shag me, fuck me, make- love to me?

I wonder if you're going to.

I'm frightened of you.

I wonder if you caught me because I'm vulnerable or whether you're just another person?

Fuck me.

Let me lick you all over.
 I want to tie you up and blindfold you but not all of the time.
 Your eyes are dragging me in. I'm not like you. It won't work. I get stuck. You hurt me.
 I thought I could play it with Neville. I couldn't. I always lose.
 Neville fucks arses. Did you know that?
 Most of the time. I hate his guts. He's disgusting.
 I hate men.
 Dirty fucking bastards.
 Now I make love to myself, but then I crave you more.
 I don't know whether to get out now. I don't know if I can, because if I don't face you I will shut myself away again.
 Then I will get locked up again, then I will kill myself.
 I'm so bored, but I'm frightened of people.
 I want to kiss you.
 I want another baby. I like having babies. Neville doesn't. he's horrible. Arthur does. He's nice.
 I don't like people that don't like kids.
 I've been horrible to my kids but I'm sorry and I do love them.'

Not dated

'Let your spouse be your teacher.
 Don't focus on what he has done to irritate you.
 Reframe it as an act of pure love., brought into being to teach you the perfect lesson you need to learn at just that moment.
 So, a granny gets bashed by a youth – did she deserve it?
 What could a 90-year-old possibly need to learn from that?
 All monsters are weak, frightened and alone.'

Not dated

SHITHEADS
 FUCKING ARSEHOLES
 WANKERS CUNTS
 BRAINLESS YOBS
 THIEVES LIARS SCUMBAGS
 ROTTEN SHITTY FUCKING CUNTS
 NO GOOD NO GOOD
 BASTARDS FUCKING SHITS
 MAN IS THE DEVIL HIMSELF
 THINK ONLY OF THEMSELVES
 THEY SAP MY ENERGY
 FUCKING WEAK, GUTLESS, THIEVING BASTARDS. THEY WAIT TILL I'M STRONG
 THEN FUCK MY STRENGTH BACK OUT.
 FUCKING BASTARDS. SOON THEY'LL HAVE NO MORE
 BORING DISGUSTING IMMATURE PERVERTED STUPID SAD UGLY DEVIL MAN

Whenever Marianne showed James what she had written she placed her full trust in him as her friend. There was no way she could ever have shown these to just anyone without scaring them to death. *If a psychiatrist sees these then Marianne would be committed on the spot*, thought James. But she trusted him to keep her and her children safe. James came to genuinely believe that Marianne, the *real* Marianne, had a good heart.

There was a core self that suffered badly and needed to be loved and protected. But there was at least one part of her that was, as Arthur had pointed out – evil. James needed someone to confide in and offer professional help, but he could think of no one. If he had gone to someone without telling her then she would accuse him of betraying her and her children to someone she could not trust. She was terrified of doctors and psychiatrists. And there was no wonder. They would have her sectioned and she would lose her children to social services if any doctor had sight of anything she had shown James. He was alone with Marianne in her psychological hell, and the only power he had to help her was to love her – no matter what. He put his own trust in his own ability to love and in the healing power that God had given him. Such was his belief at that time. But that was to change.

Chapter 18

Who Are You?

The children were in bed and James had just had a bath. Marianne had washed his hair for him as he lay back in the bath. He had noticed how gentle she always was whenever she touched him. Perhaps it was something to do with the way she bathed her children, or perhaps it was her saying, through touch, *be gentle with me*. When he had dried and put on his dressing gown they both sat at the parlour room table with a hot night-cap before retiring to bed, and Marianne, in reflective mood, started a conversation that would lead to a significant confrontation.

‘Have you ever been to a prostitute,’ she asked out of the blue.

‘Only once,’ said James. ‘I was on a business trip to Amsterdam to buy trucks for an Arab. I met up with an Australian banker who was staying in the same hotel as me and we went on a tour of the red-light district. We had a few drinks and were on our way back to the hotel when we were stopped in the street. It was a bit of a laugh really, and a totally new experience for me. I had never felt the need for anything like that, and I have always seen prostitutes as very unfortunate people. But this one told us that she did it, not because she had to, or for the money. She did it for fun because she liked sex so much.’

‘How many women have you had sex with?’ she asked. James thought about it. He could count those women in his life who had really meant something to him with the fingers of one hand. But he’d had casual sex with a few more. He asked her what she really meant, ‘Do you mean how many women I have loved?’

‘No, not that. How many women have you had sex with?’

‘I’m not sure,’ he replied. ‘About twenty.’

Marianne had a serious look on her face, and James detected a sadness in her eyes. She looked as if she was about to cry and he asked her, ‘What’s the matter?’

‘I’ve had hundreds,’ she said.

He thought she was speaking metaphorically, and asked, ‘What do you mean, hundreds?’

‘Hundreds,’ she repeated and looked at him again with those sad eyes. ‘Literally hundreds.’ She paused for a moment, keeping her own emotions in check and then added, ‘I was a child prostitute.’

James had a rule that he lived by and he had told her of this rule many times. For him anger was not permitted. He had seen the damage that anger can do and he had felt it in himself from time to time. He knew that he had the ability to kill, and if anger were to ever take hold in him the way that he had witnessed in others he would fear the consequences. He looked into her sad eyes, and with the love that had grown for her he felt his anger rush to the surface. He saw her as the innocent child that had not just been abused but had been led into a life so sordid that it had destroyed her. His own compassion and his instinctive paternal protection mechanisms boiled to the surface, and he screamed at the top of his lungs, ‘YOU BASTARD.’

As he screamed these words, a thought had flashed through his mind. He directed his scream not at many but at one. The ‘bastard’ was not those who had abused her, but the one who had started the ball rolling. There was a single source of evil that had infected her at a very early age. The concept of an entity in spirit form entering her little body as she lay curled up in her mother’s womb had flashed through his mind in an instant. And he knew. *Instinctively he knew.*

As he shouted his anger at this unknown entity, Marianne slipped off her chair and hid under the table, trembling. He dropped to the floor and tried to coax her out from under the table.

‘I’m not angry at you. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to frighten you.’

Marianne slunk away from him further under the table and managed to get to the cupboard in the corner of the room where her children kept their books and toys. She had a look of terror on her face and with trembling hands she pulled open the cupboard door and tried to crawl inside it. There was no room, so she turned to face him with her back to the inside of the cupboard. Her legs were drawn up close to her body and

she wrapped her arms around herself. When she looked at him her face changed from fear to contempt and she spat the words, 'I will kill you.'

At last James had come face to face with the entity that Penny had warned him about and he had tried to deny the existence of.

James felt the hackles on the back of his neck stand on end, and he knew what that meant. His own fight-or-flight response had kicked in and he felt the rush of adrenaline through his body as the animal in him prepared for mortal combat. But the threat he faced came not from an armed enemy or a ferocious beast. The threat had been issued by a helpless child who cowered in fear, but it wasn't the mind of the child that issued the threat, it was another consciousness that used her as its instrument of communication. He also knew, only from what he had read, that dark force entities feed on fear and anger as their source of energy. This was why he had to overcome his instinctive fight-or-flight animal fear and his anger. He sat down a few feet in front of her, crossed his legs, put his hands on his knees and momentarily closed his eyes. He asked for guidance. When he opened his eyes, he saw a face glaring at him with malevolent eyes. A chill ran down his spine. He confronted his adversary.

'Kill me?' he questioned. 'At last you have shown yourself and I know you. Kill me?' he repeated. 'You don't have the strength, or the skill or the courage. Like all users of the weak you are a coward. You are nothing.'

'I'll get you. The voice issued from Marianne's mouth,

'You won't be able to sleep for fear of me getting you.'

James had read that a person can be affected by either an earthbound soul of someone who has died but hasn't passed over, or a dark force entity that is not of human origin. The earthbound soul would have a name, but the dark force entity would not. He asked if it had a name.

'A name, what's in a name?'

'Then how do I address you? What should I call you?' asked James.

'The bitch,' it replied. 'You can call me the fucking bitch.'

'OK then you fucking bitch. Your time has come. You have succeeded in teaching us what we needed to know, that an evil exists and the difference between good and bad. You can go now, back to your creator.'

'Fuck you.'

James began the exorcism prayer that he had used with Sarah, but had difficulty remembering it. He did the best he could by saying, 'This is a child of Christ. She belongs to Him and you have no place here. Your task is done and you are directed to leave. Go now. Do not delay. Be gone. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit I command you to leave. Amen.'

Marianne became a little relaxed and there was no reply. She looked stunned by the experience and James wondered how much of it she could recall. He didn't ask her then. All he wanted to do was comfort her. She was certainly a little dazed as he took her to bed. They both slept peacefully.

There was no mention, by either James or Marianne, of the previous night's experience. James was still in the dark about such matters and in the cold light of day he was still not convinced that he had confronted a dark force entity. That knowledge – the knowing, as he came to call it, would come later. For the time being he still grappled with the conflict in himself between whether to believe such things were real or a figment of imagination. Without concrete answers to his own questions he was unable to broach the matter with Marianne. Nonetheless Marianne seemed unaffected by the experience and they resumed their lives as before, just as if nothing had happened.

The seductress had been replaced by the girl in love. Marianne couldn't take her eyes off James and needed to be close to him all the time. She thought of him when he wasn't there and craved his presence, and when he was there she orgasmed when she stepped into his aura – literally.

He came up behind her as she was washing the dishes and put his arms around her in an affectionate hug and kissed her neck. Her knees went weak and as she held on to the edge of the sink she had an orgasm. One day as he was getting changed for work in her room she came to kiss him goodbye. Her kiss lingered as she drew him to her and he had to gently ease himself away to continue changing. As she stepped away from

him her legs started to buckle and her entire body shook. He took her by the arms to steady her and her orgasm went into prolonged multiples.

Their respective journeys ran concurrently as he went to work and she went to the school to pick up the children, at the point they parted she would watch his car until it disappeared from view and longed for his return. She was in love.

If he was sitting at the parlour room table or watching television she would sit on his lap and snuggle into him. One day as he sat at the breakfast table she looked at him with a coy smile and said 'Don't.' She blushed and went all silly.

'Don't what?' he asked.

'Don't look at me like that.'

'Like what? I didn't do anything.'

'You know. What you're thinking.'

'I wasn't thinking anything.'

'I know what you're thinking. You want to make love to me.'

'I wasn't thinking that at all. What makes you think I was?'

The penny dropped and her countenance changed as she realised he was telling the truth and said, 'It's me isn't it? It's not you it's me.'

Marianne was projecting onto James her own thoughts and desires and creating the belief in herself that it was he who had desires of her. The realisation came as a shock to her and threw her into confusion.

But there was also something else happening, similar but quite different to Marianne's projection. James was continuing to develop an ability to adjust to Marianne's needs by mirroring her own moods.

'I see changes in you,' she said to him. 'You are unpredictable and it frightens me. I don't know what to expect.'

James, unknown to himself, had developed an ability to mirror Marianne's moods and changes in persona. What she was experiencing was reflected in him and when she saw the changes it confused her. His ability to adapt to her ever-changing needs was becoming a hindrance because it took away, in her eyes, the stability he offered to her. Her unpredictability was being reflected in him. The difference was that James was stable and she wasn't, but her realisation that this was happening was a major step forward. She began to realise that she was changing for the better. The huntress / seductress had been replaced by a more innocent girl in love and she knew she was learning to grow up through a natural process. The bad was giving way to the good. James realised this too and he thought, *it's working. I'm winning. The power of love works.*

Marianne had wanted James to meet her family and for them to accept him, and they had. Now it was time, she thought, to approach him with her question.

'Do you think you could ever be married to someone like me?' He knew she was serious and he had to give her a serious answer. He had avoided getting this involved since his divorce thirty years ago. He had known some good women and he could have married any one of them, but something always held him back – fear. He had overcome this fear with Julia's help but other circumstances had got in the way much to his regret. In truth James wanted nothing more than to be settled with a woman he loved and to be a family man. He enjoyed being with Marianne and her children and he loved her more as time went by. He was her friend, her protector, her therapist and a father figure all rolled into one.

He answered her honestly.

'Yes,' he said. 'I could. But as I said before, when you are well then you will be able to decide what you want for yourself and your children. If it's me you want then that's OK, but if you want someone younger then that's OK. I have learned to let go of those I have loved, and your happiness is all I want. If that means not being with you then that's OK too.' James was telling her what he had learned of human love in its purest form; not possession but freedom.

A few days later, sitting at the parlour room table one afternoon as they were considering going to work and to the school respectively, she asked him, 'Have you ever wanted to have a son?'

One thing James had learned about Marianne above all else was that she never engaged in trivial conversation. Everything she said had meaning – important meaning. This was a refreshing difference from Penny who chattered incessantly about trivia. Again, he took her question seriously.

‘It’s not something I have ever had a burning desire for and I have never missed not having one. My ex-wife became obsessed with having a second child and the visits to the hospital and fertility clinic were a nightmare. She had trouble with her reproductive system and we only ever had the one. I was content with that. If we are meant to have children then we do and if we are not meant to then we don’t. That’s my belief. I don’t believe we should interfere with nature or miss what we haven’t got or can’t have.’

‘But would you like one?’

Yet again he answered her truthfully. ‘Yes, I suppose I would. If I thought the circumstances were right and I could bring him up with security. Why are you asking me this?’ James already knew the answer that was coming.

‘I want one,’ said Marianne. ‘I have three girls and I love children. Now I want a boy and I want it to be yours. Will you give me one please?’

‘I’m a bit old fashioned Marianne,’ said James. ‘I believe in marriage before children and that children need to be brought up in a secure environment. Let’s see what happens.’

During his solitary night driving James pondered very seriously Marianne’s request – both her requests. The new Marianne was very different from the one he had known and been seduced by. The new one was innocent and loving whereas the old one had been cunning and manipulative. He had gained her trust and her genuine love and now she wanted it to continue. But there were still many problems to overcome before any wishes she had could be seriously considered.

Apart from her continued development into emotional stability and the resolution of the consequences of her traumatic childhood, there was her relationship with Arthur to consider. It wasn’t so much Arthur’s attachment to her that bothered James, but her continued attachment to Arthur. She had told James that if they were ever to be married then she would want Arthur to give her away and not Kenneth. She considered Arthur to be more of a father figure than Ken had ever been. Then there were practical issues like where she lived. Marianne had the neighbours from hell who had given her serious problems in the past and there was no guarantee that that would change. Her children were confined to playing indoors because the children from next door bullied them. The father was a drug addict and the mother had entered Marianne’s house and attacked her.

The house belonged to Marianne but the mortgage was in Arthur’s name. If James was ever to become irrevocably involved with Marianne in the way she had expressed her wish then the house would have to be sold and James would have to take on the responsibility of providing a home for them all. All this, he decided, was something he was willing to do. He had made a promise to Marianne to never leave her and he would keep his promise. His genuine love for her was his commitment to her.

Nothing was going to happen overnight, and James could not see into the future, but Marianne’s wishes triggered other thoughts. He was earning good money as a night-trunker and it was secure work. It was certainly a lot more secure financially than trying to earn a living as a therapist and a lot more comfortable than being a research student. His disillusionment at not being able to follow through for his PhD had gone and he began to feel that he really did have something special and rewarding to look forward to. He had moved into his existing flat because of limited finances at the time, but now he thought it really was about time he bought himself a house again, whether to provide a home for Marianne and her family or not.

Since his confrontation with Penny and with Arthur, James had plenty of opportunity to allow Marianne to talk about her problems. He never prompted her or pressured her in any way, and Marianne spoke of the things that troubled her only when she felt the need to. She spoke of her anger at being rejected by her birth mother, and her mistrust of her adoptive parents. They talked long about fear and anger and Marianne’s own knowledge of her alter-egos. She acknowledged that she could never have told anyone else about these things and she thanked him for all the help he was giving her. What seemed to trouble her most of all at that time was that she had a compulsion to make James angry. She didn’t understand why and she didn’t want to make him angry, and it troubled her.

Another thing that troubled her was her sexual insatiability for James. She asked him to make it stop.

'I need to give time to my children,' she said. 'I have to meet their needs, but I think about you all the time and it's not fair on them. I'm like a bitch in heat. Can you make it stop? Do you have this problem? How do you make it stop?'

'We can try hypnosis,' suggested James, and asked her to lie back on the sofa and go into trance. Marianne had a remarkable ability to go into trance at the slightest suggestion, but as soon as he began to give her suggestions to control her sexual urges, she came straight out of the trance and said an emphatic, 'No.' Her response to his suggestions had been the same as when she had been helping him with his demonstration to the self-hypnosis class. There was a part of her that disagreed with the suggestion. In the case of the demonstration James assumed it was her conscious awareness that intervened, as she didn't want to give up smoking at a conscious level. But this was different. Marianne wanted to suppress her sexual desires at a conscious level, but something else had different ideas. Was there a part of her unconscious, or one of her alter-egos that disagreed?

A few days later Marianne suggested another ploy.

'No matter how much I ask you to make love to me, you must refuse,' she said. She treated it as a game and taunted James. 'I bet you can't,' she suggested. 'I bet you anything that you are as bad as me and you want it every day.'

'I'm only responding to your needs,' James told her. Just because I like sex it doesn't mean I want it all the time.'

'But you do,' she argued. 'Whenever I come anywhere near you, you are ready. I've never known anyone like you. Are you on Viagra?'

He laughed, 'No of course not.'

'But where do you get your energy from then?' she asked.

James thoughts flashed to something he had considered during his solitary driving, when he had wondered about energy levels. Penny had always been a drain on his energy, not sexually but all the time. He had only to be in her company for a matter of minutes and he felt drained and lifeless. But with Marianne he had boundless energy. He was working all night and sometimes he would only get four hours sleep before she came to climb into bed beside him. He would satisfy her, often several times, but always hung on to his own energy until he knew she was spent. He was tiring her out and she couldn't understand it, especially for a man of his age in comparison to hers. It was as if she was trying to wear him down, but instead she was wearing herself down.

He thought carefully before he answered her question and then said, 'I suppose it must come from the same source as my healing energy. It is a source that is immeasurable and limitless.' A flicker of a frown crossed her face as he answered, and James got the fleeting impression there was something about his answer she didn't like. These were his thoughts and his answer, and unknown to him for certain at that time, the answer he gave her was in fact the truth. This truth he would discover much, much later.

They made a friendly bet with each other. Marianne bet that he would not be able to resist her advances and James bet that he could. That night Marianne set out to win the bet. It was the weekend, and after reading to the children from *Alice in Wonderland* they went to bed as usual. James turned onto his side and faced away from Marianne to settle down to sleep. After a few moments she began to whisper in his ear, 'Make love to me,' and tried to reach between his legs. His equipment was firmly pressed between his legs and she was unable to reach him. He ignored her and made himself comfortable. Marianne continued to try to stimulate him but began to get irritated at his non-compliance.

'That's not fair,' she said. 'How can I reach you when you're lying on your side like that?'

James knew perfectly well just how much self-control he had, and with a little chuckle to himself he turned to lay on his back. He tucked his arm beneath her neck and she was able to snuggle up to him and reach him with her hand. James simply thought about something else. This was a master hypnotist she was dealing with and all he had to do was focus his mind.

Marianne, much as she tried, could not stimulate him to erection and her frustration began to get the better of her. She lifted herself onto him and faced him, using her entire body to get him to respond. Under normal circumstances James would have responded automatically, but he had a point to prove, and he genuinely wanted to help Marianne to find a way to stem her passions. He still didn't respond. Suddenly Marianne, with increasing frustration announced, 'I'm not playing this game anymore.'

'I told you I would win,' said James, and gave her a loving hug. She was upset and he didn't want her to go to sleep with any bad feeling towards him. She hugged him back and said, 'I didn't like that game. It's over. Now you can make love to me.' He had won the bet and proved his point, and with the game over he allowed her to be pleased.

The next morning Marianne, with a smug expression, announced to James, 'I told you I would win.'

'But you didn't,' argued James. 'I won, you know I did.'

'But you made love to me, didn't you? In the end I won.'

He had been tricked. She had called an end to the game, let him believe he had won, and then tricked him into making love to her. James thought, *the cunning little bitch*, but Marianne was deadly serious now.

'I told you not to make love to me no matter what, and you failed. I Knew you would, and I told you so.' James looked into Marianne's eyes and he could see that she was genuinely angry with him. She was actually blaming him for her own failure to resist temptation. Another projection perhaps?

Marianne was starting to accuse James and she wanted an assurance that he would desist from seducing her. James was astounded at the very idea that he should be to blame for her own desires.

'I want you to promise me that you will not make love to me, even if I ask you to,' she demanded. 'Alright,' said James. 'I promise that I will not make love to you no matter what you say or do. If you persist then I will sleep downstairs on the sofa. Does that satisfy you?'

'Yes,' she said, 'but I know you will fail again.'

James went to his own flat that night and slept in his own bed alone. That morning, after she had taken the children to school Marianne came over to join him so they could spend the day together. The brake linings on Marianne's car were down to the rivets and James took it to his local garage to have them replaced, then they went for a walk and James introduced Marianne to his local pub. It was one of those places where everyone knew everyone else, and he wanted Marianne to broaden her social skills and meet people. She had been confined to her own world for too long by her own fears and her lack of social conditioning all the time she had been with Arthur. Everyone in the pub was introduced to her and as a group they all made her welcome. She politely returned their greetings and James bought them a drink and a sandwich. Later they returned to James flat. He had some correspondence to see to and switched on his computer whilst Marianne put the kettle on. She came up behind him as he sat at his desk, put her arms around his neck and whispered in his ear, 'Please make love to me.'

He had made a bargain with her the night before and answered according to her own wishes, 'No.'

She began to plead with him, 'Oh go on. You know you want to.'

'No. I don't want to. Go away.'

Marianne went into the bed room, took off her jeans and slipped into bed. From there she called to him. He didn't answer. She began to cry, and James, responding to her obvious distress, went to stand in the doorway of the bedroom.

'Come on Marianne, what's the matter?'

'I want you to get into bed and make love to me and you won't.'

'But you told me not to. You told me that no matter what you said and no matter what you did, I was to ignore you and not make love to you. I'm only doing what you asked me to do.' Marianne got out of the bed and walked towards him, holding out her arms, reaching for him. He grasped her by the upper arms so she couldn't touch him and then in a burst of anger she swiped at him. He backed away and in a fit of rage and tears she rained blows against his arms which he held high in defence. Marianne fell to her knees and beat her fists on the floor, crying, 'You don't love me. You said you loved me and you don't. You're a BASTARD AND I HATE YOU!'

James tried to coax her off the floor and stop crying, but to no avail. He was confronting a child with a tantrum, not a twenty-eight-year-old woman who wanted to constrain her own sexual desires. He was at a loss as to what to do, so he just stood and waited for her crying to stop. When she eventually did, he held out his hand to help her up, but she just pouted and pushed his hand away.

'Go away, I hate you.'

James went back to his desk and sat down in the hope that Marianne would switch back from the angry child to the grown-up woman. She leaned against the doorway with a tear streaked face and played with her lower lip with a finger, just glaring at him.

‘Come on Marianne, it’s getting late and you have to collect the children from school.’ With much coaxing he managed to get her to dress herself and they left the flat for their respective journeys. She wouldn’t speak to him. Although she was returning to the role of mother to collect her children from school, she still held on to the persona of the angry child and there was nothing he could say to change her. As she pulled away in her car, she glared at him and shouted, ‘I hate you and I never want to see you again.’

A few days later James received a letter.

‘I’m sorry I hit you. I’m sorry I said I didn’t love you. It wasn’t true. I’m sorry I said you were a bastard. I don’t think you’re a bastard at all. I think you’re a lovely, beautiful man.

I’m not ungrateful you fixed the car. Thank you.

I’m sorry I’m spoilt and immature.

You said you didn’t want a relationship with someone like that.

Then I suppose you’ll have to stop it because I’m not going to change.

You said you could handle everything I threw at you.

You were wrong weren’t you.

You said you liked me and loved me the way I was and I didn’t need to change.

You were wrong.

I reacted to you in the way I did because you hurt me first.

I wanted a cuddle and you wouldn’t give me one.

I don’t know why you wouldn’t.

How can I trust you now?

I wouldn’t have asked for one if I didn’t need or want one.

Typical men. Always let you down when you need them most.

Always running away.

If you’d given me what I wanted, I’d have been happy, but instead you’ve kept me as a child – the very thing you say you don’t want.

If you were trying to be celibate why would that stop you getting into bed with me unless you were worried you might give in.

Would it have mattered?

If you were angry because I won’t make space and were getting your own back then you’re the one who is childish.

You know perfectly well the way to get someone to do something is help, motivation, bribery, etc, not making them feel guilty.

If you need me to prove my love to you at least have the guts to say so, like I do. It’s easy. I NEED YOU TO PROVE YOU LOVE ME. I can do it. I’m not afraid like you are to say what I think.

It’s funny how you said to me you don’t need mothering.

Why then do you need reassurance from me?

Why do you need me to be strong?

Only a child would have expectations.

You showed me you have expectations of me.

I’m honest in that I tell you.

I’m vulnerable and childlike.

So maybe you do need mothering.

You’re asking me to be as strong as you and stronger because you want me to accept rejection (not cuddling me) and criticism (saying I was spoilt and should grow up).

And on top of that you want me to prove I love you by doing something I don’t want to do, (tidy up, make space).

You want me to change myself to accommodate you.

That would happen naturally but it is you who is impatient.

I would like to make you happy but it won’t happen.

You are frightened of me staying like a 15-year-old.

If you weren't frightened you would have no reason to say it to me because if you weren't frightened you'd know damn well that I wouldn't want to be that way if I was happy, sensible and secure.

You told me you'd meet my needs first and that you understood I needed to be selfish and childlike.

I think you don't know what to do.

It's simple. You can stay away while I grow up., or you can stay with me and experience it with me, or you can do a bit of both.

But whatever you choose to do makes no difference to me, because I will grow up when I'm ready, not when you want me to. If you upset me, I'll upset you back. I love you enough to accept your failings and weaknesses.

Why can't you accept mine?

The letter gave James a lot to think about as he analysed it with his simple logic and his lack of psychological training. There was a marked difference between the persona that wanted to curb her passions and the one that hit out at him when he tried to meet the needs of the first. They were in direct conflict with each other. However, there was a similarity in that they both blamed him. Both of these different egos were projecting onto him their own problems. Then there was the other persona that had asked him if someone could be born bad. This was the one that was aware of the pain she was causing others and wanted to know why. Each behavioural event that Marianne exhibited was unique and James had to try to fit each of them with a persona. The episode with what he thought could have been a dark force entity could also have been with yet another persona, a potentially violent one.

The only time that James had taken the initiative and tried to influence Marianne's behaviour was when he had told her that their affair had to stop. Her reaction had been to exhibit two different personas, the aggressive one who was not going to let him go and the helpless one who desperately refused rejection. He sat down and tried to piece them together in some kind of framework. Working like this, emotionally detached, with his logical mind in operation he began to get a clearer picture of the shattered mind of Marianne Craven. As he put away his theories and returned to being an ordinary man with feelings he once again put his faith in his own capacity to love without judgement and waited. There was nothing else he could do.

Marianne called and asked to see him. She wanted to meet him at the pub across the road from the clinic. This was neutral ground for both of them and James agreed.

Marianne had her sensible head on that evening and they sat in a quiet corner of the pub to discuss their situation. Of all the conversations they had had since their original meeting, this one was unique. James was able to discuss with her, in realistic and pragmatic terms what he thought her problem was and outline her different personas. He then offered her what he thought were her options. Firstly, she could seek help from a psychotherapist. Secondly, she could use him as her therapist although he was lacking in knowledge about her condition, and thirdly they could continue in their personal relationship whilst he continued working as a driver and help her as best he could. Marianne opted for the third one. She had two priorities as she sat with him and discussed these matters. She wanted to be well and she wanted to be with him. As for James, he had come to love her, and he also wanted her to be well and to be with her. With this understanding they continued on their path of learning – together.

James' and Marianne's new relationship continued to grow. At weekends they would drive out somewhere and enjoy the Autumn sunshine. They walked hand in hand as the children played and it was good for James to see Marianne laugh. One day, as he parked the car at a local beauty spot, Marianne's little dog, as soon as it was released from the car, dropped a huge turd in the middle of the car park much to the disgust of a group of passing people. It was the look on their faces when they saw such a little dog drop such a large pile that caused Marianne to crease up with laughter. She was nearly wetting herself as she pulled a bunch of tissues from her pocket to clear it up. The whole scene drove the children and James into hysterical laughter. After the difficulties of their earlier relationship and the confrontations with Penny and Arthur life was good, and

much to James's own surprise he began to feel happier than he had done in a very, very long time. Then, one day a really strange thing happened.

They were alone in the house. The children were all at school and they were in the parlour having a cup of tea and discussing something quite trivial, which was unusual. Then, suddenly, Marianne sank to the floor with her back to the wall and put her thumb in her mouth. She sat there on the floor with her thumb in her mouth and a glazed look in her eyes, unfocussed and somewhere else it seemed. James sat on the floor in front of her and asked her what she was doing.

'Is it my turn again?' she asked without looking at him.

'Your turn for what?

'You know, my turn to be the wicked witch again? Everyone has to take their turn at being the fairy princess and the wicked witch.'

'Who says so?'

'God and the aliens.'

'Do you like being the wicked witch?'

'No, I would rather be the fairy princess, but it's only fair to take turns isn't it? Shouldn't everything be equal?'

'What do you do when you are the witch?'

'I'm grumpy and shout at people and scream at them.'

'Do you like being naughty?'

'Sometimes.'

'Don't you know that being naughty makes other people not like you?'

'I don't care.'

'Don't you want to have friends?'

'No. I would rather be on my own.'

'Why do you try to make mummy and daddy cry?'

'So, they know how unhappy they really are.'

'What makes them unhappy?'

'Bills and things.'

'Don't they cry without your help?'

'No. They are too busy.'

'Tell me more about God and the aliens.'

'They tell you to take turns at being the princess and the witch.'

'What else do they do?'

'They jump in and out of people.'

'What for?'

'Oh, they just do. They do it to everybody.'

'How do you know? Have you asked anyone?'

'No, but if they do it with me then they must do it with everyone.'

'Have you ever said this to anyone else?'

'No.'

'Then how do you know?'

'I just do. All children know, but then they forget. I forget a lot.'

Because of his lack of experience and training, James was not aware of the significance of this conversation that he had been having with a regressed four-year-old dissociated sub-personality of Marianne. That knowledge would come later, but in that brief conversation James had been given every answer he needed to know about Marianne's complex psychological and spiritual problems. He didn't need to take notes. This conversation became etched in his memory, never to be erased. He just didn't know what it meant at the time.

Billy had been James's friend for over thirty years. They knew each other's families and they had been trucking in Saudi Arabia together. Billy had been married twice and had two daughters from his first marriage and one from his second. He and his second wife had run a typical English pub, and James had actually been with Billy when he had first met her. Billy's wife was what he called a 'diamond'. She was everything a man could wish for in a wife. She was beautiful, intelligent and she loved him. But over the years, beginning in his early youth as a merchant seaman, Billy had been developing a problem. He drank too much, from social pressure at first, and then when he had his own pub the problem became serious. Catastrophe struck when Billy's wife caught him with his trousers down with a barmaid after hours. His drinking had been affecting the business and his behaviour and his poor wife had been tolerating it for a long time. To catch him in the act was too much and she left him. Losing his beloved wife drove Billy deeper into drink. James hadn't seen Billy for some time, and one day he received a desperate plea from him. He needed help. James had just returned from Crete at the time and he had learned the art of hypnosis. Billy's plea gave James the chance to help his old friend recover, and after many years of going their separate ways they always kept in touch. Several times James came to Billy's rescue and helped him overcome a binge of drinking, but he had never been able to cure him. Every now and then, when he became depressed or lonely Billy would go on a binge and James would come to the rescue. James hadn't been in touch with Billy since he had met Marianne, but now that he and Marianne had settled into a comfortable pattern, something prompted him to call. Just to see how he was.

'I have to go and see an old friend of mine,' James told Marianne. 'Would you like to come and meet him?'

Marianne agreed and they made their way over to Bill's flat. When Billy was having a binge he never answered the phone or the door bell, and James knew something was wrong. He shouted through the letter box to let Billy know who it was and there was a response. Billy came down the stairs in a drunken stupor to open the door and let his old friend in, but before he did James stopped him. 'I've got someone with me Bill. Is it alright if I bring someone in with me?'

'That's OK,' Said Billy and opened the door. The stench of stale alcohol and cigarette smoke spilled out onto the street and Billy turned around and lurched back up the stairs with James and Marianne following behind. They followed him in to his lounge where he collapsed onto his urine-soaked couch and started to cry.

The place was a tip, with empty beer cans and overflowing ash trays strewn all over the floor. The whole place stank of stale beer, urine and spew. Poor Billy was a picture of humanity at its lowest dregs and James looked at Marianne to see her reaction. He had expected to see disgust, but there was real compassion in her eyes as she said, 'Is there anything I can do?'

'Who's this?' asked Billy as he focused his blood-shot eyes on Marianne. 'She's beautiful. Where did you find her?'

James introduced them and Billy said, 'You lucky bastard. How does an old sod like you get to know someone as lovely as this?' Marianne stepped in and answered, 'I'm the lucky one.'

As James sat with Billy, Marianne rolled up her sleeves and busied herself cleaning up the mess. James could hardly believe how helpful she was and he was so proud of her. She went across to the local shops and bought some tea, milk and sugar so they could have a cup of tea, and some beers for Billy. James knew from experience that it was a mistake to try to get Billy to go cold turkey, he had to be weaned of the drink slowly. Billy was transported to James's home and he took a week off work to nurse him back to sobriety. Every day that week Marianne would drop the children off at school and make her way over to James and help nurse Billy. She got to know Billy very well and she learned a lot about James from him. Billy always embarrassed James when he spoke of him to other people, and it was even more embarrassing when he was highly emotional, when he was recovering.

'He's the best friend I ever had,' said Billy as his eyes screwed up and his lower lip turned down and he cried. 'He is always there when you need him, when there is no one else. He will never let you down. He's saved my life more than once and I love him like a brother.'

Billy's expression of his regard for James always led him into uncontrollable sobs and James had to make him stop. As Billy had spoken of James, Marianne had looked at him and seen for herself the love and

devotion that could exist between two men who were real friends. She had never seen this before and her love for James increased as she watched him care for his friend.

It was during this time, when James watched over Billy, that he received news from the clinic about Penny's complaint. Mrs Weston had phoned to ask him to report to the clinic for a meeting with Doctor Weston. It wasn't a request. It was a demand. He agreed. Marianne was concerned for him, and once again offered her support and volunteered to go with him, but he declined her offer saying it was his problem to deal with.

As it turned out, Bill's doctor had to visit to see his patient at the precise time that James had been summoned. He needed to be with Billy when the doctor came and he called the clinic to arrange an alternative meeting with Dr Weston. Mrs Weston had made her demands and that was that. If James couldn't attend when she wanted him to then their decision would be taken without him to defend himself. A few days later James received a letter from Mrs Weston telling him that his agreement with the clinic was terminated and that he should not use Dr Weston's name for any references. The decision was made and the case was closed. James never saw Dr Weston again. Penny had carried out her threat.

James had made his sacrifice for Marianne, and Marianne found herself making her own sacrifice as James cared for Billy. She wanted him so much, but each day she had to leave and collect her children from school and stay with them each night, and each night James had only Billy for company. He missed Marianne as well as she missed him. As Billy improved, day by day, he was more able to function and communicate properly, and one night he said to James, 'She really loves you, you know.'

James looked at Billy in appreciation of what he had said, and Billy continued. 'When you went out to get some shopping she told me what you have been doing for her. She told me herself how much she loves you. You've got a good one there, you lucky bastard.'

James appreciated all Marianne's help with caring for Billy, but more than that he appreciated her truly compassionate nature. It was so different from the frightened person he had first met, and so different from the manipulative seductress she had once been. Each day that went by he loved her more and he was glad. And he was glad that he could share his good fortune with his old friend.

One night, after James had read to the children a couple of chapters from *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and they had settled down to sleep, he and Marianne retired to bed. As they snuggled into each other's arms Marianne began to say something, 'I love you ...,' but as her voice rose towards something more, she stopped in mid-sentence.

'You love me what?' asked James.

Marianne paused to make sure she was saying what she wanted to say, then said, 'Completely. I love you completely.' She looked into his eyes as she said it as if to reinforce the message.

'And what's the recipe for making a little boy?' he asked her.

'Love,' she said. 'Just love.'

Something inside James told him that one day she might just have her wish. But there was this nagging conversation he once had with a four-year-old about taking turns at being the wicked witch and the fairy princess. There was an important key there, but he didn't quite know where to make it fit, yet.

Chapter 19

All Roads Lead to ...

Running Bear, Medicine Chief of the Blackfoot tribe of the Sioux Nation, stood before the host. For as far as his eyes could see were all the bluecoat soldiers and their generals, and all the medicine men, chiefs and warriors who had perished in the Indian Wars of North America. His rage consumed him and he wept. He had been summoned to the Light after a hundred and fifty years of roaming the earth, bound by hatred and his quest for revenge. The Light was all around. There was nothing but the Light, the soldiers and the warriors. A disembodied voice said, 'It is time to forgive. The soldiers ask your forgiveness for what they did to you.'

Running Bear raised his hands in a gesture to embrace the host and, with exasperation from the depths of his tortured soul, cried at the top of his voice, 'AND WHAT ABOUT MY PEOPLE?'

The disembodied voice spoke again, 'They ask for forgiveness for what they did to all your people. They are sorry. They knew not what they were doing. They fought from fear and they knew nothing of the right way. They are here now, in the Light, and they know, and they are sorry.'

'How can I forgive?' asked Running Bear. 'So much suffering and so much waste. What was it all for? How can I forgive?'

'They forgive you,' said the voice. 'Here, in the Light, all is forgiven. You are here now with all others. We are all One. You have been separated from your brothers. Here we are all One. This is the Great Oneness. It is time. Say you forgive.'

Running Bear wept a grief for genocide. Such a grief that no one man should bear alone, could bear alone, and he opened his mouth to express his awe, 'Such big medicine.' He tried to put aside his anger, his rage, the rage of an entire nation who had suffered immeasurably at the hands of the ignorant, the greedy, the fearful and the malicious, to one side, and he opened his mouth to speak words of forgiveness. It was hard, but he tried, 'I.... I..... I for..... I forgive....' He wept again and his body trembled. He fell to his knees and he forgave. When he had recovered enough to speak again, he said through gritted teeth, 'What was it all for? So much suffering. Are we to start all over again?'

The disembodied voice said, 'We are all One again. Your journey of separateness is over and you have come home. Rest now and be at One with all your brothers, red and white, in forgiveness and universal love.'

The disembodied voice said, 'Now James, bring all of your consciousness back into yourself. Be centred and grounded and come back to full conscious awareness in your own time.'

James returned to conscious awareness and found himself once again in the room with nine other people. His body was still trembling from head to foot, his face was streaked with tears and his hands were burning. As he unfolded his legs from the lotus position on the sofa and put his feet on the floor, one of his teachers sat in front of him and held his ankles to help ground him back into this material world. He had been to the Light to help return a lost soul, the soul of Chief Running Bear of the Blackfoot Tribe of the Sioux Nation. This is where his search for answers, both his and Marianne's had led him. He was being trained as a spirit release practitioner by the UK division of the Hickman Academy for Depossession, and it had been almost a year since he had seen or heard anything of Marianne.

James had previously thought that he had experienced anger, but never in his wildest dreams could he ever have imagined such a rage could exist in the breast of a man. He asked his teachers, and the rest of the class, if he could excuse himself. He put on his shoes and coat and stepped outside into the grey drizzle of a January afternoon and walked a little. He found himself at a pub a short distance from the house where the course was being held and bought himself a large scotch. Never before had he experienced such a powerful emotion and he needed time to recover. In fact, it took James several weeks to process the experience and

come to terms with it and even longer to recover properly. After the course had finished and he had gone back to work, as he drove his truck up to the Midlands and back through the night, he would feel the pain of the experience. Each night for two weeks he would experience, with tears streaming down his face, in diminishing strength, the grief of genocide, and the anger of Running Bear. But in parallel with the pain of the experience, he felt the peace of Running Bear's ritual of forgiveness. At last he was beginning to get some real answers. If the ability to forgive had the power to overcome the grief and rage of genocide then there was hope for the world after all. Forgiveness was the key it seemed.

But the experience, in fact the whole philosophy behind the experience, could still be irrelevant in relation to the real world in which he lived and worked. Was what he had experienced real, or was it just a figment of his imagination, or the result of suggestion whilst in a hypnotic trance? Scepticism of the mystical is something the modern world of technology and medicine have taught us all, and James's own scientific training in psychology was still at the opposite end of the spectrum to his own spiritual healing powers. His faith in his powers and his faith in God had been shattered by his failure to help Marianne. But two weeks after the healing of Running Bear, James was attending his church, and the visiting medium came to him and said, 'I have an Indian here for you. He is big and he wears a beautiful war bonnet. He is giving you his peace pipe and he is smiling. He says, 'Thank you'.'

It was then that James knew that what he had experienced had been real. His own consciousness, his spirit-self, had actually been in the mysterious Light and he had been the carrier of the spirit consciousness of Running Bear. He had rescued the Chief and taken him home. James's faith in the mysterious workings of the mind of God had been restored and he knew. It was not a belief any more – it was 'the knowing', and he was well on his way, going with the flow of the mysterious cycle that had begun a year and a half earlier. This was the cycle that broke all boundaries, and he was beginning to understand.

All roads lead to Rome, they say, and three separate roads had led James to the door of those who had guided him to the Light with the Chief. One road began with a lecturer from the college where he gained his degree, one began in a bookshop and the other began in a Spiritualist Church. All three roads converged and he was now on the main highway to his destination. As all three roads converged, James began to appreciate the unseen power of those who guided him, but it still remained for him to be told, categorically, what his objective was. It was as if he was being led, blind and ignorant, towards a destination that was still as mysterious as those who guided him. His faith in himself and his faith in the mysterious power that he called God had been shattered. Now was the time to get it back, but stronger than ever before.

At his failure to help Marianne, and to protect himself from the emotional torment of that failure, he had written a clinical report on what he had discovered through his research reading on what he thought was troubling her. He had to detach himself from his own emotional destruction and view the experience as a psychologist.

As he neared completion of the report, he decided it might be a good idea to have it assessed by one of his old lecturers from university. Shirley had recognised the value of James's non-scientific abilities as she taught him the basics of the science of psychology, and she had warned him, 'Science is seductive. Be careful. Hold on to your beliefs and do not allow yourself to be seduced by academia or scientific theory.'

Shirley and her husband had become firm friends of James since she had taught him, and he had administered to her and some of her friends with his healing abilities. He called her and she invited him to dinner.

'We haven't seen you for a long time James. What have you been up to lately?' she asked as he entered the door and exchanged a kiss on the cheek.

'I've got something for you to look at and I need your opinion,' he told her. 'But first, I need to relax. I've been under a lot of pressure lately.'

It was good for James to be with his friends. For a year and a half, he had been embroiled in Marianne's world and its unsolved mysteries, and he'd had no social interaction outside of that. He sat down to dinner with Shirley and her husband and they talked about other things. When the dinner things had been cleared

away, and with the calming effects of a glass of wine, James was able to tell Shirley why he wanted to see her. He showed her the report.

He had written it as if it had been commissioned by Marianne. It was for her benefit and not for the benefit of a medical panel or tribunal. He knew that she would never present herself to a doctor or therapist, and he had a fear that she may get herself into some kind of trouble with her next-door neighbours again and involve the police. There was a possibility of physical violence and James had the vision of Marianne being taken into hospital and undergoing some kind of psychological assessment. The report he had written was structured and biased in such a way as to lay firmly the blame for her emotional state at the door of the social services. He gave it the title:

MARIANNE CRAVEN

CASE HISTORY

A Phenomenological Investigation into
The Long-Term Consequences of Abuse
Within the Child Care System.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Shirley flicked through the report, critically evaluating its structure and content. 'My word you have been busy, haven't you? How could you manage to get so close to a client and discover all of this?'

Guilt must have flushed his face. There was no way any therapist could ever retrieve this much information just by clinical interview.

'She trusted me,' said James.

'So, what happened? Why are you not still working with her?'

'There is something else,' said James. 'Something I can't put in the report.' He wanted to tell his friend the full story of how he had volunteered to love his client, and how he had fallen in love with her. He couldn't bring himself to go that far, but what he could do was express his fears to his former lecturer. He braced himself in anticipation for Shirley's reaction. 'I think she is possessed.'

Shirley was not so much shocked, but curious. 'What makes you think that?'

James described how he had developed and honed his hypnotic skills with Marianne, 'I could get her into trance just by changing the tone of my voice,' he said. 'All I had to do was speak to her in a gentle tone and she would be gone. Each time I did this I would reinforce her trust in me, and I would call upon that part of her that wanted help, that part that wanted to trust me. I only did it when she was in crisis, when she asked for help. Then, as I was about to start my investigation into her other parts she would open her eyes and instantly return to waking consciousness with the word, 'No.' There was something in her eyes when she said this and it was something I didn't like.'

James went on to describe what had happened in the cathedral, and the confrontation with what he thought may have been an entity. There were other instances when James had felt the tingle up and down his spine at something Marianne had said. On one occasion she had complained of a physical discomfort in her arm or shoulder and he had said to her, 'Don't forget I'm a healer.' He would never forget her response to that simple statement. She had said nothing but turned on him with a look that spoke volumes. That look said, 'Don't you DARE come near me with THAT.'

On another occasion, they had been sitting at the parlour room table after an evening meal and she had asked him a question that she had asked him early on when they had first met, 'Do you believe in God?'

'Yes,' he had replied.

'OK then. What is God? Tell me what you know.'

James explained as best he could what he thought God was. 'It is a universal power far beyond our understanding. It is the origin of our universe, the Creative power of the universe. It is an energy form that provides us with all we need to survive and develop. It is the power of love and it gives us the power to heal

ourselves.’ As he finished speaking he saw Marianne give a malevolent snigger. She was mocking him. It was then that he knew for certain. All other incidents, including the confrontation with what he thought might have been an entity paled into insignificance as he added these two incidents together and drew his conclusion. But then, there was the conversation with the dissociated four-year-old who reported those that jumped in and out of people.

The very last time he had tried to answer Marianne’s plea, ‘I don’t want to be like this. Please help me,’ he had spent five hours trying to overcome the part that resisted. With the both of them exhausted, he finally gave up for that day, but Marianne would never give him another opportunity, and she wrote him a letter.

‘For James.

Can’t say these things to you. They’re important. Its strangely calm.
I’m alone.

Neville came around. He let go. He fucked someone else.

He enjoyed telling me. She’s younger than me.

Arthur still hates me. He won’t help with the bills.

Earlier I thought, 2 down and 1 to go.

That’s you. I hope I don’t have to rope anyone else in.

I can’t love you if you get too close to me.

Please go away, but if I called you, you would have to say no to me.

I mustn’t see you, any of you.

I can only talk to you on the phone.

I’m frightened without you, but all I can see is pain.

Couldn’t you all love me from a distance?

Couldn’t you all look after us from a distance?

I thought earlier today, I’m not really an I. I am an *US*. Me Teresa, Tiffany and Toni. That’s all.

Not supposed to have men around.

They’re bad for us.

I never left Arthur or Neville. They left me.

They broke their promise.

I will never believe that we could be happy.

It’s not possible. One of us will hurt each other.

If you don’t do it to me then I will do it to you.

I already hurt and I don’t want any more.

I don’t want a man in my life.

I only wanted a son.

I don’t want to hurt you either. I couldn’t bear to see you suffer. You don’t deserve it either.

I really only fear being alone because of money problems.

If you could ask Arthur to please take care of bills until I’m able to cope with them myself. I don’t want to be a burden, but unless I have this time to myself that I really need, I can’t get the strength I need to do everything by myself.

Please make Arthur understand.

I just want you all to look after me until I can look after myself.

I can’t see any of you.

I don’t really want to see other people.

You could help by explaining to them how important it is to me to be left alone.

If I need help, mainly financially, I’ll ask, but I don’t want anything else.

It’s too painful for me.

I’ve always known I would have to be alone.

Waiting for the dragon.

Once you’ve all let me go I can start to walk towards it, face it, fight it, defeat it.

I have to do it alone.

Please help me not to feel frightened.
 I do love you, but I need you to love me more right now. I need you to set me down free, but I need to feel safe that you are there waiting for me to come back.
 I'm going to be gone a long time.
 I can only make this journey if I travel alone.
 I'll find what I'm looking for and I'll bring it back.
 You must stay away from me and if I ask you to come you mustn't.
 Please ask Arthur to help me and the kids by relieving money problems, for a while at least.
 Things are going to be difficult enough.
 I still have so many questions and I need you, but as you say, sex is getting in the way.
 Couldn't we just talk on the phone or write.
 I can't see you because I can't switch off the sex.
 It won't stop. The only way would be to get someone else. I don't want to do that.
 If I don't leave you now it will be too painful.
 I have to do it now. I'm ready.
 I hope you are too.
 I want to say sorry to everyone and thank you to everyone.
 Wish me luck. I love you.'

The letter hadn't been the final goodbye, and there was more to come, but it had closed the door on him reaching any kind of dialogue with her hidden parts.

He had answered Shirley's question, but the pain of his parting with Marianne was still with him and she detected something. 'Your medicine wasn't big enough. You have done all you can. You have to let it go now.'

What struck James was that Shirley had used the term 'medicine'. It had connotations of Shamanism, the spiritual 'medicine' of the North American Indian. She was a psychology teacher, and it would have been perhaps more appropriate if she had used the term your 'knowledge' or your 'training' wasn't enough. He thought it odd, and then a distant memory flashed across his mind. The entity that had written a message through the entranced member of the medium development circle all those years ago had written, 'James isn't strong enough.' Yet another piece of a puzzle had floated across his consciousness.

James agreed with Shirley on this point, but he didn't agree with her advice to let it go. He chose not to argue with her about it, but he knew he would never be able to do that. This was unfinished business. Something had prevented him from doing his work, and he would never be able to rest until he knew what it was and to confront it himself. He was left with three questions that just had to be answered. Was Marianne born bad, as she herself believed, was she psychologically damaged as a result of childhood experiences, or was she being influenced by something that was not of herself, something that interfered with her own free will – was she possessed? He needed to know. Whatever it was, was more powerful than his own healing power and his deep human love for her. Even though he was defeated, there was no way he would stay that way. He needed to find a 'big medicine.'

Pauline was another old friend from university. She had been the girlfriend of a client, Geoffrey, one of the lecturers who had a drink problem. James had literally saved Geoffrey's life. He had gone to his home to give him another hypnosis session to reinforce his abstention from alcohol and there had been no answer to the doorbell. Then James had heard wailing coming from a bedroom upstairs. He stepped back from the house into the road and looked up to see if he could tell where the wailing was coming from, and there on the roof, sat a big black crow. The wailing was coming from inside the house and the crow was waiting. Something hidden deep within James's animal instincts told him that the crow was the nearest thing in the urban world to a vulture. It was a carrion bird that cleaned up the debris of dead beasts on our motorways, and this one was waiting for something living to die.

James rushed to the nearest shop and asked to use the phone. He dialled the emergency services who sent the police to break down the door and an ambulance to take the dying Geoffrey to hospital. They were just in time.

Geoffrey was another of James's failures. He just couldn't get past something in Geoffrey that made him want to drink, and his own pressures from his studies and financial hardship had prevented him from devoting the time and attention that Geoffrey needed. Pauline had no alternative but to give up on Geoffrey for her own sake. Her reluctant abandonment of him and his problems meant that she had to undergo counselling. To fail a loved-one is traumatic for anyone.

Once in a blue moon Pauline and James would share some time together as friends, usually over lunch. She had been one of only three people who had read his manuscript, *The Silent Witness*, and she herself was about to begin a PhD in religious studies. She was to research the subject of beliefs in the afterlife before the coming of Christ. James was always intellectually stimulated by Pauline and they always had a lot to talk about, and James made a date to pay her a visit.

Pauline lived in a large, old three-storied house with her three teenage children right on the sea wall. There were two entrances to the house, one up a flight of steps above street level and another down below street level. She was in the process of refurbishing the house and James never knew which door to knock, the upper or the lower. He knocked the upper door and a voice issued from below and said, 'I'm down here.'

James went down the steps to the lower door and presented Pauline with the bunch of flowers he had bought at the petrol station and she planted a kiss on his cheek. 'Sorry about the mess,' she said. 'The builders still haven't finished.'

There was a fire in the grate that cheered a room with nothing on the floor boards. Books and files were stacked everywhere and everything was covered in dust. The work had been going on for some time, and James had become used to it. He cleared a space on one of the easy chairs in front of the fire and Pauline went to the kitchen to put the flowers in water and put the kettle on. 'So, what's your news?' she asked from the kitchen. 'I haven't seen you since last Summer. What have you been doing all Winter, anything interesting?'

'You first,' said James. Pauline came into the room with two mugs of coffee and sat down in the chair on the other side of the fire place. She handed him a mug and said, 'I need to ask you something.' The smile she had welcomed him with had vanished from her face and she looked ill at ease.

'Sure,' said James. 'What's the matter?' Pauline settled into her chair as she tried to shrug off her discomfort, then she looked straight at him with a look that suggested a hidden cloud of fear. 'Do you believe in evil?' she asked him.

'Now there's a question,' said James. 'Why do you ask?'

'Do you remember when Geoffrey nearly died? You know, that time you called the ambulance and he was taken into hospital?'

'I remember it very well,' replied James. 'Go on.'

'Well, I was in the house when Geoffrey was in the hospital. I had been cleaning up. You know what a mess the place used to get in when he had been drinking. Well, I was having a little nap on his bed, and something disturbed me' She paused as if she was having difficulty finding the right words.

James prompted her. 'Tell me what happened. Just say it as it is.'

'Something caught my attention near the ceiling. It was like something was coming out of the wall, near the ceiling. I actually saw it. It was horrible, like some kind of gargoyle. It scared me half to death. I was awake instantly and I thought it must have been my imagination, but there was a terrible feeling in that room. I had to get out and leave the house.' She paused and James waited for her to continue. 'What do you think? Was it my imagination or did I really see something?'

James had a friend who was psychic. They had met by chance, (James was learning that there is no such thing as chance), in a hamburger restaurant close by to the university. Trevor his name was, and a little bit older than James. They just got chatting, and right from the word go they had been on the same wavelength. Trevor knew straight away that James had healing gifts. They would often meet in the students' union coffee shop at the college. Trevor had met Geoffrey as he was entering James flat above the therapy centre where he had been living at the time, just as Geoffrey had been leaving. They merely passed on the stairs, and as

Trevor came into James flat he remarked about Geoffrey, 'That poor man. He has something with him that's dragging him down.' Trevor had got to meet both Pauline and Geoffrey in due course at the student's union.

'Do you remember Trevor the psychic?' he asked her.

'Oh yes, I remember him. Why do you ask?'

'Because he went to Geoffrey's house one time, and he told me that there was something in the house that was making Geoffrey very sick. He told Geoffrey he had to move, to get away from the house or he would never get well.'

James still hadn't answered Pauline's question, and he thought it may be a good time to tell her something of his news. 'I have something to tell you too,' he said.

James told him of the events he had experienced with Marianne. He told her that he'd had an affair with her and outlined the experiences at the cathedral and all the other little clues that had bothered him, 'On the one hand,' said James, 'she was helpless and vulnerable and in bad need of help, and on the other hand she actually threatened to kill me – more than once. I tried everything I knew to help her but there was something that prevented me. The closer I got to it the more resistant it became, until in the end I couldn't get near her at all. She was torn between two very powerful emotions, the need to be loved and a terrible fear. The fear was ultimately projected onto me. She became terrified of me. Everyone in her family only had one explanation for the emotional destruction she caused to everyone she came into contact with. Her adoptive parents and the father of her children all said she was evil. She herself believed that she was born evil.'

Their conversation was interrupted by a knock at the door. It was another old friend of Pauline's – with another bunch of flowers.

'Isn't that strange,' said Pauline as she led her friend Caroline in to meet James, 'Two bunches of flowers in one day.' Pauline introduced Caroline as a friend she worked with at one of the local prisons. They both had part time jobs as English teachers to those inmates who had been granted the privilege of attending classes. Pauline went into the kitchen to refresh their coffee cups and to fetch one for Caroline. When the three of them all sat down in front of the fire with their coffee, Pauline informed Caroline of James's hypnosis skills and informed James that Caroline was a Reiki practitioner. The conversation soon returned to the question of evil.

'Let me tell you what happened to my son,' suggested Caroline. 'He was committed to a psychiatric ward with schizophrenia. I would visit him and he would tell me, 'I'm not crazy mum. I have these voices in my head, but they are not my imagination. They actually tell me jokes and they are so funny I have to laugh at them. The doctors think I'm nuts. I don't belong here. You have to get me out or I will finish up being as mad as the others.' So, I got him out and he came home with me. I practised my Reiki on him and it worked. The buggers left and he has been alright ever since.'

They all looked at each other, each with their own unique experiences, and shared the same thoughts – the same conclusions, that there was something in this that could not be ignored. Where James had been producing a report for Marianne that comprised purely clinical psychological theories, he decided it was about time he had a closer look at this thing called evil.

Chapter 20

Love is Never Enough

Fear gripped him like a cloying blanket. It wasn't the physiological fight-or-flight kind of fear that tensed the muscles and released adrenaline through the body. It was a crippling fear that froze him to the spot, unable to move and unable to think. Panic reigned supreme as he experienced the true meaning of helplessness, like being paralyzed and tied down at the mercy of a torturer. The atmosphere was thick with a presence that surrounded him, coursed through him and consumed him. This presence was almost tangible in its malevolence, unseen, yet real and suffocating. He tried to move, but his feet had no purchase. He tried to speak but his tongue filled his mouth, choking him. He looked up, and through the darkness he caught sight of it, crouching and leering.

He knew what it was. He had encountered it before, but then it couldn't be seen. It had been behind a door, powerful and threatening his very soul with destruction. It wanted to get to him then, and his fear had been absolute. Now he could see it. He knew it was the same one as before because the frightful inexplicable atmosphere was the same, like a signature, or a whiff of scent after someone had left the room. But this was no scent – this was a suffocating soup of un-holiness.

He wanted to reach it and wring its scrawny neck, wipe that sneer off its ugly face. As he tried to move, his feet simply lifted higher off the ground. His body was useless, and as he tried to voice the words of the Lord's Prayer, his tongue became larger and filled his mouth so that no words could be uttered. His fear was turning to anger and rage as he vainly tried to reach the entity or dispense it with the Holy words. It just laughed at him.

James woke up with his fists gripping the edge of his mattress, his body bathed in sweat and his heart thumping in his chest. The cloying unholy atmosphere remained, and he knew that this was no ordinary nightmare. With a superhuman effort he raised himself from a prone position and sat on the bed. He spoke out loud and clear, 'Right, you sonofabitch. So, you want to play games eh? Now I have you. Come back and try that again and then we'll see what happens.'

James had moved to Sussex in late November to stay with his own parents. They had moved out of London the year before to get away from the increasing nuisance of the local children playing football in the street and constantly knocking the door for their ball back. They were getting on a bit and just wanted a quiet life and to be left in peace. They had provided James with a safe haven twice before, once when he had returned from the Middle East in 1982, and again in 1998 when he had finished his degree and to escape the clutches of Penny. Whenever James had to start again from scratch, they would provide him with a roof over his head and leave him alone to recover whatever it was he had to recover from, with no questions asked. He had decided to go and live with them this time for two reasons, one to give him the opportunity to save money for a deposit on his own house, and once again to distance himself from Penny. She was still on the war path and had locked horns with Marianne.

Penny, not content with reporting him to Doctor Weston, had telephoned the editor of every newspaper in the land about the irresponsible hypnotist who seduced clients with mental problems in the hope that publicity would destroy him and his relationship with Marianne. Her accusations were not accepted as newsworthy and her anger and frustrations grew. She had gone to every one of James' friends and acquaintances to tell them what a despicable character he was, and she had taken to having long conversations with Marianne on the telephone. Penny's anger had turned to hatred, and it was consuming her and making her ill.

James could still travel to work from his parents' home as easily as from the coast, and he spent his time evenly between being with Marianne and with his parents. When he was in Sussex they would talk on the phone, and not a single day went by that he didn't have contact with her. She wrote letters to him often, to express her thoughts and feelings, but she never sent them. James asked her to keep all her letters and notes in a folder, and from time to time he would check the folder to see what she had written.

James now had good reason to buy a house. Marianne's wish had come true. He had been sitting at the parlour room table with the children when she had gone into the bathroom to use the do-it-yourself home pregnancy test. She came into the room and showed it to him. There were two lines on the tube that showed a positive result and the children jumped for joy. Marianne came and sat on his lap, put her arms around his neck, kissed him and said, 'Thank you. You have made me very happy.' He hugged her and held her close to him and he felt proud at the thought of becoming a father again. The first to know their news was Billy. He had found himself a new lady friend since recovering from his drinking with James and Marianne's help, and he had called to arrange for them to meet her. Billy was thrilled at the news. The next to know was Penny. She called Marianne to have another dig at her and Marianne calmly gave her the news. Penny was mortified and her hatred grew even more.

James went into a book shop in Sussex to buy some books to help Marianne with her pregnancy. He found one that would suit very well and another that interested him. It was all about communicating with the unborn child and establishing a relationship between it and both its parents. James was very much looking forward to his future with Marianne, the new baby and the children. But that visit to the book shop would not be the last.

During the month of December James and Marianne would sit and discuss their future and the future of their little boy. They both knew it would be a boy. Towards the end of December, just before Christmas, James took Marianne to the hospital for her first ultra-sound scan. The children went along, full of excitement, to see a computer image of their tiny embryonic brother in his mother's womb. All was well – physically anyway.

James was disappointed and a little concerned at Marianne's announcement that she didn't want him to spend Christmas with her and the children, and added to that, Marianne began to act strangely. At first, he thought it was a simple case of an expectant mother rearranging her nest. She became obsessed with cleaning and became a little morose. One day, whilst cleaning the window sill in her bedroom, she looked out of the window and saw what she thought was damage to her car. She called the police, and after they had inspected it found nothing. Marianne was convinced that her next-door neighbours had vandalised it, but there was no evidence at all.

On another occasion, he was in the bathroom shaving, and he could hear a commotion out in the back garden. When he came down and asked what all the fuss was about she said there was nothing. The children all looked sullen and afraid. That day he drove the children to school and Marianne rode passenger next to him. As he steered the car into the road Marianne opened the glove box and deposited two fresh eggs into it and closed it again. He asked her, 'Why did you put those eggs in there?' She didn't answer but sat with a similar sullen expression to the one the children were wearing. He dropped the children off at school and they returned to Marianne's house. Once inside, and before removing her coat, she went into the living room and banged her fists on the wall that divided her home from the neighbours next door. He rushed in to stop her and asked, 'What are you doing? Why do you want to antagonise them?'

'If they want trouble they can have it,' she replied with terror in her eyes.

'What's going on?' he asked her. 'What's the matter with you?'

'I'm fed up with living in fear of them,' she said with increasing distress. 'I can't live like this anymore. I want an end to it. Let them come and I'll show them.'

James led her into the parlour and sat her down to try to talk to her and get to the bottom of what was troubling her. There was a knock at the door and Marianne literally jumped at the sound and burst into tears. James braced himself for a conflict with the neighbours and opened the door. He was surprised to find a police woman on the door step.

'There has been a complaint,' said the police woman. 'May I come in?'

James invited her in and learned that the next-door neighbour had complained to the police that Marianne had thrown eggs at a window of her house. Marianne emphatically denied it. The police woman could see

that Marianne was suffering deep distress, and with an assurance from James that the situation was under control she left.

Following this incident, James saw less and less of Marianne as she, using more and more subtle methods, pushed him further and further away from her. She told him she wanted time to herself; that she didn't want a boyfriend any more, that she didn't want to make him angry, but he could talk to her on the phone. He did - every day. But as each day went by, James became more and more worried about her and her mental state. Whilst he talked to her on the phone each day from his mother's house, he read more and more to help him understand her behaviour and put it down on paper in his clinical assessment. He concluded that she was suffering from obsessive compulsive disorder and paranoia. He also concluded that there was absolutely nothing he could do. He felt helpless and frustrated in the extreme.

A new routine developed for James as the New Year unfolded and Marianne's unborn little boy developed. He would work as usual, sleep in the morning and then talk to Marianne on the phone. Then he would go into the town and sit in the coffee shop at the book shop and read. It was cheaper than having to buy all the books he needed to read. Sometimes he would buy one. The sales assistant began to notice him and the books he was reading.

'Here's one I think you should read,' she suggested, and handed him a copy of *Sybil*. He bought it. On top of that, his friend and former teacher, Shirley, loaned him a copy of the film that had been made of the book. This was no coincidence. The true story of *Sybil* was about someone with multiple personality disorder.

Early in February, as James was pulling into the transport yard at the end of a trip to Birmingham, one of the warehouse staff came out to him to inform him that there had been a telephone call the previous evening, just after he had left for Birmingham. He rushed to Marianne's house, fearing the worst. It was six o'clock in the morning and the house was dark and still. He went upstairs and found Marianne sleeping peacefully on her side with her thumb in her mouth. She heard him enter and woke up. As he sat down on her bed and stroked her hair he asked her, 'What's the matter sweetheart?'

'I want you to make love to me.'

'No, you don't. Tell me, what's the matter?'

'I'm so depressed.' She started to cry,

He lay down with her, still clothed and held her in his arms as she cried.

'It's all right. I'm here now.'

He lay there with her, comforting her until the children came in. Marianne got up and went about her business with the children, giving them breakfast and taking them to school whilst James undressed and slept. That afternoon was the day he spent five hours trying to overcome the hidden resistance to his efforts to uncover the cause of her distress. He failed. He was exhausted and as Marianne went to fetch the children from school he went back upstairs for a nap. After she had fed the children, Marianne came to wake him and climbed into bed beside him. She was wearing makeup, which was something she never did unless she was going somewhere special. It was also something she used to do, a long time ago, when she was a little girl. As she lay beside him, James said to her, 'Sex gets in the way. You already know that. It's not what you want.' Then she shocked him.

'I want you to rape me.'

James sat on the edge of the bed and looked down at her. He saw someone he didn't know, someone who had existed long before he had met her. He saw someone who had no regard for herself, no self-esteem, someone to be punished. He deliberately altered the timbre of his voice and said, 'You know I can never hurt you, and you can never make me angry. Be calm and still. Be peaceful and rest.' She slipped into trance as he spoke and he made a final attempt to reach her inner self. She opened her eyes and told him, 'I didn't give you permission to do that.'

'I just wanted you to know how easy it is, how easy it can be.'

'I want you to go.'

James knew this time she really meant it, and he knew he had failed. She had often told him he would - fail that is.

Marianne then asked him to move all his belongings from the house, including his box of precious items, and after a couple of days he arrived to do just that. He didn't use his key but rang the doorbell. Marianne

answered and let him in. There was no smile and no warm welcome. He made to collect his things and she asked him, 'Can I make you a sandwich or something?'

'Yes,' he said. 'That would be nice. Thank you.' He went to the bathroom to collect his razor and toothbrush, and to the bedroom to collect his clothes and dressing gown. It was the first time she hadn't followed him there. He went downstairs and she invited him to sit down and eat his sandwich and drink his tea. He sat at the end of the table with his back to the kitchen door and Marianne sat on the little sofa under the window at the far end of the room. As he began to eat in silence she asked him, 'Have you nothing to say?'

He had already said it all. He had promised to help her and to love her. He had fulfilled her wish to have a little boy and he had devoted himself to her. He had sacrificed his work and his other clients, his relationship with Dr Weston and his friendship with Penny. He was the real casualty in all of this. He had used all his skills and his knowledge and he had prayed every day for the guidance to make her well. There was nothing left to say.

'What can I say?' he replied.

'You must think me cold and heartless,' Marianne said.

Marianne's adoptive family had called her cold and heartless and so had Arthur. She sat there in front of him with cold detachment, a blank expression on her face, but James was not being fooled. He saw in her eyes what she was really feeling. The cold detachment was only a mask. Just beneath the surface she was feeling exactly what he was feeling. She really did love him. But for her there was no way she could accept his love. She felt unworthy, and on more than one occasion she had told him so. She had told him to stop bringing her flowers because she didn't deserve them. She didn't want a Christmas present because she didn't want to feel grateful, or loved, or beholden to him.

There was turmoil and grief for both of them just below a thin veil of detachment. It was their mutual protection from an expression of emotion that Marianne would not be able to deal with. So, he left it where it was, for both of them, and as he spoke these words, he knew he spoke the truth, 'No. I don't think you're cold and heartless. I know different.'

James got up from the table and collected his things in his arms. Marianne said, 'I can't find your silver cross. It's here somewhere but I don't know where.'

'Never mind,' said James. 'Give it to the boy - a present from his dad.'

Another shield went up.

'You're not his dad.'

James knew perfectly well who the father of her unborn child was, and he could have challenged her, but he decided not to. She had decided to end it and end it completely. She wanted no ties, no visits, and no maintenance payments or child support. She wanted no pain. So, he protected her from it by saying nothing.

The last thing she said to him was, 'I suppose you have cured me of one thing.'

'What's that?' asked James.

'Trying to seduce psychologists: I won't do that again.'

Marianne helped him to his car with his things and as he closed the hatch-back she kissed him.

'Take good care of yourself,' she said. That was the last time he saw her and that was the moment he realised that love was never enough.

Chapter 21

Trust

For some reason, completely unknown to him, James had always been blamed. He was the eldest of four children and his mother had often said to him, 'You are the oldest, you should know better.'

One day at school, when he was only five years old, his class had been dismissed by the teacher to go to the playground for a break. The moment all the children, about thirty of them, left their little desks, they began to make a noise. As they approached the exit doors the noise grew louder and louder. By the time they all gathered in the playground the noise was an all-consuming, ear splitting cacophony. The young James was the only one who had been silent, and he held his hands tightly over his ears to try to shut out the awful noise. As he did so he screamed at the top of his voice for all the others to, 'SHUUUUT UUUUP!'

At that precise moment the teacher looked out into the school yard and she saw only one little face with its mouth wide open in a scream – James's. The teacher brought them all aback inside, and in front of the entire class, the little five-year-old James was humiliated for being the one who had caused the whole frightful affair.

Shortly after getting married, after he had left the army, James received a letter from a previous girlfriend, Helen, to inform him that he was the father of her little girl. He wasn't. When his wife divorced him, he was blamed for the breakdown of the marriage and accused of abandonment. This was his wife's justification for her own betrayal in infidelity whilst he was away. He left his idyllic life in Crete because he was held to blame for the disruption to village life caused by those who had a drink problem. He had been everyone's whipping boy, and he had grown used to it. Even Marianne had told him that he would get the blame for everything. He wasn't quite sure what she meant at the time but she had been absolutely correct.

He had finished his clinical assessment of Marianne's mental and emotional condition and sent it to her with his front door key attached. The report was only thirty-five pages long but had taken him all of two months to research and write, and he had written it with love – for her protection and for her benefit and understanding. Marianne read the report and then asked Arthur to read it. Then she phoned him for the last time. She blamed him for everything, and Arthur blamed him into the bargain. She and Arthur had re-joined forces, to continue their symbiotic relationship, and to condemn James for his unethical behaviour.

Marianne informed James that he had left one or two possessions behind and she asked him to come and collect them. Coincidentally, Shirley had invited James to her birthday party, and in need of a little social interaction and to break his loneliness, he accepted. As Marianne lived not a great distance from Shirley, he arranged with Marianne to collect his things on the same evening that he was to attend the party. When he arrived at her house, he noticed Arthur's car parked outside, and not wishing to be confronted by the two of them to condemn him in front of the children, he chose to drive by without stopping. He had seen Marianne for the last time and now that both she and Arthur had chosen to blame him for everything, he wanted it to stay that way.

He arrived at the party, wine bottle in hand, to meet some of his old lecturers, and some of Shirley's friends who he hadn't yet met. One of Shirley's friends was introduced to him as Susan. On being given his name, Susan remarked, 'So you are James then.'

'Yes I am. Why, has someone been talking about me?'

'No, not exactly,' said Susan. 'But I was at church a couple of weeks ago. I go to the Spiritualist Church,' she explained. 'And I got this strange message. I was told that James needs help. Well I don't know anyone called James, so it was a bit of a mystery. Are you the James who needs help?'

Did he need help? What a question. He had joined Marianne in her pit of despair to try to save her and pull her out, but she had dragged him into hers and then had thrust him into his own pit. 'Yes, I do need help,' he told her.

James gave Susan a brief resume of what had happened and asked her what she could do to help. She invited him to give her something that belonged to Marianne. One of Susan's varied gifts was psychometry. That is the gift of picking up information about people from objects. This presented him with a problem because he had nothing of hers except the letters and little notes she had written for him. Susan agreed to accept a couple of originals, together with copies of some of her drawings, and he asked her to not take any notice of what had been written.

After James had returned home to his mother's house after the party, he found a message on his answer phone. He was shocked to discover that the message was from Penny of all people. How on earth did she get my number? He thought. She was terse and brief with her message, 'I have something of yours here. Marianne brought them to me when you didn't show at her house last night. Come and collect them.'

Marianne had made Arthur take her to Penny's so she could hand over James's things when he hadn't shown, and she had given Penny his phone number. The last thing in the world he needed was for Penny to have his phone number. Fortunately, he had taken the precaution of having his own number installed so his parents wouldn't be bothered by his running up a bill on their account. The next day he reluctantly phoned Penny in order to make arrangements to collect his stuff. Penny was gloating, and he knew that his arrival at her place was going to be yet another ordeal to look forward to. All the birds were coming home to roost.

After a few days of sending the notes and drawings to Susan, this is the reply that James received:

'Dear James,

Enclosed is the reading and the writings and drawings. I hope it helps. I feel that you have done all you can for this lady, and I really do not think that she will listen to you. So, for your own sake, safety and sanity, I would pass this on and walk away. Hand it over to 'Above' (meaning prayer).

I know a hypnotherapist who practises Spiritual Response Therapy and clears past lives as well as present life. It is achieved by dowsing with charts. He has a lot of success. I think it would be possible for him to help without having to meet the lady.

Perhaps it might be an idea to discuss this work with him. His name is Norman and he lives in Tunbridge Wells. His phone number is *****.

I wish you lots of luck, light and protection with many blessings.

Take care with my best wishes.

Susan.'

Reading 4/4/01

This is from the handwriting and drawings, in the order I picked it up.

This lady has a split personality, behavioural problems, hallucinations and mood swings.

SPLIT PERSONALITY. One side is childlike, vulnerable, in need of protection, quite loving and sweet, wants help, sensitive.

The other side is destructive, violent, cruel, and intolerant. Hatred of men, self-hatred, refuses help, insensitive to others, fearful, angry, strong willed.

I feel this lady has been on prescription drugs at one stage, but these were not correct for her treatment. She needs medication to initially stabilise her mental state, and to enable her to focus on what is reality and what is not. Along with psychotherapy, counselling, past life therapy and healing.

Fear is the strong emotion, and anger that is not only from this life but from previous lives, along with a strong self-punishment plan. I feel her mental imbalance is hereditary, possibly from her mother. She was starved of love as a child by her mother. I also feel her mother had a drink problem. She was even in a state of fear whilst in her mother's womb.

She was sexually and physically abused as a child by a relative. In a past life she was killed and labelled evil as a witch. She needs to feel needed, also likes having babies, but then cannot cope as

they grow older. A major problem is with her daughter, who I feel has inherited some of her mother's mental imbalances.

This lady is able to communicate with Spirit but is unable to control or fully understand this contact. Therefore, she is too open and vulnerable to psychic attack, particularly at night. I feel she needs an immediate clearing including past lives.

If she does not get the help she needs, I fear for her children's safety and upbringing, as I feel she can become very dangerous in one of her violent and frenzied states of mind. I see her with a knife attacking a man.

There is a black cloud of negativity surrounding her. She has a fear of accepting help due to strong self-punishment regime. Her pregnancy could have complications, oedema, blood pressure, difficult birth and baby underweight.

This lady is short of vitamins and minerals, particularly for aiding normal brain function. To name some: B vitamins, chromium, iron, copper, folic acid and vitamin C. I am also told that Evening Primrose oil would help her as well to calm the mind and mood swings.

She has food intolerance for coffee, chocolate, alcohol and cheese, and should stay away from all stimulants.

She needs to be cleared of psychic attack and taught to protect herself and control her communication with Spirit.

This lady is going to prove very hard to help, as she needs so much in different areas, and due to her lack of co-operation, help would progress more from women rather than from men and will take a very long period of time.

END

The report from Susan said it all, even down to the fact that she was expecting another baby. James was stunned by the accuracy of the reading. He wondered how different things would have been if he had something like this when he had first met Marianne. This type of assessment knocked any clinical or medical assessment into a cocked hat, and all Susan had to go on were a couple of examples of handwriting and drawings. Amazing and very, very scary.

The assessment had confirmed James's worst possible fears, and he realised that his own abilities at dealing with this kind of problem were far too inadequate. It made him feel such a fool. He thought he could help Marianne with genuine human love and his own spiritual gifts. How wrong could he have been? And into the bargain he felt such a fool at making her pregnant. Marianne had accused him, during her last telephone conversation, of making things worse rather than better. He realised that she was right. The destruction of his own self-esteem, and his abilities was complete. And now he had a new fear, not just for Marianne, but for his own unborn son. But there was one glimmer of hope. The world of Spirit had contacted Susan and she had come to help. This was no coincidence. It gave James his first real inkling of the power of the Spirit World and its entities. The pathway from his college lecturer towards the main highway, yet to be realised, had begun, and it encouraged him to contact this person called Norman who lived in Tunbridge Wells. If James couldn't do any more, he thought, then maybe someone else could. He made an appointment.

In the meantime, James swallowed his pride and visited Penny to collect his remaining possessions. He was partly relieved to see that her hatred had diminished and she was courteous to him. She gave him the plastic carrier bag that Marianne had put his things into and he looked inside. He found his music tapes and CD's and all the books he had given her; a bible, a self-hypnosis book, a copy of the Dalai Lama's book, *The Art of happiness* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. She had also returned the book he bought her about communicating with the unborn child, although she had kept the other one about pregnancy. James noticed that she had not returned his original manuscript and the two photographs of himself. The silver cross was also conspicuous by its absence. *Perhaps she had just thrown them away?*

Now he was once again at the mercy of Penny, but this time she was a little more lenient with him and they sat down with the customary cup of tea to talk. Now that his relationship with Marianne had come to an end Penny saw her chance to win him back, and she didn't chastise him too much. James was on his guard, and he tried once again to tell her that with or without Marianne's intervention, he had no intention of

carrying on with her where they had left off. He was adamant about this and told her that now he was living in Sussex at his parent's home and he had every intention of staying there.

Their conversation was fraught with emotion, and James tried very hard to keep things on an even keel. He wanted Penny to be relieved of her anger towards Marianne and tried to explain to her that Marianne was indeed a very disturbed person. He wanted her to sympathise and he told her some of the things that he had learned. He explained that when Marianne was getting anxious and felt threatened by him, or when he had tried to work with her, she would simply say, 'Do you want to fuck me now?'

Penny had worked with abused children in the past as a nurse and as James said this, she visualised the child in a compromising situation saying those words to either avoid punishment or appease her antagonist. Penny's sensitivity was triggered and on hearing these words she simply burst into tears.

'We have both been through a very difficult time,' he told Penny. 'And I have learned more these past six months that I ever did during three years at university. I have learned all about abandonment at birth and childhood abuse, but I can't use my knowledge because I broke the rules. That's the irony of it all. It has nothing to do with anything you did or tried to do. It's my own conscience that says I can never again be a therapist. I have also learned that evil lurks behind the innocent, and that is something I need to know more about.'

They parted company as friends once again, of sorts.

By the time James came to meet Norman it had been over two months since he had seen or heard from Marianne. He had tried to do as Susan and Shirley had suggested, to let it go. They had both told him that he had done all he could do, but it was not enough for him to detach himself from his own folly, or to stop worrying about her and the children. His meeting with Norman was his first with someone he could confide in completely and let go of his own feelings. As he voiced his own disappointment at not being able to help Marianne, all his hidden emotions erupted at once, and just as before, when he had involuntarily expressed deep hurt in front of Penny, they roared to the surface and he broke. Between violent sobs of despair, he fought to get the words out, 'My love wasn't enough. My own healing abilities were not enough. My faith in the healing power of love was betrayed.'

Norman handed him a handkerchief and waited patiently for the flow of grief to subside, and said gently, 'You haven't failed. You have done your best and no one could have asked you for more.'

'But I broke the rules,' said James, racked with guilt. 'I was a therapist and I broke the rules. No one can forgive that.'

'In the realm of spiritual healing there are no rules,' said Norman. 'We are all guided, and this is part of your pathway. These are things you have had to learn – the hard way, as we all do. These things are beyond our meagre understanding, but there is a meaning to all of this, and one day, you and Marianne will be able to share the joy, in laughter, of your experience. I promise you.'

They were words of great comfort, but James could not understand or see any joyous outcome.

Norman promised to carry out a spirit release using his dowsing method and send him a report. As they parted company, James had no idea how events were to unfold, and although he had been able to release powerful emotional energy and free himself a little, he still had a long way to go to find all the answers he was looking for. This was one of the three avenues that would lead him in the right direction on what was to be a very long and arduous road. But it was a step in the right direction.

James was sitting in the book shop café, having a cup of coffee and reading when the friendly assistant came over to him. 'I would like you to meet somebody,' she said. 'I don't know why, but I think you two may have something to talk about. This is John. He attends the local Spiritualist Church.' She indicated a very large man standing beside her. He was over six-foot-tall, middle aged with a balding head and moustache. James shook him by the hand and invited him to sit down.

'Why do you think Jocelyn thinks we should have something to discuss?' asked James, although the news that he attended the Spiritualist Church may have been an indicator.

'I don't know,' replied John. 'Perhaps you could tell me what you do for starters.'

'I am', he began, but stopped himself. 'Sorry', he continued, 'I was a hypnotherapist and spiritual healer, but now I just drive trucks,' said James.

John looked at him with eyes that could see beyond the obvious, and asked, 'So why not now? Why don't you practise anymore?'

'I had a run in with a very difficult client. There's no need to tell the whole story, but as a result I just can't work as a healer any more. That's it. I just drive trucks. What do you do John?'

'Well, I work as a chef in one of the local hotels, but I do other things as well.'

'For example?'

'It may sound a bit strange, in fact it is very strange, but sometimes people come up to me and ask for help, just like that, on the street sometimes, out of the blue. At other times I get recommended.'

'To do what?'

'I tell them what's wrong with them, physically I mean. Don't get me wrong, I'm not a doctor or anything like that, in fact I've had no medical training at all, but when I tell someone what's wrong with them and they go to a doctor they find out that I was spot on. It's weird I know, but that's what happens.'

'You're not a healer then?' asked James.

'No, I don't treat them, I just tell them what's wrong and where to go for help.'

'That's really interesting.' Said James and the conversation paused as he took a sip of coffee. He remembered his manners and asked John if he wanted a cup.

'No thanks. I can't stop long, have to get back to the hotel.' John cocked his head to one side as if he were listening to someone talk to him over his shoulder, then he said, 'You have a problem, don't you?'

'No John, not me. Well not exactly. My problem is with someone else.' He was thinking of Marianne. John cocked his head again.

'Yes,' he said. 'I see. She does have a big problem, doesn't she?' Now James was intrigued.

'What do you see?'

'Serious problems. Emotional and behavioural. You did all you could do with the skills you have, but she needs something else.'

'What does she need?'

'Wait,' said John as he listened more closely. 'This is karma,' he continued. 'She is treading a path of karma. Karmic debt has to be repaid. There is nothing that can be done.'

James didn't know anything about karma or karmic debt and that's what he told John. They sat in silence for a few moments whilst James turned this over in his own mind. Something told him this was not right. His thinking was that a child is born into this world, in this life, and then has to suffer without having any memory of why, or any reason to suffer so much. He once again saw in his mind's eye a vision of Marianne standing in front of him with tears streaming down her face and saying, 'I don't want to be like this. Please help me.'

'I don't know anything about karma John, but what you are saying I cannot accept. If what you say is true, then there is no place in this world for healers and therapists or doctors. If what you say is true then we can do nothing to help our fellow human being, and I do NOT accept that. Not for one minute.'

John smiled and said, 'That's why people like you are brought in.'

'So, what can I do then.'

'Trust. She needs to learn to trust. Wait' John cocked his head again, then continued. 'She will learn it from a child.'

'Which child John? She has three girls. Which one will she learn from? The eldest?'

'No,' said John. 'Not from a girl. She will learn it from a boy child.'

'But she doesn't have a boy child.'

'Yes, she does. He isn't born yet, but he is coming to help her to learn how to trust.'

There was a pause from John, and James couldn't believe what he was hearing from this total stranger who listened to someone he couldn't see. John continued and looked straight at James as he said, 'You have done what you were supposed to do. You can do no more.'

James was dumbfounded. Was he actually being told that he had been used, guided, influenced by the world of Spirit to impregnate Marianne so that she could have a son whom she would learn trust from? This was too fantastic, but that is what the man in the bookshop cafe was saying.

Chapter 22

Three Perspectives

James had stopped working for the driver agency early in February and had gone full time for the parcel carrier to Birmingham. For five nights a week he drove exactly the same route at the same time, through the Dartford Tunnel and round the M25, up and down the M1 and M6. The regular run, with its monotony would have bored anyone half to death, but James's mind was constantly occupied with thoughts of Marianne and her mysteries. As the nights rolled by, and he slipped into highway hypnosis, he wandered the avenues of his mind, recalling incidents and trying to put them into perspective. And as the events in the bookshop, and through his meetings with Pauline, Shirley, Susan and Norman unfolded, he had more and more to ponder on. He began to realise that there were three distinct perspectives through which he explored. Firstly, his own experience and the emotions attached to them. Second was the clinical, psychological perspective, and thirdly the spiritual. These were the three roads to his final destination. To remove or ignore just one of those roads, or perspectives, was to make the journey incomplete and futile.

When he viewed his own personal experience, he became more disillusioned and felt guiltier at his own stupidity. This enabled him to appreciate the despair that others must feel when they are involved with someone with similar problems to Marianne's and he wondered how many families, how many wives, husbands, parents and children were being affected in the same way that he had been. He had an advantage in this respect – he had been set free by Marianne, but Arthur had not. Arthur was still trapped and still being punished by her. For him there was no escape all the time he had some kind of responsibility for his own children. James too had a responsibility for a child to be, but he was being prevented from exercising that responsibility. He wondered how the child would fare, being brought up by a mother who had been a witch in a past life and had karmic debts to repay and a cuckold father who lived his own hell. He knew, from experience with working with clients like Amanda Fernandez, and from research that he had read, that the emotions of the pregnant mother had a long-term effect on the unborn child. He would curse himself should it emerge that he had fathered a dysfunctional child, and this added to his condemnation of himself.

From the psychological perspective, James had learned an awful lot about the effects of abandonment at birth and childhood sexual abuse. But as a man with this knowledge he felt useless and impotent. He also realised, through painful experience, how dangerous it is to be confronted by such a person as Marianne. He had read that it is often the case that the abused becomes the abuser. He had no grounds to suspect that Marianne would abuse her own children, but she had certainly tried to abuse him. In fact, she had. Her dark side had cunningly seduced him and he had fallen in love with her good side, but to his own detriment. There are rules of ethical conduct applied to all branches of medicine and therapy, and he had broken these rules with disastrous consequences for himself. He decided that he would have to resign, officially, from his professional institute and warn others in his profession of the dangers of breaking these rules. But before he could do that he had to find a source of professional help for Marianne, as a sufferer of multiple personality disorder if she should ever decide to seek help.

On the spiritual front? Well, there was a lot more to investigate. Here is where the real mysteries lay. The incredible coincidences that led him to Shirley, Pauline and Susan could not be ignored. Neither could he ignore the messages he was being given. Those with pragmatic minds, using common sense, told him to let go and leave the experience behind him. But they didn't know the whole story. They didn't know that he was the one who was responsible for Marianne's pregnancy. If there was any one thing that prevented him from letting go, then that was it. He was responsible and he was bound by his own integrity. Then there was the astonishing revelation given to him by John in the book shop. If he could accept this then his own conscience would be cleared, but just how believable was it that he had been deliberately chosen to father a child in the process of spiritual healing? No one would ever accept that so, how could he? The one coincidence that bothered him most of all was the one when he, Pauline and Caroline came together to share

their experiences of what could be labelled 'evil'. He remembered his other experiences too. The ones when he woke from sheer terror at having his very soul threatened. The thought that he was under psychic attack, together with the idea that Marianne had been infected by a dark force entity before birth, and the information received from Susan that Marianne was still under psychic attack now, all generated an anger in him that had to be satisfied. Penny had been on the war path against him and Marianne. She knew her target and she threw everything she could at that target. But he had a target he couldn't see or touch. How was he to vent his own wrath on this unseen and potentially deadly adversary? He was determined to find out. He embarked upon two separate courses of action. First, he would openly challenge the force that attacked him at night, and secondly, he would research all he could about the concept of evil.

Over the following weeks and months James discovered all he could about the treatment for multiple personality, and he became a member of a key organisation that researched and treated the condition. He learned that it is now called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) for short. It was an organisation that trained psychoanalysts in the diagnosis and treatment of the condition and although he wasn't qualified to train with them, he was accepted as a member and had access to their material. James compiled a large folder of information and presented it, by hand, to Marianne's adoptive father Kenneth in the hope that he would read it and use its advice should Marianne ever ask for help. Kenneth's response was cool and not very encouraging, and James got the distinct impression that Ken was either a complete fool or very much afraid of something. He concluded that he and his wife Jean also needed help, but on that front, he knew he had done all he could do.

Each time James settled down to sleep he would send a mental message to the dark force that had terrified him during sleep time. *Come on you sonofabitch*, he would think. *Come now and let's see what you can do*. On several occasions James actually felt the cloying, suffocating un-holiness surround him, and each time he did, his own fear diminished, and he soon realised that the only thing this entity could do was to frighten him. *This was the key*, thought James. *The sonofabitch feeds on fear. Without fear there is nothing this force can do*. He had cracked it. He was never troubled again.

Now it was time to investigate what others thought about evil, and James busied himself with research and reading into this topic. He compiled a file of what he had discovered and examined it. He found that the academics and scientists all had rational explanations for human evil, all based on known psychological concepts such as revenge and hurt, and the need for retribution. None of them however even considered that there could possibly be an outside force. None of them considered the possibility of concepts such as the power of good or the power of evil as something that existed outside of the human physical and psychological realms.

But there were others who, from their own clinical experience had something to say, and he studied their works avidly and with relish. There were doctors and psychiatrists who know the truth and he was getting to know them and their works very, very well indeed.

'People of the Lie'

by M. Scott-Peck (1990)

Evil – the exercise of power, that is the imposition of one's will upon others by overt or covert coercion in order to avoid spiritual growth. (Peck, 'The Road Less Travelled'. pp.279)

Characteristics

A consistent, destructive, scapegoating behaviour, which may often be quite subtle.

Excessive, albeit usually covert, intolerance to criticism and other forms of narcissistic injury.

Pronounced concern for a public image and self-image of respectability.

Intellectual deviousness, with an increased likelihood of a mild schizophrenic disturbance of thinking at times of stress.

The desire to confuse.

To toy with and seduce.

To exercise power

No recognition of any authority higher than one's self.

Living and working to one's own rules.

The seven deadly sins. Pride, avarice/greed, envy, wrath/anger, lust, gluttony, sloth.

Projection. Since those who are evil, deep down, feel themselves to be faultless, it is inevitable that when they are in conflict with the world they will invariably perceive the conflict as the world's fault. Since they deny their own badness they must perceive others as bad. They project their own evil onto the world. They never think of themselves as evil; on the other hand, they see much evil in others.

The evils attack others instead of facing their own failures. Spiritual growth requires the acknowledgement of one's need to grow. If we cannot make that acknowledgement, we have no option except to attempt to eradicate the evidence of our imperfection.

Whilst they lack any motivation to be good, they intensely desire to appear good. Their goodness is on a level of pretence. It is in effect a lie. This is why they are the 'people of the lie'.

Actually, the lie is designed not so much to deceive others but to deceive themselves. They cannot or will not tolerate the pain of self-reproach.

There is no need to hide unless we first feel that something needs to be hidden.

The essential component of evil is not the absence of a sense of sin but the unwillingness to tolerate that sense.

We become evil by attempting to hide from ourselves. The wickedness of the evil is not committed directly, but indirectly as part of the cover up process. Evil originates not in the absence of guilt but in the effort to escape it.

'We see the smile that hides the hatred, the smooth and oily manner that masks the fury, the velvet glove that covers the fist. Because they are such experts at disguise it is seldom possible to pinpoint the maliciousness of the evil. The disguise is usually impenetrable. But what we can catch are glimpses of the uncanny game of hide and seek in the obscurity of the soul, in which it, the single human soul, evades itself, avoids itself, hides from itself'. (Buber, 'Good and Evil' p 111.)

The feeling that a healthy person often experiences in a relationship with an evil person is revulsion. This feeling of revulsion may be almost instant if the evil encountered is blatant. If the evil is more subtle, the revulsion may develop only gradually as the relationship with the evil one slowly deepens.

Because of the intense negativity of the reaction (revulsion) there is a profound tendency for psychotherapists to avoid sustaining relationships with evil clients. pp.72-73.

It is natural and wise that under ordinary circumstances we should steer clear of the viper's den. Yet it is also proper that the scientist should approach that very same place in order to learn, to obtain venom for the development of an antitoxin that will serve to protect human kind, and perhaps even to assist the serpent in its evolution. Serpents can grow wings to become dragons, and dragons can be tamed to become simultaneously fierce and gentle servants of God. If we can see the evil as ill and pitiable – albeit still dangerous – and if we know what we are doing, it is appropriate that we should transform our revulsion into careful compassion so as to approach them in healing.

We literally feel overwhelmed by the labyrinthine mass of lies and twisted motives and distorted communication into which we will be drawn if we attempt to work with such people in the intimate relationship of psychotherapy. We feel, usually quite accurately, that not only will we fail in our attempts to pull them out of the morass of their sickness but that we may also be pulled down into it ourselves. We are too weak to help such patients – too blind to see an end to the twisted corridors into which we will be led, too small to maintain our love in the face of their hatred.

The only reason that it can be done at all is that a therapist who is in a position of such strength will know that while the evil people are still to be feared, they are also to be pitied. Forever fleeing the light of self-exposure and the voice of their own conscience, they are the most frightened of human beings. They live their lives in sheer terror. They need not be consigned to any hell; they are already in it.

So, the methodology of our assault – scientific and otherwise – on evil must be love. This is so simple sounding that one is compelled to wonder why it is not a more obvious truth. The fact is, simple sounding though it may be, the methodology of love is so difficult in practice that we shy away from its usage. At first glance it even appears impossible. How is it possible to love people who are evil? Yet that is precisely what I am saying we must do. Specifically, if we are to safely conduct research on evil people, we must do so in love. We must start from a priori position of love for them. pp.306-307.

God does not punish us; we punish ourselves. Those who are in hell are there by their own choice. Indeed, they could walk right out of it if they so choose, except that their values are such as to make the path out of hell appear overwhelmingly dangerous, frighteningly painful and impossibly difficult. So, they remain in hell because it seems safe and easy to them. They prefer it that way. (C.S. Lewis. *The Great Divorce*).

Evil people may be defined by the consistency of their sins. Whilst usually subtle, their destructiveness is remarkably consistent. This is because those who have ‘crossed over the line’ are characterised by their absolute refusal to tolerate the sense of their own sinfulness.

‘There can be a state of soul against which Love itself is powerless because it has hardened itself against Love. Hell is essentially a state of being which we fashion for ourselves: a state of final separateness from God which is the result not of God’s repudiation of man, but of man’s repudiation of God, and a repudiation which is eternal precisely because it has become immovable.

There are analogies in human experience: the hate which is so blind, so dark, that Love only makes it the more violent; the pride which is so stony that humility only makes it more scornful; the inertia which has so taken possession of the personality that no crisis, no appeal, no inducement whatsoever, can stir it into activity, but on the contrary makes it bury itself the more deeply in its immobility. So, with the soul and God; pride can become hardened into hell, hatred can become hardened into hell, any of the seven root forms of sin can harden into hell, and not least that sloth which is boredom with divine things, the inertia that cannot be troubled to respond, even though it sees the abyss into which the soul is falling. because for so long, in little ways perhaps, it has accustomed itself to refuse whatever might cost it an effort. May God in his mercy save us from that’. (Gerald Vann, *The Pain of Christ and the Sorrow of God*, 1947, Springfield, Illinois: Aquin Press, pp.54-55.)

On Self Value

‘.... we need a sense of our own social significance. Nothing can give us more pleasure than the sense that we are wanted and useful. Conversely, nothing is more productive of despair than a sense that we are useless and unwanted. (pp.268)

The Individual Under Stress (Regression and anaesthetising)

‘In a situation of prolonged discomfort, we humans naturally, almost inevitably, tend to regress. Our psychological growth reverses itself; our maturity is forsaken. Quite rapidly we become more childish, more primitive’. (pp.252).

‘In a situation in which our emotional feelings are overwhelmingly painful or unpleasant, we have the capacity to anaesthetise ourselves, We simply tune it out. Our capacity for horror becomes blunted. We no longer feel its agony. Unconsciously we have become anaesthetised.

This capacity for emotional self-anaesthesia obviously has its advantages. Undoubtedly it has been built into us through evolution and enhances our ability to survive. It allows us to continue to function in situations so ghastly we would fall apart if we preserved our normal sensitivity. The problem however is that this self-anaesthetising mechanism seems not to be very specific. If because we live in the midst of garbage our sensitivity to ugliness becomes diminished, it is likely that we will become litterers and garbage strewers ourselves. Insensitive to our own suffering, we tend to become insensitive to the suffering of others. Treated with indignity, we lose not only the sense of our own dignity but also the sense of the dignity of others’. (pp.253-254)

‘Stress is the test of goodness. The truly good are those who in times of stress do not desert their integrity, their maturity, their sensitivity. Nobility may be defined as the capacity not to regress in

response to degradation, not to become blunted in the face of pain, to tolerate the agonising and remain intact. perhaps the best measure of a person's greatness is their capacity for suffering'. (pp.255.)

Charlene – A Teaching Case

'I have noticed how difficult it is to examine evil people in depth, because it is their nature to avoid the light. Denying their imperfection, the evil flee both self-examination and any situation in which they might be closely examined by others.' (pp.170).

'...depression following a break-up with her boyfriend. Her depression did not seem severe. She was petite and rather attractive but not a remarkable beauty. She had a capacity for humour and obvious high intelligence. Clearly however she was an underachiever in the game of life'. (pp.171). 'Their mother was unabashed in her hatred of her husband'.

Charlene considered herself bi-sexual.

Charlene had no compunction about blaming her parents. 'They really fucked up.' (pp.172).

But lots of people have wicked parents.

'I just didn't feel like telling you. Maybe I didn't trust you enough.'

'But you were lying'.

'Of course,'.

'I'm certainly not going to tell you anything until I think you are ready to know it'.

'...no other reason than to keep control of the show'.

'...her intense desire for me'.

'It is natural for a patient in response to consistent attentiveness to romantically desire the therapist when he or she is the opposite sex. This is especially the case when the patient never succeeded, during childhood, in overcoming the Oedipal Dilemma.

All healthy children experience sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex. This desire usually reaches its peak around the age of four or five and is referred to as the Oedipal Dilemma. It places the child in a dreadful predicament. The romantic love of the child for the parent is a hopeless love. The child will say to its parent, 'I know you tell me I can't have sex with you because I'm a child, but just look at how grown up I am acting and you will change your mind'. This grown up act requires enormous energy, however, and ultimately cannot be sustained by the child. It becomes exhausted. Resolution of the dilemma finally occurs when the exhausted child accepts the reality that it is a child and cannot – and no longer desires to – pull off the appearance of adulthood. In so doing, the child also realises it cannot have its cake and eat it too; it cannot both sexually possess its parent and at the same time be a child. It therefore opts for the advantages of being a child and renounces its premature sexuality.

In psychotherapy the patient who failed to resolve the Oedipal Dilemma during childhood must essentially undergo the same process in relation to the therapist during adulthood. He or she must learn to give up the therapist as a romantic sexual love object and settle for being the therapist's child on a symbolic level'.

'When an attractive woman patient desires me, my usual problem is not to respond in kind. I will have my own sexual feelings and fantasies for her and must make sure these in no way interfere with my judgement and commitment to the therapeutic role. Certainly, I have no difficulty in feeling warmly towards patients who warmly entrust their love to me.

Yet with Charlene it was another matter. I had no positive sexual fantasies about her. To the contrary, the thought of a sexual relationship with her made me actually nauseated. Even the notion of non-sexually just touching her gave me a faintly queasy feeling. And it didn't get better. The more time passed, the more my gut desire was to keep a distance from her.' (pp.176).

'.... 'We exist for the glory of God'. Charlene said in a flat, low monotone, as if she were sullenly repeating an alien catechism, learned by rote and extracted from her at gunpoint. 'The purpose of our life is to glorify God'.

There was a short silence. For a brief moment I thought she might cry – the one time in our work together. 'I cannot do it. There's no room for me in that. That would be my death,' she said in a

quavering voice. Then with a suddenness that frightened me, what seemed to be her choked back sobs turned into a roar. 'I don't want to live for God. I will not. I want to live for me. My own sake!'

'She had no enthusiasm whatsoever for spring or autumn days of sunshine or for the loveliest of sunsets. Only one type of weather pleased her dullest grey days. Mud slurped earth, filthy patches of decaying snow.'

'You go around creating chaos and confusion why?

'Because it's fun'.

It's fun to confuse you. It gives me a sense of power.'

Does it bother you that you're having this fun at the expense of other people?

No. Maybe it would if I seriously hurt somebody but I don't'. (pp.198).

'Her thirst for power was unsubordinated to anything higher than itself'. (pp.201).

'...utterly unable to be creative'. (pp.202).

On Possession and Exorcism

The vast majority of cases described in the literature are those of possession by minor demons. (pp.209)

Genuine possession, as far as we know, is very rare. Human evil, on the other hand, is common. The relationship between possession and ordinary evil is obscure at best. (pp.209).

Conversion to a belief in God generally requires some kind of actual encounter – a personal experience – with the living God. Conversion to a belief in Satan is no different. (pp.210).

I am equally certain that clergy and psychotherapists and human service institutions are seeing such cases, whether they know it or not. (pp.210).

Moreover, obscure though it might be, I do believe there is some relationship between Satanic activity and human evil. (pp.211).

All psychotherapy is a kind of exorcism. good psychotherapy does in fact combat lies.

The differences between psychoanalytic psychotherapy and exorcism fall into two categories: conceptual frames of reference and the use of power. (pp.211).

Traditional psychotherapy deliberately makes little or no use whatsoever of power. It is conducted in an atmosphere of total freedom. the therapist has no weapons with which to push for change beyond the persuasive power of his or her own wits, understanding and love.

Exorcism is another matter. here the healer calls upon every power that is legitimately, lovingly available in the battle against the patient's sickness.

Finally – and most important – the exorcist, through power and ritual, invokes the power of God in the healing process. (pp.212).

What prevents exorcism from being true rape is that the individual consents to the procedure. (pp.214).

The greatest safeguard is Love. ... it is only Love that can heal. (pp.215).

Exorcism is psychotherapy by massive assault. (pp.215)

The whole purpose of exorcism is to uncover and isolate the demonic with the patient so that it can then be expelled. (pp.215).

The one who looked more sane had the deeper possession and the more ghastly struggle for healing.

Possession appears to be a gradual process in which the possessed person repeatedly sells out for one reason or another. The primary reason both these patients sold out seemed to be loneliness.

In one patient the process began at the age of twelve and in the other at the age of five.

Fixation at the age of onset. 'I haven't learned anything these past twenty years. I'm really only twelve years old'.

...had to deal with all manner of five-year-old fears, misconceptions, issues and transferences.

Both were victims of human evil

Usually the biggest step in the healing process occurs when the client first decides to see a therapist.

On diagnosis:

Multiple manifestations of mental illness such as depression or hysteria or loosening of associations.

There has to be a significant emotional problem for the possession to occur in the first place. Then the possession itself will both enhance that problem and create new ones. (pp.219).

Unusually spiritually oriented

In each case the diagnosis was made not on the basis of a single finding but on a whole conglomeration and pattern of many findings over time.

In both cases the major distinction in differential diagnosis was between multiple personality disorder and possession. (pp.220).

In multiple personality disorder the 'core personality' is virtually unaware of the existence of the secondary personalities. In other words, true dissociation exists. In these two cases however, both patients were aware of the self-destructive part of themselves and that this part had a distinct and alien personality. (pp.220).

The secondary personality had a desire to confuse them. The secondary personality seemed like a personified resistance.

The second differentiation is that while in multiple personality disorder the secondary personality may play the role of the 'whore' or 'the aggressive one' or the 'independent one', it has never been reported as being frankly evil.

A crucial part in this diagnostic uncovering process was an attempted deliverance. ...an utterly evil personal temporarily emerged. (pp.221).

...although both patients demonstrated blatantly evil secondary personalities, they were not evil people. They did not feel evil to me. (pp.222).

potential holiness

the demonic hides within and behind the person.

...the demon itself seemed to have a marked ability to draw the exorcist into confusing conversation that went nowhere. (pp.223).

...secondary personality took on inhuman features and the Pretence was broken. (pp.224).

Even God cannot heal a person who does not want to be healed. At the moment of expulsion both these patients voluntarily took the crucifix, held it to their chests and prayed for deliverance. Both chose that moment to cast their lots with God. Ultimately it is the patient who is the exorcist. (pp.225).

Satan does not easily let go. After its expulsion it seems to hang around desperately trying to get back in. (pp.226).

'Before, it was like I was a little embryo, totally surrounded and hidden by them so that I couldn't be me. Now I am me, and while I still hear the voices, they are coming from outside of me'.

The other said, 'Before, the voices were in control of me. Now I am in control of them'. (pp.227).

I had a sense in both exorcisms that our weaknesses and mistakes were being used as well.

Christ can use our sins. (pp.228).

'Possession & Exorcism'

by Hans Naegeli-Osjord (1988)

Chapter 5. The Demonic (Evil)

'As early as Goethe's time the quantitative aroused the greater, almost exclusive fascination. Natural sciences, by seeking exactitude and objectivity as much as possible, denied the necessary attention to the qualitative, which cannot be precisely measured.

Through natural philosophy he [Faust] gains access to the magical, which provides extraordinary experiential content. Only the knowledge gained within these and other personal experiences gains Faust redemption. ...Thus, ultimate knowledge is gained only through a complete vision. Judging only part of a phenomenon and part of reality, i.e. only the material aspect, inevitably results in only a partial description.

Therefore, a true seeker cannot ignore the demonic or even go so far as to deny it. Jesus Christ was far removed from such an attitude. Opposite the positive Divine stands the demonic as an archaic power. Both together constitute the Divine whole'. (pp.24-25)

Manifestations of the Demonic

'The demonic, often caused by ethereal beings, should not be ignored just because it is rooted in multi-dimensional space. These dimensions – as stated before – are coming increasingly into the focus of natural science, although the qualitative aspects of the phenomenon of possession belong to the domain of natural philosophy. The demonic, in philosophical and psychological understanding, represents a reality as an archetypal principal and thus must manifest itself in a world of activities which must be experienced. It seems to me that personal experience is indispensable in order to contemplate the possibility of possession as the alternative explanation for tension within the psyche. (pp.27).

Expanded Thinking Needed

In the Western civilised world, the majority of educated as well as uneducated people deny the existence of an ethereal world, since it supposedly contradicts modern 'knowledge'. However, this so-called knowledge is – to emphasise it again – a belief, which corresponds with dogmas of scientific authorities, accepted unconditionally. How differently C.G. Jung expressed himself! He used to say, 'I do not believe in God [i.e. an immaterial form of being in the cosmos, (N.)], I know that He is'. Jung arrived at his knowledge not only through mediumistic inner experiences, but many areas of the liberal arts.

Let us examine the thinking of many psychologists and psychiatrists in relation to Jung's way of looking at the world. As an experienced practitioner, I can not help but judge the results of many psychological-analytical as well as psychiatric-chemotherapeutic methods of treatment as unsatisfactory, although I do not doubt they are sincere attempts to relieve the lot of the psychically ill person. However, they had to align themselves with the demands for exclusive rationalistic-materialistic thinking, which will never do justice to the complexity of the human soul. Nevertheless, it is this thinking which is predominant in almost all university psychiatric clinics. It is known that successful scientists who have 'arrived' and are recognised in their own time, frequently reject new and pioneering impulses. Pioneering work almost always comes from academic outsiders. Not only do Freud, Jung, and Szondy come to mind, but also chiropractors and, acupuncturists, whose early work was rejected by prominent scientists. Younger scientists striving for academic achievement usually learn to adjust to opinions of teachers and colleagues if they don't want to be side-tracked as a nuisance. This inhibits the ambition of the researcher and does not provide room for him to spread his mental wings, leading to conscious and unconscious adjustment to the predominant views of the times'(pp.28).

The Religious Aspect of the Human Soul

'Removal of hatred only happens when a kind psychotherapist attempts to evoke a loving understanding for the often only allegedly guilty persons. Hate can only be removed through love!

Only prayer – which could be called a small 'unio mystica' – tears it [the soul] from the meaningless chance events of today's typical concept of the world. Reconnecting with the divine

links the soul with the positive archetypes, which, as mentioned before, are more powerful than the demonic.’ (pp.29).

‘Demonic possession reveals an illness of the soul. I consider the genetic and external causes diagnosed by psychologists merely to be an opportunity for destructive transcendental forces to enter. Generally, this leads only to less spectacular neuroses, but these too can only be definitely healed when the psyche is reconnected – *religio* – to its cosmic and religious origins.

The statement by C.G. Jung may be appropriate here: ‘The ideas or moral laws and deity are a constant in the human soul which can not be exterminated. Therefore, every psychologist who is not dazzled by narrow-minded, arrogant interpretations, must deal with these facts’. (pp.30).

General Observations Concerning Possession

‘What would be the clinical-psychological definition of such states of possession? They would be termed ‘affective psychosis’ in cases where the patient is subject to attacks of domination by a very negative part of his personality, in psychological parlance, usually called a split personality.

Demonic expression is expressed in word and deed, and occasionally in paranormal events: in the form of words, through blaspheming and obscene insults of persons present; in deeds, through destructive fury towards sacred objects and all kinds of utensils, and often through self-destructive acts. The possessed person beats his head against the wall, for example, and frequently inflicts painful cuts on himself.

During periods when the possessed person is free from attacks his behaviour is normal. An almost symptom-free condition during a period when the possessed person is free from attacks offers one of the best characteristics distinguishing possession from dementia praecox. The schizophrenic can behave very normally in everyday matters, in bathing, eating, even in games of chess or bowling; but when spoken to about personal matters, he always reacts the same ... in terms of his delusions, fears and aggressions. The possessed person, however, is not subject to any abnormal delusions during attack-free periods and has an almost balanced psyche’. (pp.31-32).

‘The conceptual distinction between schizophrenia and possession is extremely difficult. Possibly there are no basic differences.

There may be a possibility here of distinguishing between these manifestations On his own, he [the schizophrenic] rarely seeks help from his associates and is referred for treatment by his relatives. But the person considered to be possessed struggles for liberation during the periods when he has few symptoms and is free of attacks. If religiously oriented he turns more readily to persons in the priesthood, feeling that the problem has psychic aspects rather than medical. He is not a social isolate, and even during the attacks he emphatically interacts with others. This distinguishes him from the hysteric who, although extremely autosuggestible, rarely interacts with others because of his own egocentricity. The hysteric also retains a clear recollection of his attacks, whereas the possessed person is usually subject to total amnesia.

If a person has shown abnormal symptoms and strange behaviour such as autism (wilfulness and very little contact with parents and peers), such a person would likely be diagnosed as schizophrenic. Impoverishment of the outer personality leads to inflation of the inner personality, resulting in inconsistency of behaviour and lack of control over will and emotions.

Cases of possession become obvious in a crisis, a state of excitation during which the victim’s ability to make decisions remains blocked, and the possessing entities have complete control. ... the crisis usually, but not always, ends in a kind of exhaustion.’ (pp.33-34).

On the Causes of Possession

‘...if a person is burdened to an excessive exceptional extent with negative characteristics, an entryway is formed for demonic spirit beings which simply find an appropriate home for him or her.’ (pp.35).

‘... but keep in mind the efficacy of the letter and the spoken word as transmitter of the essence of Being.’ (pp.36).

Psychic Prerequisites

‘We know that mediumistic sensitivity plays an important role in cases of invasion by spirit beings.

...mediumistic activity creates particularly intense bio-electrical radiation around the head, similar to a halo, that irresistibly attracts spirit beings. Since an ability as a medium is more frequently expressed among women and primitive peoples, instances of possession are far more frequent in those cases. Among males and intellectualised peoples, the perceptual function is suppressed by critical thinking. Hence women and children are far more in danger of possession.

Melancholic and phlegmatic temperaments, as passive natures, are most frequently affected. They are more inclined towards weakness of the ego and suggestibility. States of psychic and physical exhaustion likewise facilitate spirit seizure.’ (pp.36-37).

The Nature of Possession

‘The demonic can only be active to the extent permitted by the divine. Nowhere do we experience more impressively than in exorcism that the demonic must yield if the positive divine forces desire it.

There is no more sublime occasion for showing the faithful the strength and mercy of God and the victory of good over evil than a successful exorcism in the church.

... to a large extent possession is a religious problem and, because of the rationalistic world view of many psychiatrists and counsellors, cannot be as readily understood by them’. (pp.37).

Characteristic Signs of Possession

‘Physical strength that exceeds comprehension.
Aversion against anything to do with the divine.
Troubled sleep, constant restlessness.’ (pp.39).

On Harassment and Multiple Personality Disorders

‘Drastic, abrupt changes in personality are frequently encountered among patients receiving psychotherapy or psychiatric care. The behaviour patterns of these patients change so abruptly that many mental health professionals now use the term multiple personality disorder (MPD) to describe this phenomenon. Clinical case records often reveal histories of repressed anxieties, fears and hostilities which can be traced back to traumatic experiences, such as physical and sexual abuse and molestation, buried in the subconscious. From this it is hypothesised that one or more distinct, alternate personalities have been created by the patients to cope with their traumatic experiences.

---this phenomenon should not be viewed exclusively as possession or multiple personality, but that some cases may be a result of dissociated personalities, while others are more likely to be cases of harassment by the spirit of a deceased person.

...both multiple personality and harassment should be considered when viewing the entire range of such disorders. My own clinical experience has also caused me to conclude that the role of external entities should be considered. I know that the trauma of abuse and other shocking experiences results in scars on the psyche which are generally suppressed and emerge later in unusual disturbed behaviour. In cases of weakened ego and / or extreme stress, external entities may invade or harass the person to the point where counselling or treatment is indicated to enable the patient to return to a normal state. Unfortunately, those clinicians who cannot conceive of a post-mortem existence, limit their diagnoses of such abnormal behaviour.’ (pp.135).

These notes, when compared in relationship with Marianne's behaviour, sent shivers up and down James's spine and he *knew*. There was no shortage of evidence, supported by the knowledge of experienced clinicians, that a part of Marianne was evil, or had evil entities influencing her behaviour. His next step was to find someone who could tell the difference between multiple personality disorder and possession.

Someone he could learn from.

Chapter 23

The Path from the Bookshop

James was buying another book. This one was on the healing art of Reiki. He was exploring all avenues that would help him understand the spiritual healing arts, and Reiki was the one that Pauline's friend Caroline had used with her son. 'That's a good one,' said Jocelyn, the friendly book shop assistant. 'I have read it myself and it is highly recommended.'

'Thank you,' said James, and handed it over for payment. As he paid her and she put the book in a bag, she said, quite out of the blue, 'You can help me.'

'I can?' asked James. 'How?'

'I've seen the books you read and I have this feeling..... Tell me what you do.'

Jocelyn was perceptive. She had introduced him to John on an impulse that she herself couldn't explain, and she had recommended that he read *Sybil*, again on an impulse. She herself had studied Reiki and aromatherapy, and she recognised in James a kind of kindred spirit. It was no good telling Jocelyn that he just drove trucks, so he told her what she wanted to know.

'I'm a hypnotherapist.'

'I knew it. I just knew it. You can help me.'

The shop was quiet and James, in hushed tones, asked her how she thought he could help her.

'I have this anger and I don't know why. It's there all the time, just beneath the surface, but sometimes it grips me and I can't function properly. What do you think?'

Alarm bells triggered, and James wondered if, under his recent circumstances, he should take her on.

'But I have to tell you that I don't practise any more. I had an unsettling experience with a client about six months ago and I have been resting and'

Jocelyn interrupted him, 'And reading a lot. I know. When you first came into the shop I could tell there was something wrong. You didn't look well and I could see you were troubled. But now you look much better. Have you found the answers you were looking for?'

'Partly,' said James. 'I have learned a lot and now I understand much more than I did, but' She interrupted again, 'It's all about fear and anger isn't it?'

'How did you know that?'

'I don't know, but I just know. I am right, aren't I?'

'Yes.'

'Then you can help me. OK, so you're not in practise at the moment, but I just know that you are the one who can help me. Will you?'

What could he say, take a running jump? No, of course not. The red rag was being held up in front of the bull, and all the coincidences that had been triggered from this shop could not be ignored. He agreed to go to Jocelyn's home and see if he could help her. He was also very much on his guard.

At the appointed time James arrived at Jocelyn's home. She owned the house and rented out her spare rooms to a couple of single lodgers. Jocelyn was in her late thirties and attractive with striking jet-black hair that she wore pulled back into a long plat that hung down her back. The room that she invited him into was a comfortable sitting room with a couple of sofas and an arm chair, at the back of the ground floor and leading to the kitchen. She put the kettle on and he made himself comfortable in the arm chair.

She brought the tea in and they chatted a little about her experience of Reiki and such like. Then the subject of her mysterious anger came up. 'I'm quite strong and resourceful,' said Jocelyn, 'and I have used my own skills to try to clear what it is that is causing this anger and I just can't get to it. I know, and don't ask me how I know, but I do, that you know a lot about fear and anger. You do, don't you?'

‘I have treated a few cases with success, but I had this one that I couldn’t solve. There was something preventing me. Lack of knowledge was one thing’

‘But now you have the knowledge,’ Jocelyn interjected.

‘I’m not so sure that I do. All right, so I have more answers than I did, but I don’t want you to run away with the idea that I have all the answers. I don’t, but what I can do is use the knowledge I have, and I can’t make any promises.’

‘OK,’ said Jocelyn. ‘What do you suggest then?’

James asked her to fetch a straight-backed chair. He always preferred this kind of chair to start with, and it gave him access to the back of the neck should he need it. Once she was seated, he adopted the same attitude that he had always adopted with a new client in the clinic consulting room.

Quite often, it was the case that James didn’t have any outright plan for seeking the cause of a problem, and on these occasions, he simply responded to his own intuition. He spontaneously got out of his own chair, stood behind Jocelyn and put his hand behind her neck. Then he said to her, ‘Emotion is energy, and any unwanted emotional energy is held somewhere in the body. Just relax and tell me where you feel this energy.’ Immediately Jocelyn detected something in the pit of her stomach. James said, ‘Now focus on it and tell me what you are feeling.’

Jocelyn began to hold her midriff and bend forward in the chair. ‘It’s getting stronger, and it’s hurting.’

‘Now tell me what you are feeling emotionally.’

Suddenly Jocelyn started to cry. She had gone back to a childhood experience when she was being scolded by her father for being naughty. She was about four years old, and very upset and angry.

‘It wasn’t my fault,’ she cried between sobs.

Details of the event were relived and re-experienced, and James asked the unconscious if there was anything else that needed attending to. There wasn’t, so he brought her back to normal waking consciousness. This technique is known as the ‘affect bridge’ and is used by hypnotists to take a person into trance by linking the physical effects of an emotion to its origin in time.

Jocelyn was amazed at the reality of the experience, ‘I was actually there. I was about four years old and I was there. I can’t believe it. I never had that memory before, but it was so real.’

‘Well now we know what caused the anxiety. You have an unconscious fear of doing something wrong or being blamed for something you didn’t do. All we have to do is take you back to that event and reframe it so it doesn’t have power any more. One more thing though, it seems you were very angry at being wrongly blamed.’

‘Yes,’ said Jocelyn. ‘I didn’t tell you about that, the anger I mean. Sometimes I get so angry for no apparent reason, and quite often when I try to meditate, it really gets hold of me, especially when there are other people present. It can be very embarrassing because sometimes I do this.’ Jocelyn made a fist with her right hand and with the forefinger straightened she drew it across her neck in a gesture of cutting her throat. ‘This is the part that really bothers me, especially when others are present. I can’t explain it.’

‘As far as your own subconscious is concerned, the only thing that it is aware of is the incident when you were four years old. So, we’ll deal with that one first, then we’ll see if we can find out about this other anger. Is that all right with you?’

‘Yes, all right then. What do you want me to do?’

‘Go back into trance and we’ll reframe the experience.’

‘Can I change my seat? I’d like to be more comfortable.’ Jocelyn moved towards one of the sofas without waiting for an answer and sat down with her legs folded underneath her in the lotus position. She closed her eyes and James began a traditional trance induction. Before he had a chance to verify that she had gone into trance she opened her eyes and glared at him. He was about to ask her why she had opened her eyes when a shiver ran down his spine and the hairs on the back of his neck stood on end. He felt the rush of adrenaline and was immediately reminded of the incident with Marianne when she had tried to hide in the cupboard and had threatened to kill him.

As he looked at Jocelyn, she sat bolt upright so that her back was ramrod straight and placed her hands on her knees. She looked at him with the utmost contempt and there was hatred in her eyes. James knew two things at once. Firstly, this was not Jocelyn looking at him, and secondly, this was confirmation that the persona that he had been threatened by had not been Marianne.

‘And who might you be?’ asked James.

‘Who are you to ask me who I am?’ said an angry man’s voice coming from Jocelyn’s mouth. Her face grimaced as he spoke.

‘I am here to help Jocelyn,’ replied James. ‘Why are you here?’

‘I am her protector, *white man*.’ He *spat* the words ‘white man’ with venom and a very ugly sneer.

‘And do you have a name?’

‘Who are you to *dare* ask me my name?’

‘I am here to help. Can I help you. You are here for a reason, what is it?’

He drew his finger across his throat in the same manner that Jocelyn had shown James, and spat the words, ‘To kill the white man.’

‘But not all white men are bad. Why do you want to kill them?’

‘BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU DID TO MY PEOPLE,’ shouted the Indian.

James began to get a little nervous as he envisaged Jocelyn flying out of her seat to attack him. ‘What happened to your people was a long time ago. This is the year 2001, and you no longer belong here. Why did you not go to your happy hunting ground?’

‘There is no such place. There is only here. There is only HATE and I must kill the white men.’

‘I can understand why you are angry.....’

‘ANGRY. You don’t know what angry is. I HATE all the white men. I will kill them all.’

James wasn’t sure where to go from here. In Marianne’s case he said the prayer of exorcism in the hope that it might work. He was still in the dark when it came to these matters and groped for a solution. He adopted a compassionate tone and said, ‘I want you to know that I can understand why you feel the way you do and I sympathise with all your people. I want to help you if I can. Why don’t you tell me your name?’

‘I am ANGRY.’

‘I know you are, but what should I call you?’

‘You may call me the Angry One.’

‘OK. I will call you the Angry One if that is what you wish. I would like to discuss many things with you. May we speak again?’

‘As you like.’

‘Thank you for coming to speak with me this time. You may rest now. I would like to speak with Jocelyn please.’

The Indian left, and Jocelyn became herself once again. They discussed the implications and theories as to why Jocelyn had been the medium for the Indian. She had the notion that she and the Indian were linked in some way, possibly that he was one of her former selves. James made the link with her anger as a child and suggested that this may have attracted him as an earthbound soul. *Like attracts like in terms of spiritual energy*, James thought. She had an obvious sympathy for the North American Indians and their suffering, and that could have been another explanation. Perhaps she and the Indian were kindred spirits. Again, *like attracts like*. James didn’t know enough and all they discussed was pure conjecture. He needed to know more and looked forward to his next meeting with the Indian.

James had taken a giant stride forward on his path from the book shop towards the main highway of his learning.

James had set himself the task of finding someone who could tell the difference between multiple personality and possession, and once again, providence came to the rescue. He didn’t have to consciously sit and say a prayer to ask for something. Whatever it was that he needed was coming to him. It just took a little time.

Norman had carried out a dowsing on James and Marianne and sent him a copy of his written notes. Two things got in the way of his appreciation of what Norman had done. Firstly, the report was hand written and James couldn’t make out many of the words, and because they were in note form they were disjointed. Secondly, he had no real understanding of the principles involved. There was a third reason that James was completely unaware of at that time. He wasn’t supposed to understand it. He had to learn for himself, by his

own experience. He was being led to the main highway where all three roads converged and where he would be the carrier of the earthbound spirit of Running Bear.

However, what Norman did do was introduce James to the organisation that he and other spirit release practitioners belonged to. James contacted the secretary and asked the question, 'How do you tell the difference between multiple personality and possession?'

'With great difficulty,' said the secretary. 'You have to have special training and lots of experience.'

'Is there someone I could talk to about this then?' asked James. The secretary suggested he contact the founder of the organisation who was an expert in these matters and, within a couple of weeks, James came face to face with the man who would be the key to answering all he needed to know.

Doctor Richard Templeton was a tall elegant man in his seventh decade, who had spent his entire professional career as a National Health Service psychiatrist. He had reached the peak of his profession as a consultant psychiatrist when he discovered that as many as ninety percent of his patients were possessed. Unable to work within the NHS with this knowledge because of resistance to the very idea of possession from hospital authorities, he established a network of practitioners and set about the task of educating his fellow medical and psychiatric colleagues. Dr Templeton called his embryonic organisation the British Association for Spirit Release (BASR). James outlined the case of Marianne Craven to the good doctor and he agreed to see Marianne. All they had to do was wait for her to ask for help.

Every day that had passed, James checked his answerphone for any messages from Marianne, and every day that passed there were none. He had found a man to help her by determining whether she was possessed or had multiple personality, but she never called and asked for help. James had done all he could do to help Marianne, and now was the time to place the outcome in the hands of divine providence..

Two pathways had led James to this point, the path from Shirley and Susan to Norman and Dr Templeton, and the path from the book shop through Jocelyn to an unknown entity that was in the guise of a very angry North American Indian. But there was yet a third path that led him to where he was going, and it started at his own local Spiritualist Church.

Spring had turned to Summer and James was well on his way to saving enough money for a deposit on a new home. He contacted his old friend Billy who offered to put him up whilst he visited the area to look for a suitable property to purchase. Billy had been horrified to learn that Marianne had sent James packing and was deeply distressed at the news. As for himself, Billy had got his act together and was pleased to have James around as a friend, and to help repay some favours. Billy could fully understand James's distress at Marianne's action, and after hearing this news he took it upon himself to call her. The next time James went to stay with him, Billy told him what he had learned. She had given birth on the 25th July.

'What did she have Billy? Was it a boy or a girl?' Asked James.

'She wouldn't say,' replied Billy. 'She just said it was a baby.' That was enough to tell James that she'd had a boy and that she didn't want him to know.

Billy felt deeply for his old friend but could offer no advice or solution. 'There's nothing you can do James. Let it go. She's beyond help.'

As soon as he had said that, Billy knew he had made a mistake. He saw the glowering pierce in James's eyes as he looked back at Billy.

'And what would you think of me if I had said that about you Billy? Have I ever given up on you after all these years? How would you feel if I turned my back on you and said he's beyond help?'

Billy's eyes filled and he said no more.

That week James contacted the register of births, marriages and deaths and ordered a copy of the birth registration document. Marianne had registered the birth of a boy and had not named a father.

It was during his time staying with Billy that James took the opportunity to attend his church. He hadn't been for a long time.

James listened to the visiting medium give messages from deceased loved ones to members of the congregation, when she came to him. The messages James received were always different from the norm. His messages were direct and straight to the point.

‘You have been betrayed by someone,’ said the medium. ‘And you have been blamed. That was wrong. It wasn’t your fault. Now you have to decide what to do about it.’

James considered his options. His guilt and his shame had been assuaged, but what could he do? He could do as Marianne had wished and disappear into the sunset, never to be seen or heard of again. He could challenge her and demand access and to provide support. Or he could wait and see what happens. He had visions of sitting at the taverna in the village in his beloved Cretan mountains as an old man and being confronted by a young man who asked him, ‘Are you my father?’ As James drove his truck through the night, he wondered what the boy was like, was he healthy, when would he see him – would he ever see him. As these thoughts went around and round in his mind he felt all the emotions associated with such thoughts. He felt loss and anger and disappointment, and he understood what hundreds of men felt when they were prevented from carrying out their assigned roles as father of their own offspring. But he had to put all these feelings aside and wait. He had to wait until Marianne had been freed from her maladies and the negative energy forms that created them. Or he could simply wait until that prescribed time when Marianne’s son, his son would come to teach her how to trust.

For another month the waiting was a nightmare for James. As he punched his truck up and down the motorways he had nothing else to occupy his mind. He would switch from one perspective to another as each night went by. One night he would feel the grief and emotional trauma of losing someone he had committed himself to totally. He missed her – a lot. He had no one to cuddle up to and give comfort to when he returned from his nights work. He would return to an empty bed, and his last thought as he went to sleep was to pray for her and hope that she would ask him for help. When he rose again his first thought was how she was and what she was doing. How was she coping with her new-born son? How was she coping with *his* new-born son?

Other nights he would examine the psychological evidence and try to determine the answer to his three main questions, was she born bad? Was she suffering the effects of abandonment and abuse? Was she affected by an outside agency? Each night that he asked a specific question and reviewed the evidence he got the same answer to all three questions, yes, yes, and yes.

He knew he would never get confirmation of the validity of his own answers until Marianne volunteered to be assessed by either Dr Templeton or one of the skilled practitioners from his network of colleagues, but in the meantime, there was still the spiritual avenue to be explored. The next time James visited Billy to look at houses he prepared himself with a specific question and presented himself to his church. This time his question was directed to the source of all knowledge and he asked, ‘Who is going to help me with this?’

He got his answer that very same evening from the visiting medium and she invited him to witness a remote investigation of a person’s spiritual health. This was to be a step into uncharted waters for James. And a very big step to boot.

Chapter 24

Remote Depossession

James was ushered into an upper room in a small modern terraced house. The room had formerly been a bedroom but had been converted into a healing sanctuary the medium that James had met at the church.

On either side of the fireplace there was a bookshelf and display cabinet, each filled to capacity with books, crystals and all manner of psychic paraphernalia. Against the opposite wall stood a portable therapy table / couch which was covered with a clean white cotton sheet and a pillow. The walls were covered with icons and pictures of saints and angels. A candle glowed in front of the empty fireplace and soft, gentle music issued from a CD player on top of one of the cabinets. The atmosphere in the room was of calm tranquillity; a haven of peace. Four straight backed chairs had been arranged in the centre of the room, and two of them were occupied by a man in his thirties and a woman in her fifties. James was introduced to them and all four took their seats.

The medium and leader of the soul rescue group that had assembled, opened the proceedings with the Lord's Prayer and asked for spirit guides and rescue angels to attend and assist in the rescue of lost souls. The atmosphere of tranquillity deepened and she went into a trance. In a state of willing acceptance, her mind was transported to another place and she began to speak, 'Is this lady about five feet four with dark hair?' she asked without moving her head or opening her eyes.

'Yes,' answered James.

The medium continued, 'It is quiet in the house at this time. What we'll do is draw the blind down and get some energy and see what happens.'

James wasn't sure what she meant by drawing the blind down. The other two people had their own eyes closed, and James wasn't sure what he should do, so he did nothing but watch the others and listen to the medium in fascination. Could she really see another person in another place simply by projecting her mind?

She spoke again, 'As it draws down and breaks up into spots of light.....What happened to this lady, was it when she was about two years old?'

'I don't know,' answered James.

The medium went on with a complete sense of calm detachment in a soft and gentle voice, 'I feel something happened when she was about two years old, and she has a lot of trauma about that time. She has an attachment to her. The attachment lives actually within her, and when it takes full force it actually takes over her whole body. But I feel it's more on the masculine side rather than the female side, and she takes on quite nasty, aggressive energies. This is a very hard attachment here.'

James listened in fascination. What did she mean by an attachment? Was this the entity that he had encountered when Marianne had said that she will kill him? If so, then his prayer hadn't worked and it was still with her. The medium continued, 'Because this attachment has such strong energies this may have to be done over a period of several meetings. Because of the destructive element of this being it can cause far more damage than we can anticipate.'

I am trying to find out how we can help this lady. She has had this attachment for so long now, that to yank it from her could cause physical problems.' There was a long pause and the atmosphere in the room began to grow tense, or was it just James that was growing tense?

After the pause the medium went on, 'This attachment has a source of energy – of fear. There is a tremendous fear around and about this lady. And she is giving fear to this being. Each fear that comes in it grows stronger, and it has been getting stronger over the years. Fear comes from the family. For this lady we need to help the family first – to take the fear from the lady. When the fear is taken away the food source will cease. But it can also create a problem. So, there are several things that need to be done. Are there please four other members of the family in the home?'

James assumed that the question was directed again at himself, and he assumed that the four she referred to were Marianne's children.

'Yes,' he replied.

'These four members of the family need to have a great deal of energy given to them for protection also. Just talking to the attachment need not be advisable at this time for the attachment has a great deal of power and energy within it. The family themselves need a great deal of help.'

There was another long pause, during which James considered what he had learned of the distress that all of Marianne's family had endured over the years. He could see that they were all afraid of Marianne and her unpredictable behaviour, and what this medium was saying was that all their combined fears were giving a source of nourishment to an entity that fed on people's fears. He thought of his own fears for Marianne and her children, and it began to dawn on him that his own fears for them could actually be contributing to the power of the attached entity.

'There are going to be four bubbles of energy,' the medium continued. 'Of pure energy that are going to be created for each member of the family. There is a darkness about the house also – a dark energy within the house that has created unhappiness also.' There followed another long pause.

'We are going to have to work in a different way – for we don't want to upset the attachment and cause more problems than there already are. This is going to take a great deal of energy, so will you please link in and don't release the light that is being taken down. Allow the light to manifest within yourselves.'

James didn't know what she meant by the 'light' and he had no idea what he was supposed to do. He just watched the others and waited.

'We are going to have to work with a lot of help here. I feel the need to approach the lady herself, but not to disturb the attachment at this time.' She paused again and James could feel his own tension rise with suspense and expectancy. He had to force himself to become as relaxed as the others.

The medium went on, 'There are quite a few helpers who are making their presence known. There are three for each person in the house, there are also four for the lady herself. As we start to journey over to the lady's house – don't go into the house just yet. And as we see the lady, we wrap a web of light around her and the energies holding her. See the light wrapping round and around her..... That is being done. Send out webs of light around each member of the family. See them all cocooned. This web of light is so strong around each member – they need also this Just carry on with the light please. Don't let the light recede. And from the web of light grant each of these souls – allow it to go It's got this web of light all the way through it. The attachment is concerned. The lady will be OK for the time being.'

There was another unbearable pause before the medium continued. She was still very calm and emotionally detached as she continued with her running commentary of what she was witnessing. 'There's a struggle going on. Sorry – there's a struggle going on with this attachment and there are some more energies coming in. If you send your energy to the attachment to quieten it.... It's wanting to escape. There is a net of light actually being placed over the house. The attachment can't – is finding it very difficult ... There are six of the rescue angels actually attaching to and holding the net.' She paused again.

Still in a calm and non-emotional voice she suddenly said, 'They've got it. They've got the attachment. And they are taking it. Carry on sending the light please.'

James felt a surge of relief and excitement all at once and breathed an audible gasp. All the others remained calm with their eyes closed, and the healer continued, 'So much healing needs to be sent to this lady and to her family, and to the house. She needs to have her entrances sealed. There is an entrance in her back that's being sealed, there is also one in the crown and one in the solar plexus. The whole of the house is cocooned in this web, and we can end there.'

After a short pause, the medium opened her eyes and breathed a deep sigh. The other two opened their eyes and stretched as if they were awakening after a short nap. They all smiled at James as he sat in a state of wonder and awe, still not knowing exactly what had taken place, and still in a state of sceptical disbelief at the reality of what he had heard from the entranced medium. If what he had heard was a true commentary of something that has taken place in a spiritual dimension, then he had witnessed the exorcism of something unholy from Marianne. Could this be confirmation of his suspicions that had been triggered by the fears and experience of Penny all that time ago when he had first come into contact with Marianne? It seemed so.

The medium, having recovered her full conscious awareness, began to speak again. This time she was not in a trance and her mind was focused on those in the room. But it was not the medium who spoke. It was still her voice, but the demeanour was not hers. James was instantly reminded of his experience of the young man who spoke to him with the wisdom of the old master, Lao Tzu. Someone else was using the medium to convey a message to each individual person in the room in turn. Her head turned to James and he was spoken to first.

‘May I address the young man please?’ the voice began. ‘You have become fearful, and you must be reminded that you are not to lose your faith in the ones that guide you. You have much to learn and you must never lose sight of your objective.’ James felt like a little boy who was being scolded for being naughty. The voice coming from the medium was her own, but it had a power and a depth of wisdom that belied her. She turned to face another person in the room, but James was still transfixed by the message he had received from the hidden power that had spoken to him. He had experienced spiritual communication many times before in church through visiting mediums, and he had communicated with others through Penny several times. But this experience was like being told off by God himself. He felt ashamed that he had actually despaired at his own failure to help Marianne through his own love and the knowledge that he had. He realised, through this witnessing of the release of a dark force entity from Marianne, that he had much to learn. He felt foolish that he had tried to help Marianne with so little knowledge and no experience of these matters. He came away from the group and the ordinary little house in a state of shock. He felt humiliated and yet he also felt hope for the first time in many months. But there was still something puzzling him. The guide that had spoken to him had said that he must never lose sight of his objective, but what was the objective? He hadn’t the courage to ask at the time, but it was something he still needed to know. This was all happening for a reason, and he had been told that he would work in a different way. Was this the way he was to learn how to work? What was his objective? And another thing – how was he to know that what he had witnessed was real and beneficial to Marianne? If he couldn’t have any contact with her, then how could he ever know?

Two more issues troubled James very deeply in addition to his guilt at leaving Marianne pregnant. His own guilt at having breached the code of ethical conduct and, now that he had more evidence of the phenomenon of spirit attachments, the need to warn his peers. He had to find a way to warn them of the dangers of close personal relationships with potentially dangerous clients and of the reality of spirit interference.

As he seriously considered these issues, he began to see the possibility of a sinister motive in the consciousness of a dark force – to take out of action a spiritual healer and thereby deprive many sick and troubled people of healing. James had built up a reputation with Dr Weston and his patients, and the staff and consultants at the hospital. He had a client list rapidly approaching forty and since meeting Marianne, all that had disappeared. He was no longer a healer, he was an outcast. His guilt and his own folly continued to strike at the very core of his being, and he was being systematically destroyed by self-doubt and failure.

There was an internal battle going on for the soul of James Parker. He had entered into a deep personal relationship with Marianne Craven out of compassion and a need to understand her conflicts. He had sacrificed his ambitions and his potential as a healer of others in order to heal just one person. He had committed himself to her wellbeing in total, and his willingness to care for her and to protect her and to provide for her and her family had been reinforced by his response to her request for a son. He had given of himself as much as any man could ever be asked to give to prove his love and commitment to any woman. This commitment and his total surrender to Marianne had been thrown back in his face and he had been blamed for the catastrophes that followed her in her wake. How was he to reconcile this? Was he to agree with his accusers and blame himself? Was he to blame her? Or was he to seek out the truth and fully understand what forces are at work to undermine and destroy the fundamental principles of human love? Light and dark were at war with each other, and James Parker was the battle ground. He still had three choices. He could do nothing but succumb and continue to go into irreversible decline. He could retaliate and fight back. Or he could seek a third way and regain his faith in himself, in his own integrity, and in the powers that guided him through this powerful cycle of learning and development. Something very powerful

was driving him on this third way. It was his love for Marianne and his need to rescue both her and himself from the pit that she had drawn him into and then abandoned him there to fend for himself. James Parker had joined Marianne in her own hell, and she had left him to find a way out of his own, on his own.

With his resolve to honour his own integrity, he went to see Andy, his friend and colleague, who was on the governing council of his professional institute and tell him of his indiscretion.

Andy listened to James with compassion and understanding. He was very much aware of the emotional turmoil that James had endured, and he detected it still just beneath the surface. As an experienced hypnotherapist himself, Andy offered James his full support to help him face and deal with his emotional conflicts and suggested that as no complaint had been received by the Institute that he had no case to answer. He told James that he should continue, or rather take up again the mantle of practitioner and even offered to refer to James some of his own clients.

James told Andy what he had decided. He would present his case to his peers and warn them of the dangers of ignoring the code of ethics and more specifically warn them of the reality of dark force entities. After his meeting with Andy, James wrote to the Principal of the Institute and requested permission to attend and participate in a discussion forum that was planned for the Autumn. Permission was granted.

Including James, a total of twenty hypnotherapists from all parts of the country assembled at the headquarters of the Institute for a weekend of exploration into the mysteries of the mind. James was pleasantly surprised to see two of his old fellow students there, Alex and Janet. They had trained together for their certificates to practise back in 1994. Alex had met his love-match since they had last met and James was introduced to Alex's wife, Mary, who had joined him in his healing practice. The collected gathering of hypnotherapists represented a cross section of experience, and many of them, like James, had other healing skills. There were psychologists, shaman, spiritual healers and Reiki masters, and of course the Principal himself, teacher and role model for all of them.

Each member of the assembly had a story to tell, or advice to seek, and as the first day wore on, each had his or her say about the matters that concerned them. Then came James's turn.

During the course of his work, James had made many presentations to many different kinds of audience. He had addressed conferences of several hundred people, including the findings of his and Dr Weston's research to an audience of scientists and doctors. He had stood in front of an audience of two hundred children and hypnotised them all at once. He had taught school teachers in groups how to deal with stress in the work place, and he had stood in front of his own church congregation to pass on information about healing. But he had never before had such a difficult time as this.

Rather than go straight into a confession of his indiscretion from the outset, James began by introducing the possibility of interference from attached entities. The Principal immediately responded by telling his own story of how two childhood friends of his had been killed by their own father in a fit of depression during the great depression of the nineteen-thirties. At a conference in America, he discovered that these two childhood friends had attached themselves to him and had been released at that very same conference. The Principal then told James, 'In all the years I have known you I have never made a real connection with you. Now I have.'

Apart from the Principal, Alex and Mary, there were seventeen colleagues all listening to him and not hearing a word he said. They listened with incredulity and disbelief. Some challenged him and others dismissed him outright without further consideration. Then there were those who saw the real distress that he had been, and still was suffering, and they wanted to comfort him and give healing to him. Only three people took him seriously, and James knew that he could not succeed in asking the group as a whole to take his warning seriously and carry it out to the membership. He also knew that to expose his own indiscretion to this group would put him through intolerable pain.

During the lunch break the following day, James fellow student, Alex, offered his expertise to help him find his emotional balance with some trance work. Afterwards, Mary came up to James and putting her arms around him gave him a big warm hug. This was the first human contact James had had since holding Marianne in his own arms some nine months previously. James welcomed the gesture but was not able to respond appropriately. He had a resistance to receiving healing energy or love from another human being. His pain was his own and he hung on to it for fear of letting go completely and allowing his heart to break.

Memories of childhood came flooding back to James as he travelled the six-hour journey home. He had been just seven years old. Two years after his being blamed for the noise in the playground. The teacher was asking everyone in the class who they played with in the playground during break times. When she reached James and asked him who he played with he answered, 'No one Miss.' The teacher came to him and put her arms around him in sympathy and little James collapsed against her breast, deep sobs rising from his chest, and he cried out the pain of aloneness. At the recall of this memory, James began to realise why some of his clients had responded to his gift of healing by jumping out of the chair and running out of the room. He recalled others, who when receiving the power of divine Light through his healing hands, had sat and wept freely, and he realised that some could receive love and others couldn't. It dawned on him that at that moment in time he was unable to receive love from anyone, and in order for him to feel love again, he had to learn to love himself again.

He decided to be kind to himself and, after the weekend was over, he quietly resigned his membership of the Institute and was from that day not eligible to call himself a hypnotherapist. He was little more than a broken-hearted truck driver.

Chapter 25

Healer, heal thyself.

The time had come for redemption. James had purchased his new house and moved in at the end of November 2001, Christmas had come and gone, and he had been accepted as a candidate for training in spirit release.

On a grey, drizzly day in early January, James checked in to the private guest house just a short drive away from the bungalow where the course was to be held. He was greeted by Brian, a tall, very well-spoken gentleman who earned his living as a teacher of Boeing 747 pilots. Brian showed James his room and informed him that there would be one other guest attending the same course who wouldn't be arriving until the following day. The accommodation included breakfast but there was no provision for an evening meal, so James found his own way around the local village for somewhere to eat. After a leisurely meal in a surprisingly fine Moghul restaurant, James made his way back to the guest house and found Brian seated in the breakfast area reading the Times newspaper. He was invited in for a night-cap of a very mature single malt whiskey and the two men began to talk.

Following his sojourn, since last seeing Marianne nearly a year ago, of solitary night driving where he was trapped by his own thoughts, and an inability to share these thoughts and ideas at leisure with another human being, James revelled in the company of Brian, who was open, honest and articulate. They discussed many things, from politics to philosophy, from materialism to spirituality, and they sat nursing their fine malt, drinking very little of it, until two o'clock in the morning. The stimulating discussions were far too important to be influenced unduly by the loosening effects of even the finest Scotch.

During the course of these wide-ranging discussions, Brian had asked James if he knew anything about numerology, and James had answered in the negative. Brian offered to demonstrate to James and asked him to write down his name and date of birth. When he had finished his numerology calculations based on the basic information James had given him, Brian shared his findings. He told James much about himself in a similar way that a Tarot reader may have done, or an astrologer, and James was taken aback by the uncanny accuracy of what he heard. But what struck James most of all was the comment that, in spite of what he had been experiencing since his affair with Marianne, was that he was seen by Brian's calculations to be a spiritual leader by example. 'I'm not a very good example right now,' James had told him. 'That's the main reason why I am here, to find out where I went wrong.' Then he had a thought, and asked Brian if he wouldn't mind doing another one. Brian agreed and James gave him Marianne's full birth name and date of birth. Brian did his sums and sat back in his chair with an audible exhalation of breath and clasped his hands behind his head as he pondered his findings.

'Well, what does it say?' asked James.

Brian shook his head and checked his sums again. He looked worried. James waited patiently and when Brian had finished his double check he asked him again. Brian looked him in the eye and said, 'Sorry, but this person, whoever she is, has been dealt a really unpleasant hand of cards. They are all stacked against her and from what I can see she has been having a bad time of it from the word go. This person's life is a mess and she can find no way out of it. The more she looks for safety and security, the more elusive it becomes and all her efforts just make things worse.'

James was gobsmacked. How could numerology be so accurate? Then he asked Brian if he would mind doing just one more, for confirmation, and he gave him the name and date of birth of the son that Marianne had given birth to.

'Are you sure about the date?' asked Brian. 'This one is a bit young.'

'I'm sure,' said James, and waited with bated breath as Brian made his calculations. When he had finished, Brian said, 'This one hasn't had a chance to experience much yet because of his age, but I get one simple clear message from these figures.'

'And what's that?'

‘Trust,’ answered Brian. ‘This boy is here to teach someone the meaning of trust.’

James sat in stunned silence as the implications took root in his mind. This was the second time a complete stranger had told him that his son was here for the very specific reason to help his own mother learn how to trust. This was too much to be a coincidence.

James finished his glass of malt whiskey and thanked Brian for a most enlightening evening and retired to bed to sleep a deep and peaceful sleep.

The next morning after breakfast with Brian, James presented himself at the venue for his initiation into the world of spirit release. He was greeted warmly by his teachers, a married couple, and introduced to the four other participants. There was a Roman Catholic priest, a Sikh, a Spanish woman who was a practising healer and the missing guest who would be staying that night at Brian’s guest house, a retired farmer whose daughter had been diagnosed as schizophrenic.

Each participant was to be introduced to methods of entering an altered state in order to communicate with the spirit world and they would then practise the two principle roles in teams of two; one acting as facilitator and the other as scanner. The scanner’s job was to go into trance and establish contact with the person who needed help, and the facilitator’s job was to communicate with any attached earthbound spirit or dark force entity and get them to leave. It was also the facilitator’s job to make sure that the scanner was protected at all times and that they were grounded in the material world on completion of the task.

The course involved no academic or theoretical work of any kind. It was purely experiential and there was no examination at the end. In this kind of training you could either do it or you couldn’t. Each student actually experienced what it was like to enter into the mind of another person and another type of spiritual consciousness, and to convey the thoughts and feelings of that other to the facilitator and to the group as a whole. To wonder what another person is thinking or feeling is one thing, but to *know* is quite another. To imagine what another person may be feeling, or to be able to empathise is one thing, but to actually *be at one* with that other person is quite another kind of experience altogether. To try to understand the nature of a spirit entity, dark or light, that has attached to a living person is one thing, but to actually *experience* the thoughts and feelings of a discarnate spirit entity is quite another.

Before any of the students could experience any of these things, they had to know how to alter their state of consciousness to a frequency that enabled them to dissociate a part of their mind and allow it to become free from the constraints of their own body, and of time and space. They also had to learn how to protect themselves from interference from any negative energy form that may cause them harm or interfere with their work. The first line of defence was to learn how to fill their spiritual energy field with divine love from the Source of all that there is. This involves going into trance and opening the crown chakra in the top of the head and asking for the Light of unconditional love to pour in.

When James’ spiritual journey had taken him to Crete, he had known nothing of the power of the Light that passed through him, and through his hands to those in need of help. He had been an ignorant conduit for a power he did not understand or even feel as it passed through him. He was a witness to its effects on the emotions of those who ran away from it and of those who received it. It always resulted in an emotional reaction, either of acceptance with tears of joy, or rejection with fear and escape.

As a lonely child of seven with no one to play with, James’s response to the unconditional love that passed from his teacher to him was for him to release the pain of his isolation. He was able to make friends and play, just like all the other children in his class, and he had learned to recognise aloneness in others and their need for human companionship. This was why he could never turn anyone away who asked him for help, even if that person had betrayed him or hurt him. But when he had tried to convey to his peers the warning of dangerous client liaisons and the probability of spirit attachments, and had failed, he had rejected the unconditional love that had been offered in the hug from Mary. If he had received the Light through her, then his reaction would have been the same as it had been when he was just seven years old. He hadn’t wanted to release his hurt then for fear of falling apart and letting his heart break in the company of others. But in the training room with his fellow students and his teachers in the experience of spirit release, the time had come to receive the Light of Divine Love and protection from the Source of all that there is. He received it and he wept. As well as a release of bottled up emotion, James wept tears of joy. He was forgiven and he was cleansed. He was freed from his guilt and able to practise spirit release, and thus he became a Warrior of the Light. His first job was to help Running Bear go home and share in the universal forgiveness of being

in the Light. All three roads, from his college friends, from the bookshop and from his church, had all converged into the main highway of his learning, and he was on the right path to help Marianne and others like her. His prayers had been answered with his receiving this knowledge. All he had to do now was to put the knowledge into practise, and there was still a long way to go.

Like the Samurai sword, as it is heated, beaten and shaped, again and again, James was being led through the process of transformation from the raw material to a refined instrument. He had reached a watershed on the journey by being trained in the techniques of spirit release, but there were more beatings and shaping ahead of him as he traversed this cycle of change. The experience with Running Bear had taught him just how powerful the emotion of anger could be, and he had been reminded that within the breast of men, even the most good of men, there lurked a murderer, a slaughterer of men women and children. In defence of those one loves and has a duty to protect, there rages a cruel killer, and James had yet to meet his own – again.

James had been affected greatly by witnessing the forgiveness of Running Bear, and shortly after the message he received in his church of the Chief's thanks, he was to meet another North American Indian.

All the participants of the spirit release course had exchanged addresses, and James had been pleasantly surprised when he heard from the Spanish lady who had trained with him. She invited him to work with her so that they could practise their newly learned skills. There were basically two ways to affect a spirit release from an affected person. One was directly with the sufferer in a face to face situation, where the affected person would go into trance and the practitioner would communicate with and release the attached spirit. The second way required two people to work together remotely from the affected person who could be on the other side of the planet. Until such time as James had someone else to work with, the Spanish lady offered the ideal opportunity for practice.

They discussed the implications of past lives and karmic debt, which was another area that James had very little knowledge of. All the students on the course had been introduced to the concept that attached spirits could be attracted to a person through some link in a past life, and that many are actually carried through to this life from past ones. James had witnessed several past life experiences in others as he had developed his hypnosis induction skills, but he had never experienced one himself. The Spanish lady gave him his first opportunity.

He had told her why he had attended the course, and of his affair with Marianne, and he posed the question, 'I would like to know why I am drawn to, and attracted by, women who have either been abandoned or have lost their fathers prematurely.'

The Spanish lady asked James to go into trance and seek the answer to this question.

The grey mist cleared and he could see a large feather blowing in the wind. It was a very large feather, from a big bird, and it was tied with a leather thong to a thin branch. As his tunnel vision expanded, he could see that the branch was one of several that had been made into a kind of bell shape with animal skins stretched over them to make a crude shelter. A spear with more feathers tied to its shaft leant against the shelter. His view expanded as if he was looking through the lens of a camera and the focal length changed from macro to wide angle. The crude animal skin shelter was situated on the edge of a strip of dry scrub just above what would have been the water line of a wide shallow river. The river bed was dry and he could see the other bank in the distance, marked by another line of dry scrub and some trees faded to a pale shade of green by the heat. A man stood beside the shelter, looking across the dry river bed. He was dressed in crude animal skins and had his ankles and feet bound in skins tied with tendons. He was about thirty-five years old, fit and lean.

'Who is this man to you?' asked the voice of someone far away.

James felt the heat of the wind as he stepped towards the man with his back to him, and then stepped inside him. 'He is me. I am him,' replied James.

It was hot and dry, and James shielded his eyes from the hot sun with his hand as he strained his eyes to see more clearly across the dry river bed.

'What are you looking for?' asked the disembodied voice.

'I'm looking for my family,' he replied. Then an image flashed into his mind. He saw his family. The tepee was large and comfortable, and a woman and two children stood just inside. They were dressed in finely made clothes of buckskin with elaborate stitching. The woman wore beautiful hand-crafted jewellery, and she held a hand on the shoulder of each child with pride. James went into the tepee to greet his wife and children but found himself back at the dry river bed.

'Tell me what's happening,' said the disembodied voice. James felt a crushing stab of anguish as he said, 'Something terrible has happened.' His body folded and he held his hands to his solar plexus as he fell to his knees. Then he cried, 'The blue-coats came when I was away.' His voice raised with increasing anguish and despair as he choked out his words. 'I wasn't there when they came. I didn't protect them.' Tears streamed down his face and he hid behind his hands as he cried at the top of his voice, 'I wasn't there. I failed. I AM SO ASHAMED.' His body folded as he knelt on the dry earth and buried his face in his hands as he wept for his dead family.

'Why are you here?' asked the disembodied voice. 'Why are you alone? Where are your tribe?'

'I am exiled,' replied the Indian. 'I banished myself from the tribe in shame. I must live alone and avenge my family alone.'

James returned to normal waking consciousness with tears still streaming down his face. The experience had been real. He had actually felt the hot wind and the dryness of the earth, and the emotions had been extreme. It was an altogether different experience from the one he had had with Running Bear. Then he had been in touch with Running Bear's feelings, but this time he knew they were his own. He was the Indian, and now he understood why he had always been alone and why he had a compulsion to protect abandoned women. In his soul he felt responsible for not being there to protect his own family when they had been massacred. Other thoughts flashed through James mind as he began to return to normal consciousness. Terrible thoughts, too terrible to contemplate. Thoughts of murder and revenge. Thoughts of silently creeping up on sleeping settlers and slitting their throats in the night: men women and children. Thoughts too ghastly for him to want to experience again. But now he understood everything to do with his own life pattern.

James had often wondered why he had never made it in the army, despite coming top of his class in everything he did. He was a good instructor and section commander, and could navigate himself anywhere, often without a map. Serving in the mountains and deserts of Oman, he was often sent out on his own at night, or with a couple of men to find other soldiers who had got lost, and he was skilled at getting really close to enemy positions to gain information or capture live prisoners. He had never been a team player and always worked best on his own.

This all explained why he felt so contented when he had lived as a hermit in the Cretan mountains, in touch with the wild. It all made sense. And it explained why he was a rescuer of lost souls – abandoned women who needed protection until they could fend for themselves. It was karmic balancing. The repayment of karmic debt for the innocent lives he had taken in revenge for his murdered Native American family.

No sooner had James come to terms with all this new information, he received an urgent message from his old teacher and friend, Shirley. One of her long-term friends needed help and she asked James if he would see her.

Jenny was a divorced teacher aged about forty-five, overweight and very anxious. She was suffering from a compulsion to harm herself and was worried for her life and her sanity. For several fruitless sessions she tested James's skills in hypnotic induction to the limits before he asked her to stand up and look him in the eye. Then he said, 'I call upon the higher self of Jenny to help me and guide her to a state of mind that will enable me to help her. Look me in the eye and try to keep your eyes open.' Jenny went straight into trance standing up in front of him.

Her immediate response even surprised James, and he realised that he had discovered a new way to help clients achieve an altered state. James proceeded to help Jenny explore her early life as a child to see if he could find the cause of her discomfort, and much was uncovered. After several weeks of this traditional type

of hypnotherapy with no outward signs of success, he decided it was time to seek help for a remote session, and he contacted the medium who had witnessed the capture of the dark force entity from Marianne.

'My word,' said the medium, as James sat down in front of her in her healing room. 'You are looking much better than the last time we met. What's been happening?' Once again, they were surrounded with an ambience of peace and tranquillity, with gentle music coming from the CD player in the corner of the room. James told her that he had been trained as a spirit release practitioner and that he wanted to share his knowledge with her. He asked her if she was willing to listen to what he had to say and adopt an altered state of consciousness. As a naturally gifted medium she had never been artificially induced into an altered state or hypnotised before and with a little trepidation, she agreed.

James trod very carefully, giving her time to adjust to a trance state that had not been spontaneously adopted by herself, and when he was satisfied that she was ready, he put her to the test.

'Allow a part of your consciousness to look at my spiritual energy field. I am sitting in front of you and you have your eyes closed. Tell me what you see. I may look a little like an outline or an x-ray negative.'

'I see a shape,' said the medium. It is the shape of a man, like an aura.'

'Good,' said James. 'Now scan the aura with you mind, working from the top of the head and tell me if you find any dark spots.'

The medium scanned James's energy field from the top of his head and all the way down his body to his legs before she spoke again. 'There is a dark spot in your left knee,' she said.

'Now go to the right knee and tell me what you see.'

'There's another dark spot in the right knee, but it isn't so pronounced as the left one.'

What The medium was seeing was the negative energy of James's arthritis in both knees. She had passed the first test. Then he said to her, 'I am going to give you the name of a person. Someone you don't know, and I want you to tell me what you see, OK?'

'Yes, OK?'

'The person's name is Bill and he lives quite near to where I live. Allow part of your consciousness to go to where Bill is and tell me what you see.'

The medium scanned the image before her mind's eye until she reached the solar plexus and said, 'There is red there. A big red splotch right in the middle of his body.'

'Can you tell me what the red energy is? What does it represent?'

'It is anger,' replied the medium.

'And where does this anger come from?'

'From himself. It is anger that has turned in on himself.'

'And what effect does it have?'

'He drinks. This man has a drink problem.'

'And what should he do about it?'

'Talk to you. Talk to James. He must change his way of thinking. Talk to James.'

'Bring your consciousness back to yourself. Feel the support of the chair beneath your body and the firmness of the floor beneath your feet and bring all of yourself into this room and into your own body. When you are complete and feeling grounded in this room you may return to normal waking consciousness and open your eyes.'

The medium returned to waking consciousness and opened her eyes. She had successfully scanned, with undoubted accuracy, the spirit mind of his friend Billy, and James knew then that she could help him as a remote scanner. She was a natural.

The medium reported to James that the experience certainly felt different from her previous experiences whilst working in the soul rescue group. James asked her how she felt about working in this new way and she replied that it was OK. Then he asked her if she would mind looking in on someone else for him. She agreed, and James asked her to go back into trance. He then took her through the complete procedure as he had been taught it.

'As you go into the state of mind that will allow you to communicate with others, I am asking our spirit guides and angelic helpers to attend and assist us in our work. I also ask the guides and helpers of Jenny to attend and assist. In the name of God, the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit, may we be used as

instruments of healing. I also ask that St. Michael and his host of angel warriors be on hand should they be needed, and I ask that the healing Angels attend should they be needed. Amen.

James addressed the medium, 'I am asking your own higher self if we have permission for you to scan another person. Tell me what message you get. Do we have a yes or a no? Nod your head for yes and shake your head for no.'

The medium nodded her head.

'Thank you. Now I am asking Jenny's higher self for permission. Do we have permission or not, yes or no?'

The medium nodded.

'Thank you. Now, allow part of your consciousness to be taken to where Jenny is and look at her spiritual energy field and tell me what you see.'

'Her energy is being pulled. There is a cord leading away from her, like a fine silver thread. It goes a long way.'

'Go to the end of the thread and tell me what you find.'

'It enters a stone wall. I can't see the end. The end is behind the stone wall.'

'What is behind the wall? Can you tell me? What do you feel?'

'Fear. There is terrible fear here. People are in prison. They are waiting for death.'

'What year is this?'

'It is 1575. This is Scotland. This is a prison in Scotland. People are accused and sentenced here.'

'I want you to go to the end of this life for Jenny and tell me what is happening.'

'She is to be burned. She is accused of witchcraft. The fire is being lit and she is afraid.'

'Now go to the point when the spirit leaves the body. There is no pain and no emotion. What is the spirit of the one we call Jenny experiencing?'

'Relief. Free.'

'What are her thoughts and feelings?'

'She was wrongly accused. She was a healer, helping people. The people who accused her were afraid of her. They didn't understand.'

James brought the medium back into herself and invited her to be grounded and return to her normal consciousness. He had an explanation for why Jenny was afraid to exercise her gifts as a healer and a clairvoyant. Her fear was the residue of this experience in a previous life.

James had found someone to work with as a remote scanner and he thanked her for her help. They both looked forward to working together in this way, and James left with this new information to help Jenny.

After a few days Jenny came over to see James and he explained to her what had happened. Unfortunately, her compulsion to hurt herself had not gone away, so James arranged another appointment with the medium. This is the transcript of the audio tape recording taken during the second session for Jenny.

'Access the energy of Jenny and tell me what you find.'

'Confusion. The energy is going all around her. The darkness is going all around her head and shoulders. The confusion is strong from the heart upwards.'

'I need to be able to focus on the core of this energy that is creating the confusion.'

'The energy is focused in the crown – the top of the head.'

'I need to be able to communicate with the consciousness of this negative energy. I am talking to the negative energy around Jenny's head. You may express your thoughts and feeling through the medium and you will not harm her in any way.'

'I am speaking to the dark energy in Jenny's head. Tell me if you have a name.'

'No.' (With an aggressive, defiant attitude).

'Have you ever occupied human form?'

'No.'

'What do you call yourself?'

'Call myself?'

'How should I address you?'

'Don't'

The fact that the entity does not have a name and has never occupied human form suggests that it is a dark force entity (DFE).

I now call upon St. Michael and his warrior angels to cast a net of light around this entity. What do you know of the light?

‘What is light?’ (With disdain).

That which surrounds you. Where do you come from?

‘Nowhere’

‘Why are you here?’

Why not?

‘What is it you want?’

‘Nothing.’

‘Then why are you here? Do you have no purpose?’

‘No.’

‘Then you are nobody – you are nothing’

‘Noooo’. (Distressed).

‘Who are you then? How long have you been with Jenny?’

‘Always.’

‘How long is always? This life – previous lives?’

DFE shows signs of increasing distress

What’s the matter? Are you uncomfortable?

‘Yes.’

‘What’s making you uncomfortable?’

‘You. You.’

‘Why am I making you uncomfortable? Is it because you have been discovered? What happens to you now that you have been discovered?’

Increasing distress

‘What happens to you now? They’ll find out, won’t they?’

‘I want to get out.’ (Very distressed).

‘Where do you want to go?’

‘Can’t find the way.’

‘Would you like me to help you – to show you the way?’

‘Yes.’

‘OK. Look inside yourself and tell me what you see.’

‘Can’t see – can’t see.’

‘Why can’t you see? Is it dark?’

‘Nothing. Nothing.’

‘Look into the blackness – look into the nothing – there is something there. Look hard and tell me what you find. Look hard and tell me what you find.’

‘Can’t see.’

‘You’re not looking hard enough. Look deeper.’

DFE shows increasing distress at discovering something.

‘Tell me what you see. You see something. There is something there isn’t there. What is it? If you look hard you’ll find something and I’ll help you out.’

Increasing distress

‘Just be calm and tell me what you see.’

‘Don’t know.’

‘Look outside of yourself now and tell me what you see. What is there?’

‘There’s’

‘What?’

‘Shapes.’

‘What kind of shapes?’

‘Tall shapes’

'Are they like you?'
 'No. No.'
 'What are they like?'
 'Tall.'
 'Are they light or dark?'
 'Light. Light, light, light.'
 'Are they friendly or unfriendly?'
 Increasing distress.
 'Are they coming closer to you?'
 'Mmmm.' (Whimpering)
 'Are you afraid?'
 'They are going to trap me.' (Very distressed).
 'You said you wanted to get out, didn't you?'
 'Mmm.'
 'Well they've come to help you. Now look at yourself. Look deep within yourself and see if there is something that's not dark.'
 Whimpering.
 'What do you see?'
 Increased whimpering.
 'Are you looking?'
 'Mmmm.'
 'What do you see?'
 Increased whimpering turning to whining.
 'Why are you crying?'
 'I'm frightened.' (Increased whining).
 'There's no need to be frightened. We are here to help you. We are here to get you out. Do you believe me?'
 Increased distress.
 'Look at yourself. Look deep into yourself. Look into the blackness and tell me what you see.'
 'A light. Yeah. A light. A little, little light.' (Very distressed).
 'What's happening to it?'
 'It's getting me.' (Wailing with fear).
 'Is it going to hurt you? I'm going to ask one of the angels nearby to send a shaft of light right through you – right now. And another – and another. Did that hurt?'
 Distress begins to diminish.
 'No. It doesn't hurt at all does it? Light doesn't hurt you. Light helps you. That's better isn't it? That spark of light you found inside you – what's happening to it?'
 'It's getting bigger.'
 'It's getting bigger and what's happening to the darkness?'
 'It's going.' (Diminishing distress).
 'How are you feeling now (with sympathy)? The fear is going away isn't it? What's happening to the light? Is it expanding?'
 'Mmmm.'
 'Let me know when all the dark is gone.'
 Shows signs of relief.
 'Is it all gone yet?'
 'Mmmm.' (Affirmative).
 'How do you feel?'
 'Mmmmm' (relief)
 'Now you can realise your true nature. You are a being of light. And you have been deceived. Look at yourself now and those others around you. What have you learned?'
 'Sniffles.'

‘Tell me what you have learned?’

(Between sobs). ‘I’m one of them,’

‘Yes. And now you can go home with them. How do you like that idea?’

Nods.

‘Good. Now you can come out of Jenny. But before you go home take a couple of those angels that helped to rescue you and show them where you’ve been hiding. Can you do that now?’

(Sobbing). Nods.

‘Can you take them and show them where you’ve been and show them the problems you’ve caused so they can put it right?’

‘Mmmm.’

‘Are you doing that?’

‘Yes.’

‘Let me know when the damage is repaired.’

Affirmative nod.

‘Is it all OK now?’

‘I put the seed in her brain.’

‘You put the seed in her brain, did you? Has it been removed?’

‘Yes.’

‘Is she going to be OK now?’

‘Yes.’

‘It’s all OK now. You are forgiven. It wasn’t your fault. You were deceived.’

‘Yes.’

‘Now you are free to go home because the damage has been repaired. Are you OK Now?’

‘Yes. (Sobbing). I’m sorry. (Genuine remorse). She wanted to hurt herself.’

‘Was it you that was making her do that?’

‘Yes. She cut herself.’

‘But she won’t try to hurt herself anymore?’

‘No.’

‘She is free then to fulfil her potential as God intended.’

‘Yes.’

‘And so are you – as God intended. You are free.’

‘Thank you.’

‘And you can go home with the angels.’

‘Thank you.’

‘You may like to join them in their work helping to free others.’

‘Yes. Thank you.’

‘Go with our love and our blessings.’

‘Thank you.’

During his next meeting with Jenny, James learned that, since the release of the dark spirit, her life had been in a process of transformation. The compulsion to hurt herself had gone, leaving just traces of thought patterns that were etched in neurological schemas. An understanding of what was causing the compulsive behaviour helped Jenny to overcome these thoughts, and she ceased to suffer from acute anxiety. Jenny also reported to James that she had just entered into a new romantic relationship.

For James, his first real confrontation with a DFE demonstrated clearly the power of fear. The attached entity used Jenny’s own fear to provide it with the means to exist. When confronted with the power of light the entity became fearful, not just of the light but also of being returned to the pit from whence it came. When the entity discovered a spark of light within itself it was too much. The poor thing had no escape. Only when the light had penetrated it and it learned that it was a being of light itself did its own fear disappear, and James learned that even dark force entities need help. This was a totally different kind of warfare with evil to what he had previously learned from stories about devils, possession and exorcisms. The sword he carried as a warrior of the Light was the sword of Light – unconditional love for all of creation, but even this was to be tested in further confrontations with the dark.

Chapter 26

Warriors of the Light

Since his training as a spirit release practitioner, and his experiences of the work done with Jenny, all James's thoughts had been focused on learning more about how to use his new skills and develop his knowledge of the influences of the spirit world. Although he read extensively, his concern for Marianne and her children was always very close to the surface of his thoughts – until one day in February 2002.

He received a telephone call from a police constable detective who informed him that Marianne had been attacked again by her neighbour and that a case against the neighbour was being brought to court. James had taken the precaution of having his name registered with the police in the event that if anything untoward should happen to her then he would be informed. The police officer told him that Marianne and her children had moved to another location and that they were safe. James asked the officer if he could tell him where Marianne had moved to, and the officer explained that confidentiality prevented him from giving this information. Nonetheless James thanked the officer for telling him that she was safe and thanked the powers that be for putting his mind at rest on this matter. The disadvantage was that he had no way of contacting her if he needed to.

Winter had given way to spring as Easter approached, and James had begun the task of preparing his garden for enjoying the warm summer to come. He had picked up the house for a real bargain from a very kind gentleman who was only too pleased to negotiate favourable terms with James. The house had been recently decorated and a new bathroom and kitchen installed. It was warm and cosy and for the first time in his life James felt blessed and comfortable. He had changed his job and now worked full time for the supermarket, and he could work less hours for more money. He sat at one end of his lounge / dining room and, as he enjoyed his comfort and new-found sense of security, reinforced by the knowledge that Marianne was safe, he thanked the powers that be for his good fortune. He also thanked them for finding a way to let him know that his concern for Marianne was being heard and responded to. His prayers for her were being answered, and this gave him a peace of mind that had evaded him for a long time.

The only thing that still troubled James was not knowing how Marianne was in herself. More than a year had passed since he had seen her, and nine months since she had given birth to her little boy. He needed to know how the removal of a DFE from her some six months earlier had affected her life. And although the incredible coincidences and messages he had received about the child brought comfort and eased his guilt, he still felt a need to know how Marianne and her children were in their new home wherever that was, and he still held himself responsible for Marianne's pregnancy. What else could he do? He struggled with his fears of his own son being brought up without knowing who his father was and what impact that may have on him later as a man. Agony still gnawed at him as he pottered around his garden and got to know his neighbours.

One bright, sunny day just before Easter the phone rang. It was a surprise, not only because James received hardly any calls, apart from his daughter, but this was a bolt from the blue.

'Can I speak to Mr. Parker please?' asked an assertive woman's voice with a conspicuous midlands accent.

'Speaking,' answered James.

'Oh, hello James, remember me? I contacted you about six years ago. This is Marilyn.'

James nearly dropped the phone.

‘Marilyn,’ he repeated her name as he grappled with the shock of hearing her voice again after so long. ‘How are you? How did you find me? I have moved around a bit this past few years and I haven’t been in this house for very long’

‘I work for a Government department and it was easy. I’m visiting friends in the South soon and I wondered if I could come and see you.’

‘Sure, why not. It would be wonderful to meet you at along last.’

‘I’ll call again and let you know when it will be. Is that OK?’

‘Fine,’ said James. ‘I work nights and sleep in the mornings, which means I’m up and about in the afternoon. When I’m out or sleeping I leave the answerphone on. When you know when you are coming just leave a message. It’s good to hear from you, and it would be really nice to meet you.’

‘Me too. See you soon.’

James sat down and collected his thoughts. Marilyn. He had thought he would never hear from her again. He thought there would never be any reason to. His thoughts traced back in time, how many years? Thirty? No, more than that. His daughter was thirty-two. It must have been thirty-three years ago, when his wife was expecting their daughter. James had received a letter from his former girlfriend, Helen from the Midlands, the one he had been seeing before he was posted abroad in the army. She had written to him saying that he was the father of her daughter, born in October of 1968. His wife at the time had gone totally ballistic at this news and had written back to Helen herself in her rage. James had some explaining to do at that time. The fact of the matter was that he hadn’t seen anything of Helen since September 1967 and had been posted to the Arabian Gulf in December of that year. That meant that he couldn’t possibly have been the father of Helen’s baby. The sums just didn’t add up. The dust cleared and James had forgotten all about Helen and her fatherless child until the Summer of 1997 when he received a letter that began, ‘Dear Dad.’

The letter was from Marilyn, the twenty-nine-year-old daughter of Helen. Helen had put James’s name on her birth certificate and Marilyn had grown up thinking that her father had been a soldier named James Parker. An intelligent and resourceful young woman with a degree in psychology, she had tracked him down only to learn the truth about the dates. James and Marilyn had had many long telephone conversations together, and although it was apparent that he was not her father, they both agreed that it would have been nice for both of them if he had been. They never did meet and lost touch.

Just a few days after the call from Marilyn, James was working with the medium on a spirit release for one of her own clients, and he took the opportunity to mention the call from Marilyn. He asked the medium if she could use her skills to answer a fundamental question: would Marilyn ever know who her father was?

The medium’s spirit guide told him that she probably would never know.

The guide told James that what was really important was not who our parents are, but who we are as individuals. We are our own creators. Our parents only give us the vehicle to move around in – the physical body. The real person is the spirit within, and it is the spirit within that makes us who we are. Our parents give us the physical environment, the social circumstances and the body that enables us to achieve what we are here to achieve.

James was fast asleep after a hard night’s work driving for the supermarket and the phone rang. He had forgotten to set the answerphone. He crawled out of bed and, still half asleep he answered it. ‘Hi James, its Marilyn. Is it still OK to come and visit you?’

‘Of course, it is. When are you coming?’

‘How about today? I’m in the area and not far away.’

‘Great,’ said James. ‘I’ll look forward to seeing you.’

He quickly attended to his toilet and dressed, and before he even had time to put the kettle on there was a knock at the door. He opened it to see a tall, red haired woman who greeted him with a broad smile. He spontaneously returned the smile in genuine pleasure, and then it was wiped off his face as he saw who was standing behind her. His jaw dropped in disbelief and his face conveyed all the mixed emotions he was experiencing as he saw the face of Helen. After thirty-five years he came face to face with the first girl he had loved, made love to, and been betrayed by.

Helen had been the first young woman that James had taken to meet his family. And she had been the one, who, right at the back of his mind in a far distant memory, he had been reminded of by the similarity with Marianne. He could have been looking at a version of Marianne as she may have looked in another

thirty years from now. They had the same shaped face and the same build. James stood on his doorstep flabbergasted. Quickly recovering his sense of hospitality, he bade them welcome, and wasn't sure whether or not to plant and kiss on each of them or give them a welcoming hug as he would have done to any old friend. He declined to do either, but simply stepped to one side and bid them enter, still not quite knowing what to say to either of them.

James ushered them into his home and, as he took their coats, he said exactly what was on his mind. 'Well this is a surprise. Forgive me, I just didn't expect this. Helen, how are you after all this time?' He didn't wait for an answer but asked them to make themselves comfortable whilst he put the kettle on for tea.

James had settled into a simple routine in his new home of going to work, sleeping and pottering about to make things comfortable for himself, and constantly thinking about Marianne and her little boy. He was totally unprepared for this, and his quickened pulse just kept on quickening. He knew he was going to be in for an interesting time with these two.

He made the tea and sat down with the two women and waited for an opening. Marilyn spoke first. 'You are my dad. I just know you are.'

Oh hell, thought James. This is all I need.

'If I were your father it would please me a very great deal,' began James. 'I can see you are a fine young woman. Intelligent and resourceful, with a degree in psychology. I would be proud to call you my daughter – believe me.'

'A masters in psychology,' she corrected him. 'Just look around your house,' she said as she got up from the chair and walked to one of his bookcases. She swept her hand across the shelves as she spoke. 'Psychology, spirituality, philosophy. All the things I am interested in. The Arabs and the Greeks, and you ride horses,' she said as she pointed to a picture of James on a horse taken when he won third prize in a dressage competition hanging on the wall. 'Explain that to me then. All these similarities in our interests, and just look at you. I am just like you.'

She wasn't. She was tall and red headed, whilst both he and her mother were shorter and dark haired. It was going to be a long day.

It was unfortunate that James had to go to work at seven that evening. He could have spent more time with Helen and Marilyn. There was much to discuss, and James hoped that when he bade them farewell that they would carry on their conversations and their friendships at other times in the future.

After they had gone, James went to work and pondered long on what had been exchanged between him and the two women who indelibly linked his past with his present and his future. There had been one very embarrassing moment that day. Helen had insisted that James was Marilyn's father and Marilyn had become convinced that he was too, despite the sums not adding up. She had asked him if he was willing to submit to a DNA test and he had agreed. It was an expensive test, around £500, and Marilyn had said she would pay for it. James told her she would be wasting her money. If she wanted him to be her father then he would be, but there was one other person who knew the truth, and that person could never reveal it. How could Helen admit to her daughter that she had been promiscuous as a 17-year-old girl, and how could James tell her that with her mother sitting there?

He had to settle with telling her what the medium's guide had told him to say, that she was her own person and she may never know who her real father was. In truth, Marilyn had been born in a women's prison. She had been put into care and abused as a child by the care system and was turning out to be a worse case than her own mother was. At the age of fifteen she had decided that enough was enough and that she would make a life for herself. She succeeded.

'Then how do you explain all the similar interests that you and I have?' she had asked him. James had responded with spontaneity to this one with some knowledge that he had.

'If you think about someone, even though they may be on the other side of the world, then those thoughts are conveyed to that person and back again. There is a link between the consciousness of one person and another, and what one person feels so does the other. You thought I was your father and you linked in with my unconscious. What I was doing, so you wanted to do. You became like me in every way because you

wanted to relate to a father. You made me your father. Thank you. You make me proud, but I didn't give you your genetic inheritance. Whoever that was will never know just what a fine woman you are. That is his loss, not yours.'

They had parted as friends, and in a brief telephone conversation that followed a few days afterwards, James told Marilyn that sometimes children are brought into this world to help their own parents. He told her that her mother was suffering and that she was here to help her. He never heard from her again – sadly, but he was genuinely proud and honoured that his own unconscious, his own spirit, had influenced her so much, even without his knowledge or conscious awareness.

There was a message in all of this for James. There was a parallel with Marianne and her son. He was being told not to worry about the little boy. He was here to help his mother, and he would be his father's son, no matter what. Once again James thanked his guides for their help in putting his mind at rest with regards to his son and Marianne. Now he could get on with his work.

James was kept busy in applying his new knowledge and developing his spirit release skills with many cases referred to him by the medium. They worked together on some cases, and on others James was given the opportunity to work directly with clients. He never charged them a fee and explained that this was not how he earned his living. His real reason for not wanting to charge them was his own integrity about resigning as a professional therapist; just like the Native American who banished himself from his own tribe in shame, this was James's way of repaying his debt. He would explain to people that Christ the Healer was a carpenter and never charged for his services, so neither would he. But some were grateful for his help and insisted that they pay him something anyway.

James encountered some very interesting cases that enabled him to develop his skills and knowledge about different kinds of spirit entity and how they affected people.

Geraldine was only fifteen years old. She was a fit and healthy girl, but for a reason that medicine couldn't fathom, she had lost the use of her legs and had to go to school in a wheelchair. At home she crawled around the house on her hands and knees. Geraldine went nicely into trance and James asked her unconscious to take her back to the cause. She was eight years old and playing in the garden at a friend's home when something happened to frighten her. James asked what it was and she was reluctant to say. Not wanting to explore the experience with her mother present, James left it at that and asked the medium if they could investigate with the soul rescue group.

When the DFE was asked what had attracted it to the little girl, the circle was told that she had been frightened by someone who was trying to interfere with her. This explained why she had been reluctant to disclose the cause with her mother present. This entity had caused Geraldine's disability and had demonstrated how an attachment can be attracted by fear and feed off shame.

Emily had been abused as a child but had come to terms with it and was progressing with her life, but she felt that something was still holding her back and wanted to know what it was. This was James's first case of an attached earthbound that had been a part of a person's past life. Samuel had been influential as a dark and foreboding figure to Emily before, and he had remained earthbound and attached to her as she was reborn into her current life. Because he had been with her for so long, Emily felt that something was missing after he had gone to the Light. She was told that now, for the first time in her life, she could be herself, and could reach her true potential.

Samantha had been diagnosed with schizophrenia seven years previously and had been hospitalised and put on anti-psychotic medication. Samantha had several DFE's with her. Her own house and the house of her parents were infested with them and James had to clear both houses and well as Samantha herself. The strongest entity with her was a real nasty that James didn't even try to communicate with. As soon as it was detected he felt the hackles on the back of his neck stand on end and adrenaline rushed through his body. He immediately called for St. Michael and his warrior angels to capture it in a cage of golden light and escort it away. Samantha's recovery was instantaneous, but unfortunately, she didn't adhere to James's instructions on how to keep herself safe. She attended spiritual development classes and, being wide open and

unprotected, she fell once more to negative influences and relapsed. It wasn't enough to just release entities from a person. They had to learn how to protect themselves and refrain from being vulnerable. In this instance poor Samantha failed to protect herself and was sectioned and hospitalised again, much to the distress of her family. James came to realise that he could only do so much. The rest was up to the person themselves. With this in mind, he once again began to be concerned for Marianne's safety and wished he could have contact with her and feedback as to how she was. But he couldn't, so he asked the medium if she would help him and check on Marianne.

The medium had learned by now to achieve the required altered state without any help from James. He asked for protection and help from their guides and then asked Marianne's higher self for permission to scan her spiritual energy field. There had been a couple of cases when permission had not been given by the higher self of an individual.

James and the medium had learned that sometimes what a person was experiencing was right and proper for them at the time, and a necessary part of their own spiritual pathway to development. Very often we are presented with problems and situations, including disease and distress, as a means of spiritual progress or karmic balancing.

James waited patiently for an answer from Marianne's higher self and wondered whether or not she had to continue to experience the discomfort and distress that had so far been dealt to her in her life cards. He breathed a sigh of relief when the medium gave him the nod that signalled that they had approval to proceed.

James asked the medium to scan Marianne's field and tell him what she saw.

'There is a darkness all around the head. All is confusion.'

'We need to understand the nature of this confusion around the one called Marianne. I would like to communicate with the consciousness of the darkness around Marianne. You may express your thoughts and feelings to me through the instrument. You may use her voice, and you will not harm her or cause her distress in any way. Do you have a name?'

'This is my domain.'

'Oh really? So, this is your domain is it? And who might you be?'

'Fuck off.'

Hearing this expletive spoken out of the mouth of the medium was so unexpected, and so out of character, that James knew instantly what he was dealing with.

'I now call St. Michael and his warrior angels to surround this entity so that it may not escape. Now you will talk to me.'

James had no intention of allowing this one to be taken away, like the one that had been removed from Marianne before, or the one that had so badly affected Samantha. He had no fear of confrontation with an entity who had caused him so many frustrations and disappointments each time he had tried to help her. This was a challenge he had relished for a long time now, and this was his chance to get even. His back was up and he was in for the kill.

'Now you will tell me everything I want to know. Why are you here? Who sent you? How long have you been with Marianne? TALK TO ME NOW.'

James cast his mind back to the time he had become angry and Marianne had hidden under the table. He had instinctively known then that he had faced a DFE when she had threatened to kill him. He had tried the exorcism prayer without having any knowledge of whether it had worked or not. He remembered saying to it then, 'You may as well give up now because sooner or later the Light will win. I promise you.'

Now here he was, in a position of power over the unseen demon, and with the help of the Warriors of Light, he was in charge. He was about to execute his revenge and mete out justice when the DFE began to whimper.

'What's the matter with you? Why don't you answer me?'

'There's a man.'

'What man?'

'He is big. He has a sword. He is going to kill me.'

Immediately James realised that the man seen by the DFE was St. Michael himself, and his mounting annoyance receded. He reminded himself that he was merely an instrument and that all life forms, including DFE's need help. He was doing what he had agreed to do in return for receiving this gift. He had made a

pledge that if he could find a way to help Marianne then he would be bound to be an instrument of healing for all others who were sent to him, and that included DFE's.

'He's not going to kill you. He is here to help you. His sword is a sword of Light. It won't hurt you, it will release you.'

The DFE began to whimper more loudly and the medium was cringing as if she herself was being approached by the warrior St. Michael.

'He is going to touch me with it. On my head. Please NOOOOOO!'

There was a pause as the medium relaxed and the whimpering stopped.

'Are you alright?' asked James. He was still talking to the DFE.

'He didn't kill me. He touched me on the head with the sword and I am alright. He tells me I can come out now.'

'Is there anything preventing you from coming out?'

'I am finding it hard. I have been here a long time and I can't remember how I got in. I'm tired. It's hard for me..... There's someone else coming.'

'Who is it? Can you see who it is?'

'It's a little girl. She is shining like a bright light. She is getting bigger.'

'How old is she?'

'About two years old.'

'Do you know who she is?'

'She is reaching out to me. She is helping me come out. She says, 'I forgive you.'''

The spirit of the little girl was a soul part of Marianne that had dissociated during some trauma when she had been about two years old. The DFE had opportunistically taken her place and had been able to influence the mind of Marianne since that time. In her absence from her rightful place with Marianne, this little girl part of her had been cared for by angels, and now she was able to resume her rightful place. The witnessing of her forgiveness of the DFE as she helped it out of the spiritual energy field of Marianne was a very moving experience for both the medium and for James. He thanked all concerned for their help, and he thanked the spirit guides for allowing him to be an instrument in helping Marianne, even from a distance. At last James felt that he was being a help to her after all. Even though he was still unable to contact her and verify any effects of his work, he felt contented with what he had been allowed to do.

Chapter 27

Confirmation Comes in Threes

It was a beautiful June day in the Summer of 2003. James was walking along the harbour, taking in the sights and sounds under a clear blue sky, and feeling a warm refreshing breeze that made the coloured fishing boats in the harbour bob up and down. Children played on the sands just past the harbour wall and mums and dads watched as their children paddled and made castles in the sand. Seagulls called as they swooped down on unsuspecting holiday makers, trying to steal morsels of sea food on the short journey from plate to mouth.

James stood and watched a man teaching his toddler son how to build a sand castle whilst the mother looked on, and a thought passed through his mind. That could have been himself there on the beach teaching his own son how to build a sand castle as Marianne watched. But it wasn't to be, and the thought fluttered away like a butterfly dancing on the warm breeze.

James breathed in the clean fresh air and felt at peace with himself and the world around him. Just then he bumped into an old friend, Nick and his wife Tracy. Nick had visited James in Crete and they had spent some time playing their guitars on the street and in bars just for the fun of it. Nick had returned home and met Tracy, and within a year they had married. The friends hadn't seen each other for some time and after exchanging heart felt hugs and laughter it was good to stop and pass the time of day.

Nick had heard rumours of Penny's outrage at James's affair with Marianne and asked him about it.

'Water under the bridge Nick,' replied James. 'That was more than two years ago and I haven't seen either of them since.'

'But isn't it true that you got the girl pregnant, you old sod?'

'True,' said James. 'No good denying it. The truth is I fell in love with the girl and she asked me for a little boy, so I gave her one. Then she just told me to bugger off.' It was the nonchalant way that James encapsulated his affair with Marianne into a neat little nutshell that made Nick and Tracy laugh. Nick was one of those people to whom everything was a joke and he relished in seeing the funny side of life. His laugh was infectious and James laughed with him.

'So, what are you up to now then?' asked Nick.

'Well, I have this problem,' replied James.

'And what's that then?'

'For the first time in my entire life I have no problem.' James told him with a broad smile.

Nick laughed out loud and asked him, 'So what's wrong with that?'

'Because it's the first time I can remember not having a problem I don't know how to deal with it. I mean this time two years ago I had two women demanding my time and attention and at each other's throats. Before that I was trying to study for my doctorate and develop a viable hypnotherapy practise. Before that I had always been struggling to get somewhere and get some kind of recognition for myself at the same time as trying to meet the needs of others. But now I don't have any of that. For the very first time in my life I am truly a free man, and I don't know what to do with my freedom.'

Nick and Tracy roared with laughter and Nick carried the funny side of it through by saying, 'Hey, I've got this friend whose got a problem.'

'Oh yeah? What his problem then?'

'He's got no problem. HA, HA, HA.....'

They all laughed until tears ran down their faces and passing tourists turned to look and see who was making all the noise. It was just like it was when James and Nick were in Crete. They just laughed all the time, and this attracted others who just wanted to laugh.

As James made his way back home with a warm afterglow he remembered those happy times in Crete with Nick and a host of other good friends. Their camp site in the mountains had been a haven of peace and

tranquillity, and on many a sultry night they had sat around the camp fire singing songs and telling stories. In such a silent valley, James often wondered if their laughter reverberating around the valley ever disturbed anyone in the village. He recalled the magic of the place and how everyone who came to visit him there had declared that it was 'enchanted'. He recalled how he had laid on his back looking up at the stars and the eternal heavens and had actually been aware of the slow but relentless rotation of the earth beneath him. He was at One with the Universe and everything in it.

They were probably the most contented days of his life, without a care in the world and surrounded by good friends in the bosom of nature herself. Then one day the alcoholics came and it was all taken away from him. Those were traumatic times, and James thought to himself, *Oh well, ups and downs, peaks and troughs, happiness and sadness, life goes on, round and round in cycles.* He was a free man again. Marianne had set him free and he could do anything he wanted to. Perhaps he could go back to Crete, or visit friends in Australia? He could go around the world if he had wanted to.

'Have you heard anything from Marianne Dad?'

The question came as a complete shock from his daughter Angie. They were in his kitchen washing up. John, her husband was working, and Angie and James's grandson, Matthew, had joined him for Sunday lunch. It was the day after James had bumped into Nick and Tracy, and it was approaching the 2nd birthday of Marianne's and James's son, just over a month away.

James had come to terms with never seeing Marianne again and had succeeded in putting her and the events of two and a half years ago behind him. Much had happened during the past year following the release of the second DFE from Marianne. James had established a reputation with Dr Templeton, the founder of the BASR, and the good doctor had taken the time to visit James in his home to discuss plans to build a web site for the association and give it some presence on the world wide web. Dr Templeton had also given James a very difficult case to resolve that had everyone baffled, and James had been fully occupied with these two projects. The brief encounter with Nick and Tracy had reinforced James's peace within himself.

Apart from having Marianne consigned to the past, there was another reason that Angie's question came as a shock. Marianne was not a welcome topic of conversation for her since Marianne had announced to her that her father had made her pregnant.

About a month into her pregnancy, Marianne had insisted that James's family be aware of their situation. James had wanted nothing more at that time for all his family to know, and he and Marianne had been excited at the prospect. But that's when things had started going wrong. There was Marianne's paranoia and her throwing eggs at the neighbour's windows, and James was more concerned for Marianne's psychological condition than he was for broadcasting to the world that he had made a young woman pregnant who was suffering from severe emotional disturbances. But part of Marianne's paranoia was the belief that James was ashamed of her and wanted to keep her away from his family. She therefore prematurely pressured him to release the news, and with great reluctance he took her to meet his daughter.

Angie was not ready to meet Marianne, but for the sake of her father's happiness she greeted her with open arms and a warm smile. James was in Angie's kitchen putting the kettle on, when he heard her call out with constricted vocal chords, 'Dad, I think you had better go.' Without any preamble whatsoever, Marianne had blurted out the words, 'I'm pregnant.' He went back into the living room to see Marianne sitting on the edge of the seat of an arm chair looking extremely guilty, and Angie gone. She had rushed upstairs to cry.

He shot an accusing glare at Marianne and said, 'What have you done?' He had only left her alone with his daughter for less than a minute and she had betrayed his trust in her in less time than it took to boil a kettle. He was speechless. He turned on his heel and followed Angie upstairs to find her weeping uncontrollably.

'I'm sorry Angie. Please forgive me. I didn't mean for this to happen. I'll come back and we can talk about it.' He went back downstairs and took Marianne out of the house. He was fuming. Now he had seen for himself just how dangerous Marianne could be when it comes to human relationships. She had no idea how to relate to people outside of her own family, and he was becoming fully aware of the damage she had done to all of them. All the time he had spent with her trying to teach her the power of human love, to treat

others as one would want to be treated oneself, and to have respect for others feelings, had all been to no avail. James quickly had to put all his frustrations to one side to avoid the risk of showing real anger to Marianne. That was the last thing he wanted to do. That's what everyone else did. But he was at a loss as to how he should proceed.

The incident had put a strain on James and his daughter's relationship, but their bond as father and daughter, and as friends was strong. After James and Marianne had parted company, he was able to talk to Angie about his mistake and explain partly what Marianne's problems were. Angie was understanding and forgave him, and as far as she was concerned, that was the end of the matter. She accepted that somewhere she had a half-brother that she may never see, and she put it out of her mind.

James's jaw dropped open as Angie asked her question. She asked him again, 'Well, have you heard from her?'

'No, I haven't, and I don't ever expect to.'

'Why not?'

'Because she is afraid of me?'

'But why should she be afraid of you?'

'She is afraid I will take her little boy away from her. That's why she tried to deny to me that I am his father. And there is another reason.'

'Oh? What's that?' asked Angie, intrigued to know.

'You have to realise that someone with the sort of problems that Marianne has, and because of the traumatic experiences she has had, she needs to exercise control.'

People who have been abused as children can become control freaks and hypervigilant. They are afraid of the world and everyone in it, and in all their relationships they need to exercise power and control. This makes them manipulative and demanding of others. Well, the reason she is afraid of me is that I refused to allow her to control me. I was trying to teach her another way of getting on in the world. I tried to use love to help her learn self-respect and respect for others and I failed. So, she sees me as someone she can't control or manipulate, and that makes her fearful of me. Does that make sense to you?'

'Yes, I suppose it does.'

James had wanted to explain more; that Marianne had only two ways of maintaining control, either to dissociate and become child-like and scream, or to offer sex. But he thought it unnecessary.

'But doesn't it bother you that you have a son you may never see?' Angie asked him.

James wasn't able to respond immediately with all the complexities of a truthful answer, so he told Angie what he was feeling at that moment in time. 'It would bother me if I let it,' he said to her.

'And you don't let it.'

'No.'

That was the end of the conversation, and after all the dinner things were cleared away, Angie and young Matthew made their way home.

It was another beautiful summer's day, and after Angie and Matthew had left, James went into the garden. He was still shocked by the fact that Angie had enquired about Marianne and was wondering what could have possibly triggered her to ask, when his next-door neighbour came into her garden to bring in her laundry.

She was all excited and wanted to share with James her good news. She announced to him that she had just made contact with an old school friend whom she hadn't seen for years. She told him that she had made contact through an internet web site and gave him the address. 'You should try it,' she said.

James had nothing better to do, so he switched on his computer and found the web site. He registered and then sat in front of the screen wondering why he was doing this. There was no one he needed to make contact with or to find. *But then maybe there was.....?*

Marianne had asked James if he could help her find her natural father, and he had tried several times, but without success. The only information he had about her father was that he was in the Royal Signals stationed in Maidstone in 1971. That was when she was conceived. James had used all the internet services known to him at the time and all the adoption agencies in the UK to try to find him. Then, when he attended the spirit release training course he had asked his instructors, 'If a person can project their mind to the mind of another person to find out what troubles them, is it possible to locate someone if you don't know where they are?'

The answer he received was that with mind projection and remote scanning we should never rule out anything as being impossible. In other words – perhaps. Unfortunately, there was never sufficient time during the course. Since then the urgency to find Marianne’s father had never arisen. But, triggered by Angie’s question, and then finding himself sitting there in front of his computer screen with a cursor flashing and waiting for an input, he spontaneously entered the name of Marianne’s father, ‘Timothy Aston’ – Royal Signals – Maidstone – 1971.

James was given his second surprise for that day. There it was, on the screen in front of his eyes. He found a man called Timothy Aston who had been in the Royal Signals in Maidstone in 1971. He was living in Australia. *So that’s why I could never find him before*, thought James. He just couldn’t believe it. *Why was this happening now? Marianne was past history, wasn’t she?* He had his own life to be getting on with.

Marianne had been the catalyst that led James away from his ambitions to become a doctor of psychology and into being a spirit release practitioner, and he had thanked the powers that be for guiding him into a less stressful and more satisfying path. But then he remembered his promises to her. *I will never leave you. I will never stop trying to find a solution for your problems. I will help you find your father.* These promises he had made. And he had a lot to thank her for. He had learned about multiple personality disorder, or dissociation, and his eyes had been opened to the horrific scale of the damage caused to people by abandonment and childhood abuse. He had been made aware of the damage caused by so-called ‘care’ systems, and of paedophiles, and the denial of society to recognise these scourges in our modern world. He had been led away from mere belief in a mythical deity but had been introduced by his own experiences to the real and undeniable spiritual source of all that there is. He had been introduced to the very real experience of face to face confrontation with evil forces and the dark side of consciousness. He had faced his own dark side and he knew all about fear and anger and how to confront them as powerful entities in their own right. He had learned that past lives are realities, and that there are such things as karma and karmic debt. He had learned all of these things, and now he was being reminded that his task was not finished. Not by a long way. *But where to go from here? Thought James. What to do about this? Why am I being given this information about her natural father now?* How should he go about informing Marianne’s biological father of her existence, and how could he contact her to let her know that he had found finally found him?

James was pondering these questions, whilst having a cup of coffee in his local pub when he was engaged in conversation by one of the locals. David was retired and spent his time cultivating a vegetable allotment, and with a bag of spuds and a bag of greens by his side, he talked to James about the season’s crop.

Suddenly he changed the subject and began talking about his younger days when he was a flying taxi pilot in the Northern Territories of Australia back in the nineteen-fifties. James listened with only half an interest as David talked about the cars that the British Motor Corporation was building in Australia, and then he said, ‘But of course my all-time favourite car has always been the Aston.’

‘What did you say?’ interrupted James.

‘What about?’ replied David.

‘Let me get this right,’ said James. ‘One minute you were talking about vegetables, then the next minute you are talking about the Aston in Australia. Why?’

‘I don’t know,’ said David. ‘I was just making conversation. Why? Is anything wrong?’

How could James explain what he was thinking to a man who didn’t believe in anything he couldn’t see or get stuck under his finger nails? David was a devout atheist and during previous conversations with James had denounced and denied anything and everything that James believed in that smacked of the non-material world.

But here he was; delivering a message from the universe about a man called Aston who lived in Australia. *Was this just pure coincidence?* thought James. *Bullshit. This is no coincidence. This is message number three. This is confirmation.*

What really struck James at this moment was this. In order to seek advice and help from the unseen source of all there is, or the spirit guides, he had always felt the need to communicate through a person who was gifted in the spiritual communication arts, like a clairvoyant or a Tarot reader. But here he was, sitting on a bar stool in his local pub, being delivered a message by someone who had no knowledge or belief in these gifts.

He realised right then, at that precise moment in time, that *anyone* can be used to convey important messages from the spirit world, and it dawned on him then that his own daughter's question must have been triggered in this way. What other reason could there be? Angie had no interest whatsoever in Marianne other than the fact that she had caused both of them immeasurable distress, and that had been in the past.

Then he thought, *If the power of Good exists and can communicate in this way, then why not the powers of the Dark?* There had to be two sides to the coin. How could there be one without the other?' James considered himself very fortunate. He knew the difference, and he had further evidence, if only for himself, that his experiences at the hands of Marianne were the result of her being used without her knowledge for the destruction of human dignity and human love. He needed no more evidence, and he knew that his task, and his duty to Marianne was far from done. He had to see it through right to the end.

James had made contact with Marianne's natural father, who had no previous idea of her existence. He learned that she had two brothers and a sister and entered into a dialogue with the sister. They had several long-distance telephone conversations, and James explained the circumstances, that he could only pass on information via Marianne's adoptive parents about her father, her sister and her brothers. He explained that Marianne did have relationship problems and that no one was to have any expectations as to how the news would be received by her. Then he set about trying to find where Marianne lived.

He tried everything, and everything he tried came up with the same result – her old address and telephone number. He had no alternative but to send details of Marianne's Australian family via her adoptive parents. When he tried to talk to them on the phone they just put the phone down on him. Marianne had instructed them to have nothing to do with James, and from previous experience of her tantrums and the emotional distress she could cause them, they adhered to her wishes. After two and a half years of no contact with Marianne he learned that he was still cut off from her completely, and there was nothing he could do about it but hope that the information about her family would reach her. He had done what had been asked of him and he could do no more. He then left the unfoldment of events in the hands of those he could not see or hear.

Although James had learned to be patient, there were still times when his anxieties would get the upper hand. Until Angie's question, and the miracle of finding her father just like that had brought thoughts of Marianne to the forefront of his mind, James had been able to focus on other things. But now she was there again in the forefront of his daily thoughts, and he was helpless to do anything as his frustrations grew. The days and weeks ticked by with no news from Marianne or from Australia and James was left hanging in doubt and uncertainty. Then within a few days of each other two very strange things happened.

The first of these strange happenings was at work. He had clocked on and reported to the traffic clerk for his night's work who handed him his assignment and the keys to the truck he would be driving. James sat down in the driver's rest room with a cup of coffee to enter his details on his running sheet, and when he moved to pick up his truck keys he noticed that the key had become detached from the key ring. He looked at the key and the ring and wondered how they had become separated. He began to try to return the key to its ring and found that it was not an easy task. *How then could it have come off?* He asked himself. He went back to the traffic clerk and said to him as he handed the key and the ring over, 'Explain to me please how this ring and this key could possibly become detached from each other?' The traffic clerk took them in his hands and examined them very carefully, and said, 'No way without you separating them deliberately.'

'That's what I thought,' said James and went back to the job of reconnecting them.

The second strange happening was when James discovered that the number plate on his car was crooked. As he touched the plate it came away in his hands, and he had to go to the service station where his car was regularly maintained to buy some double-sided extra-strength adhesive tape to secure the plate. 'How much do you want?' asked the attendant.

'Only enough to secure one number plate,' replied James. The attendant picked up a roll to measure it out, and as he unrolled it to the required length there was the exact amount required.

'Well, isn't that a coincidence!' exclaimed the attendant.

'How much do I owe you?' asked James.

'That'll be seventy-five pence please.'

James emptied his pocket of all the loose change he had and counted it out. There were exactly seventy-five pence.

The attendant gave James a funny look and said, 'One coincidence yes, but this is weird. You're not some kind of magician, are you?'

'No,' said James with a smile. He had an afterthought that he decided not to share with the attendant, *But I think I know someone who is.*

As James walked back home to fix his number plate he felt a strange calm come over him. All the frustrations at not knowing whether or not Marianne had received information about her Australian family seemed to evaporate, and he no longer felt the need to worry about what was happening beyond his awareness. A thought occurred to him about this incident with the double-sided tape, and more importantly about the truck key ring. Having one's thoughts and ideas being influenced by spirit beings is one thing, but when they can remove a key from its ring like that is something else. *Could they really do that?* Was he being simply reassured or was there something else he needed to know, or needed to do?

As part of Dr Templeton's association web site project, James had set up an experimental discussion group between spirit release practitioners. He had invited members of the association, together with friends and colleagues to participate in it for the exchange of ideas and information. The group attracted practitioners from as far afield as Germany, Australia and North America, and James invited the group to help him solve the problem that Dr Templeton had given him. The case concerned a woman who was being sexually abused by a spirit entity. James had had long conversations with this entity, and every method he had learned had failed to remove it. One of the group's participants in North America announced her willingness to attempt to solve this problem by remote means.

Having found what appeared to be a solution to the problem, James invited her to 'look in' on Marianne and tell him what she found. He gave the remote scanner only Marianne's name and the county in which he assumed she was still living and waited. This was to be a test of the accuracy and validity of remote scanning, and an extended dialogue was to follow with this long-distance healer that was to lead to a set of circumstances that James could never have imagined in a million years.

6 Aug 03

James had received a communication from the American spirit release practitioner which read:
Hello James,

We didn't have a lot of time to work on Marianne. But we did get some work on her done and really, I think the best approach with her would be to take it slow. Below are the results. Please don't let me know if this information is right or wrong because we will be doing her again. Less information is better. You can just log this and tell me at a later date when I feel we have done all we can for her.

Marianne was standing perfectly erect with her arms straight out and up out from her sides. She was leaning forward about 6 inches. Below her was a wind and a black mist rose about her and curled up and under her arms and engulfed her whole body. She had white light behind her like a spot light being projected from behind and the light ever so slightly curled around her BUT (and this is important) it was only as high as the lower back. The only reason I could make out the front of her was because of the light being reflected.

I got a feeling of complete remorselessness? She could perform evil or good with no concern, totally self-serving. NO connections to anyone/self-contained. And this is EXTREMELY rare, in fact I have never seen it before. There were no cords from her at all that lead to anywhere.

Her heart was totally non-functioning, zero/zilch. Her feeling centre was absolutely closed down. She has a high intuition, she uses the power that supplied the heart to supply this area. And also, her creative centre was performing at peak performance. Sexual power is not used just for procreating but to FEED.

I kept hearing the words over and over again 'cold' 'dark'. I felt sinister and defiant. Very sinister and very defiant.

The time I had left with her I spent putting gold armour around her aura to seal it. After that happened my heart began to ache like I was experiencing great sorrow. I am leaving her to heal like that for a while until I can get back to her at a later date. She is very complex.

Talk with you soon.
Best wishes
Daphne

Reply dated 7th August

Thank you, Daphne,

As you have seen there has been much to concern me and much to be done. I am most grateful to you for lending valuable assistance here.

I and my colleague here will continue to work with her remotely, and I thank you for all your continued efforts as and when you are able to help.

This is a most challenging task, but we will succeed because a severely damaged soul depends on it.

God Bless you
James

Dated 7 Aug 2003

James,

This does concern me. I can't seem to get her image out of my mind and that means that it is trying to tell me something that I can't see right now.

I was shocked at the severity of her state. I have done hundreds of people and only one comes close to this type. I don't want to confirm that she is a tough case in my mind or yours, I think that is just as dangerous but she is coming across very complex. I am not sure if this is an illusion that she is throwing up, but it could be.

The pose that she was in is one of complete vulnerability, especially the leaning forward with her arms out so that she is unable to catch herself. I am wondering if she is on the edge of suicide or even cares anymore. What is holding her up? Is she using it as a threat? Is she using it to display power? What is the payoff for being in this state? Why is the heart so closed down yet the intuition high, and the sexual centre? What does she mean by the word FEED?? She also feels really grounded, like she has a purpose to all of this. There is an end result that she is striving for. You don't have to answer these questions, in fact it would be better if you didn't. I just put them out there for both you and I to maybe question.

I am also wondering if perhaps when I get deeper into this if we could compare notes. I have a feeling her manipulative power is honed to perfection. and she may use it as a weapon.

There is something else around her that feels very strong. It doesn't feel like a dysfunctional family fuelling this like there usually is. It makes my heart race when I think about it. I am not sure if it is out of fear or out of curiosity...perhaps both. It doesn't feel like she is involved with a cult. It feels generated from her but yet not.

Two questions if you would answer, are you still in verbal contact with her? Has she requested this healing? I am going to think about this some more and by the time we go in on her again, I should have some better answers for you with more time to read her.

Talk with you soon.
Love and light
Daphne

Chapter 28

Keeper of the Soul

James considered very carefully what Daphne, the remote scanner in America had seen in the dimension where the soul mind lived. It all fitted so well with Marianne's behaviour, but he was finding it hard to accept the probability that he had been deceived and betrayed all along.

Her plea to be loved by him, and her own declarations of love for him could have all been false. Had she merely used him, and used his sensitivity and his willingness to love and to be loved as a weapon against him as a man, and all the time was feeding off his sexual energy? Fortunately for him, he had been tapping into the boundless energy of universal healing and was therefore unaffected. Could this be what confused her at the time? James had thought that her confusion was brought about by the fact that she was experiencing real love for the first time. He had told her outright, 'Love is not pain. It is not abuse and it doesn't hurt.' He thought he had failed to get his message across and that she was finding it difficult to separate love making from sexual abuse. But these revelations from Daphne were beginning to put a different perspective on things altogether.

Her rejection of him as the father of her son, and her rejection of his genuine love for her had wounded him deeply. With the time that had passed he had recovered and his wounds had healed, but to learn that everything she had said and done in the name of love was no more than manipulation and a means of revenge was something quite different. Penny had been right all along. This woman was dangerous – really dangerous. If she was being used as an instrument of evil for the destruction of human dignity and of human love without her knowledge then she had to be saved from it. On the other hand, if she was the instrument of evil herself then she had to be stopped.

In spite of these reflections, James still held an image of Marianne from the very first time she had asked him to help her. He continued to see the vulnerable and helpless victim of childhood abuse, abuse that he hadn't understood at the time, and he felt his compassion rise in answer to her plea. He had made a terrible mistake then, thinking that human love was the answer, and he would pay for that mistake again and again. But his heart refused to allow him to walk away from it. He had to put things right. And there was something else – he genuinely loved her.

James decided it was time to make an appointment to see the medium, his scanner, and after a detailed discussion with her Spirit Guide he reported back his findings to his new colleague thousands of miles away across the Atlantic.

Dated 8 August 2003

Hi Daphne,

Welcome to the 'team', which consists of myself and a medium here in the UK.

Other therapists are standing by, one to counsel Marianne's adoptive parents and another for Marianne herself when her consciousness decides to seek practical help again.

I had a long and detailed consultation with a high-level guide yesterday through the medium and this was their advice:

Her light is almost obscured by darkness. We have been successful in releasing two very nasty DFE's from her in the past, but because of her experiences throughout this life, from birth abandonment, and in previous lives she is empty of all emotion, has no direction and no hope. The darkness that surrounds her now is the negativity of her own hopelessness.

It is this conscious attitude that prevents her from seeing me, or any other practitioner, face to face. We therefore have to continue working with her remotely.

We are advised by the guides to take the following action:

The medium and I have to take her through past life events and decisions at the soul level. The path she has chosen was too difficult for her. When I asked the guide why she chose this path he said she was given no choice. But we must take her back and set things right so that her current pathway can be altered.

He told us that in order for her to reach a conscious decision to move forward positively she must first receive a supply of energy from other light workers. We must give her a drip feed of unconditional love through the crown chakra so that it filters down through her energy field to drive out the negativity that she has allowed to accumulate within herself. Because she has chosen to reject all offers of love at the conscious level, this drip feed at the soul level will gradually change her conscious attitude. Because we are not in conscious contact with her we will only know that our efforts are working when we hear from her that she has decided to ask for help again. The reason that she went into hibernation is because when she asked (me) for help the last time (three years ago) the amount of unconditional love and human compassion she received was too much for her to handle. In addition, at that time she had these two dark force entities who kept interfering with her recovery. One of them caused her to threaten to kill me.

She has forgotten how to receive love and how to give love. The gradual filtering of love at the soul level will slowly remind her.

Her resistance is at the conscious level and she attracts people to her who will abuse her or reinforce her negativity. We are told that she will be fed with unconditional love from the highest source because we have asked for help from the highest source. She now has the protection from this higher source, so there is no need for us to give her this kind of protection, but our energy must be directed slowly to feeding her with love so that it eventually fills her from within. The light of this love will expand to fill her aura and build a shell around her from the inside to the outside. If we put protection around her it will prevent the negativity from being pushed outwards.

I send her soul unconditional love every day, and the medium and I plan to put the guide's advice into action as soon as we can. When we work I will tell you so that you are not working with her at the same time. How does that sound to you?

James

A few days later, when it was convenient for the medium to slip James's request for another session into her busy schedule, they met again to carry out the Guide's instructions.

Following what had become a well-established routine, James asked the medium to access the spiritual energy field of Marianne after having gained permission from her higher self to proceed.

'Tell me what you find,' he asked the medium.

'There is anger.'

With two DFE's gone, and without preamble James wanted to get to the core of the cause of Marianne's anger and why she had manipulated him in the way that she had.

'We need to know what has caused this anger. Can we go to the cause please?'

James saw a shift in the expression on the medium's face as she accessed an experience in Marianne's spirit consciousness. 'Can you tell me what you are experiencing?' he asked her.

'I'm playing.'

'Who with?'

'I am alone.'

'Where are you?'

'In a field.'

'Where are your friends, your family?'

'They are somewhere else. There are too many of us. We are thirteen children and my father travels with us for work.'

'You are a family of travellers?'

'Yes.'

'What place is this? Where are you?'

'This place is called La France.'

'How old are you?'

'I am eight years old.'

'Tell me what happens next.'

The child started to cry, and James asked, 'Why are you crying?'

'They've gone. I am alone. I don't know what to do. I am lost.'

As the story of this past life of Marianne's unfolded James learned that the family had all gathered together to move on and the little girl had been left behind, inadvertently abandoned. She was found lost and alone by someone who took her in and abused her. She ran away and learned to fend for herself by stealing and sleeping rough until she met a boy who was living the same way. They teamed up and continued their vagrant life together until she reached the age of fifteen. They were caught stealing and she died from a blow to the head.

In the next life the spirit of Marianne found herself as a very small child, an infant, lying beside her dead mother. Again, she was found by a stranger who took her home and abused her until she died. James had heard enough and wanted to find a solution to this constant cycle of birth into unfavourable circumstances, abandonment and abuse. He brought the medium away from the soul mind of Marianne and asked, 'I would like to speak with the one who guides us please if it should be appropriate.'

'We are here. What is it you wish to know?'

'Are you one of those who are helping with the work we are doing with the one we call Marianne on the earth plane?'

'Yes.'

'What is it you would like us to do?'

'You have achieved much and we are pleased with your progress. There is still much to learn and much to do for you to achieve your objective.'

Objective? Thought James. *There's that word objective again.* A long time had passed since James had witnessed the capture and removal of the first dark force entity from Marianne. He had been told then that there was an objective, but he had been too much in awe and too embarrassed to ask at that time. It was rare to get the opportunity to talk directly with a spirit guide and James always felt a little too small and insignificant to bother them with such trivial questions, that to them, the answers may have been obvious. He often thought that he should really be much wiser than he was whilst in a dialogue with beings of such high wisdom. He plucked up the courage to ask what to him sounded like a silly question.

'Please forgive my ignorance, for I am unable to see into the future of events that may have been planned, but what is my objective?'

'To do this work of course.'

'Of course. Thank you.' Now he did feel silly, but overcame it quickly and asked, 'And what of the objective in this life of the one we call Marianne? What is her objective please?'

'To learn to deal with abandonment in a different way.'

'In a different way?'

'Yes. Her problem originates many, many life-times ago. For each subsequent life the pattern has been repeated and many layers have been added to the onion, if you see what I mean.'

'Yes, I understand.'

'There is much work to be done, and it will take time and patience and dedication.'

'I have the time and patience and I am dedicated to the task,' said James

Dated 12 August 2003 from Daphne.

Marianne, Marianne, Marianne,
My... what a busy girl we have been. And how do we begin to explain you?

Well James, um ah, I really have no clue where to begin. I am afraid that if I leave the least little detail out, it will be valuable but to try and get it all in one e-mail seems an impossible task.

The half hour I spent with her was exhausting. The very first thing that happened was I was standing in an abyss. And from my hips down these waves of light started flowing from me and as the rings pulsed, figures appeared. There were three solid figures and about seven non-solid. They were the ones I could only feel, except for one and she was a female. As the waves rushed to her she was transparent and had a form but just an outline, her name was Alice. There were three men Frank, David, Jacob/Jonathan, not sure about the last one's name. I have no idea what this means. Chloe thought that perhaps it was past, present, future people she knew or knows.

Something very wrong happened to Marianne at the ages of 20-5-13. There were other numbers that came up and they were 17 -18-2-8-3-7. But 20-5-13 were the most significant and in that order.

Now for the tough part to explain. This was all happening at once which blew my mind. She was speaking in a foreign tongue. This came across very strong, and it hurt a lot in the heart. In fact, I started weeping as the emotion came over me. She was speaking in Hebrew or Latin. She kept repeating over and over again. 'I am a messenger, I am a messenger.' And she was writing in Hebrew on a wall, mumbling. She was considerably older.

She was frustrated that she can't get the message out, and at the same time she was rocking on the floor with her head in her knees and her arms covering her head saying, 'I want it to leave me alone. I don't want to. Leave me alone. I'm tired of this. I am hearing voices all the time.' She seems to be in a constant state of panic.

This is when she felt too fragile to continue and I backed way off. And I went back to the beings in the light.

Frank is the one of all the guys that stood out. I couldn't get anything from him.

The three guys seemed to have been real losers.

'Alice' on the other hand was a little more co-operative. The images I got from her were, blood, grass, rifle, and wedding. This was as far as she elaborated to me.

I think she is combining all past, present, and future together and doesn't have a clear grasp on any of it.

I held her, rocked her and surrounded her with all different shades of pink. Light to hot pink all around her.

She needs nurturing and that is how we left her. Things started getting way too complicated and running altogether. So, we stopped there.

Good luck on Wednesday.

Daphne

Wednesday 13/08/03

'Allow part of your consciousness to be taken to the spiritual energy field of the one who calls herself Marianne and tell me what you find.'

'Pressure in the head and confusion.'

'Anything else? What I would like to do is communicate with the spirit mind of Marianne, and for you, the medium to allow yourself to be used to convey her thoughts and feelings to me. Is that OK with you?'

'Yes'

'I'd like to speak to the spirit mind of Marianne please. I'd like to understand what you are thinking and feeling, what confuses you. Can you speak to me?'

'The state of mind goes back aeons of time.'

'Can we go back aeons of time? Can we go back to the root cause of this confusion? Is it possible? Yes or No?'

'With time and patience.'

'Who is it who is speaking to me? Can you tell me your name?'

'I am Spirit. No name required.'

'I am trying to reach the root cause of the difficulty that is being experienced by the one called Marianne here on the Earth Plane. Are you here to help?'

'Yes'

'Then you are welcome. I am most grateful. Thank you. Where do we begin? What can you tell me?'

'Through aeons of time and through many life times on the Earth Plane. Many experiences that run one into another.'

'I'm listening.'

'Going back to when spirit was first created all was beautiful, peaceful. Everything was wonderful.'

'Please continue.'

'Everyone, all spirit beings have love, and peace surrounded them. There is no anger, only truth. There is only the One being. A total Oneness and experience of love. This is where we should be all the time.'

'There is an important message you have for us, is there not?'

'When the Earth Plane and the Spirit world converged into conflict always there is another that derives power. Needs and feeds on pain from others spreading like a disease through the spiritual planes into the earth's density.'

'Do you have a name for this other?'

'The name of the whole is hard, for it is known only as Evil and Anger that needs to manipulate. The anger of being rejected by those of the light. If only we could go back to the very beginning of time allowing the love to manifest into this energy of conflict.'

'But isn't that our ultimate goal – to welcome the darkness back into the light?'

'This is true. But the dark does not always want the light.'

'What you describe to me is something that we can appreciate and understand. It is a message that has been lost by the multitude and we have an obligation to try to remind them with your help. With time and patience perhaps, this goal will be achieved. But for now, there are those, as you know, that have been caught up and used by the darkness.'

'Yes.'

'And it is these individuals that we attempt to help rescue and bring back to the light. And it is one such person that we are attempting to rescue now.'

'It is a long journey. A long journey. Many different experiences that have not been released.'

'It is our task to explore these experiences and release the negative energy they contain. We know something of the principles but not all, and we need your help and guidance. Are you one to help and guide us?'

'I will try, for the responsibility of the soul is with me.'

'Thank you. The soul energy of the person we are trying to help right now bears a terrible burden, and we need to find a way of releasing that burden. Can you tell us the nature of the burden she carries?'

'Debt of karma.'

'It would be helpful for us to understand what her debt of karma is. Would it be possible for us to be taken back to the original cause that created the karmic debt? Is that possible?'

'Jealousy and anger, and greed.'

'How long ago?'

'Many, many, many lifetimes.'

'Whose jealousy and greed and anger are we talking about?'

'The lady. The lady.'

So, she had jealousy and greed and anger towards someone else?

'Yes.'

'Now what she experiences is anger. She has nothing to be jealous of and she is not greedy. So, we need to understand the mechanics of this karmic debt. Would it be possible for us to go with her, with her experience to understand it from her experience?'

‘Very happy and in love here on the earth plane. Nothing can go wrong until rejection by one she gave her all to. Bitterness overtook logic. Revenge and anger replaced the love.’

‘You are not talking about his lifetime, are you?’

‘No. The very beginning.’

‘In the very beginning she was rejected by the one she loved when she was happy?’

‘Yes.’

‘And the bitterness and anger still persist into this life time now? Is that what you are saying to me?’

‘There are many life times of changes as she has gone through many experiences of not being able to handle the rejection.’

‘So, rejection from the loved one is the original cause? And through her many life times and many experiences this one karmic thread has run all the way through. Is this what you are saying to me?’

‘She has lived it over and over again until only anger remains.’

‘What is the solution my friend? What would you suggest?’

‘For her to recognise the very beginning of time. For the pathway that she has walked a great deal of damage has been done to her own spiritual existence. Each time refusing to see that by releasing she would gain. Her strength has grown in the understanding that she must be in total control.’

‘But the more we try to control – the less control we have. Is that not true?’

‘This is true.’

‘How can we teach someone if they understand nothing else but anger?’

‘It is for them to recognise. This is why she had gone through so much in so many lifetimes trying to find a way clear to return once more to the perfection she once was.’

‘How many more life times must she endure this agony before she herself comes to realise?’

‘This will be her choice. Many people have tried many times in many lifetimes to help.’

‘And we shall try again. We cannot reach her at the conscious level on this earth plane, so we must try to reach her at the soul level on a higher plane. I see you nodding – you agree?’

‘Yes.’

‘And this is where we need help and guidance. Without this person sitting in front of us with the ability to raise her consciousness to the soul level we must do it this way for her.’

‘Yes.’

‘Thank you. We know it will take time. We have the patience. We have the determination. It is important to us. And we thank you for being there to help. Is there some way that I can address you so I can recognise your presence?’

‘My name is Angria.’

‘That sounds like angrier, more angry.’

‘No. Angriaaar.’

‘Is that a female name?’

‘It is, as you say on the earth plane, neither male nor female.’

‘I understand. So, if I call you by name Angriaar will you come?’

‘Yes.’

‘Thank you.’

‘Will shall work again and I shall listen to your advice and follow your guidance. I thank you and I look forward to the opportunity of working with you for the purpose of releasing the karmic debt of this tormented soul. Thank you.’

‘She is receiving help on the soul level. But she has a stubbornness of mind on the physical level.’

‘I know. But is it possible for the work that is being done at the soul level to filter through to the conscious level on the earth plane?’

‘All work done through unconditional love has its benefits and achievements can be made. But she has this part within her own brain cells of memory that will not release her. In sleep states there will be access to her. In dream state to release the agony of being in this vacuum.’

‘This is how the work must be done then. Yes?’

‘Yes.’

‘Let me ask you this. How will we know that the work is progressing?’

‘The change will filter through into her life. But she has experienced similar before, but will not trust that everything can turn out in the opposite direction to which she is...’

‘So, we have another task, and that is to find a way for her to learn to trust. You have given us enough at this time to think on, and I am not going to request any help from you further at this time. Only to say thank you for your help. Thank you for being there, and we look forward to working with you again. God bless you.’

‘Blessings.’

After the medium returned to normal waking consciousness, James had another conversation with another guide who advised him that Marianne’s anger is contained in neurological pathways in the physical brain. The solution would be to specifically ask her own higher self to change this neurological pathway at the cellular molecular level. This must be done slowly and gradually over time and with patience because to eradicate it completely in one go would cause her brain trauma.

This method of molecular re-synthesis gives us the opportunity to bypass the need for her to re-experience the time consuming and difficult task of reliving the past life trauma of rejection. Once this has been achieved she will only have to reconcile her experiences of rejection in this life.

James was able to rationalise the tasks in hand thus:

Firstly, to ask her higher self to initiate the procedure for cellular re-synthesis. Secondly to continue to drip-feed her with unconditional love during her sleep time. Then there was the task he had just attempted – to go right back to the beginning, to the very first life when she had been rejected or abandoned.

Something felt not quite right to James. The voice of the one called Angriar, the one who called himself ‘the keeper of the soul’ sounded a little suspect? James had trouble putting his finger on it and he listened to the tape again. Negative. That was the word – negative. The spirit guides were always encouraging and positive in their consultations and James always came away feeling lifted and energised. But this one left him feeling that there was a terrible burden to be overcome. The guides always spoke with confidence and authority, but the voice that had come through the medium felt burdened and depressed, and in comparison, to the voices of the spirit guides, who knew exactly what they wanted to say, this one paused a lot in the dialogue as if he, or it, was thinking of what to say next, rather like a lair does when choosing words carefully.

What this spirit said could be accepted and held true, but it was the way it said it. Something else troubled James about his one. He was trying to access the spirit mind of Marianne, but this one stepped in uninvited and did not introduce himself. James felt as if he had been side-tracked somehow and diverted from his original task. He held these reservations in the back of his mind, and later he would listen to this tape recording again and again. In the meantime, his task continued with the aid of the medium he had met at the church and she agreed to develop their working relationship with the problem of Marianne. After a few days they met again to continue the work.

Chapter 29

Patience is the Key

Weds 27th August 2003

James invited the medium to go into trance and prepare herself to contact Marianne's soul mind.

'Allow part of your consciousness to be taken to where Marianne is at the soul level so that you can view without any interference and without any disturbance whatsoever to just check and see how she is. And tell me what you find.'

'Do we have permission to proceed from Marianne's higher self?'

'Yes.'

'Tell me what you find. Can you see her aura?'

'Yes.'

'How does it look?'

'Dark.'

'Do you see any light at all?'

'Swirling mist at the moment.'

'See if you can move closer and see into the mist.'

'I'm not being allowed to go in any further at the moment.'

'OK. That's fine. We don't want to disturb her. We don't want her to feel that she is being unduly influenced in any way if that is not her wish. She needs to be able to exercise her own free will. If she chooses to be there then that's fine.'

'Now I'm going to ask Marianne's higher self to assist us in our knowledge and our understanding, and to ask if what has been suggested is possible and can work be done in this area? What are we to learn? I'm asking Marianne's higher self to speak to me through the medium.'

The medium began to speak with a very gentle and loving voice. This voice expressed compassion in its essence.

'There is work being done on several levels. She is confused and fearful. She is still not trusting of anyone.'

'Is there anything that can be done to help her with alleviating her fear of those who will want to help her?'

'She believes that her fear is her protection. She is fearful that any sign of weakness on her part would cause her destruction. Even though this is irrational thought.'

'Is there any way that we can overcome this?'

'It is not that your efforts are not good for the soul and for the good of this person on the earth plane. And when one is distressed in the body and the spirit, healing must take place. But the healing needs to go so deep. Far beyond the capacity of your current understanding.'

'So, what is there that we can do? Is there anything?'

'There is impatience that creates the wave of destruction, of distortion creating a fear.'

'So, we must be patient yes?'

'Patience is the most important thing for the love that can be sent from those of the higher selves into the existence of creation - the mind. Clearing the mind for someone else on the physical is something that is greatly misunderstood. The clearing of the mind needs to be started from the person involved with their understanding that the clearing can create a more loving environment on the earth plane and also within the spiritual world. But the mind that has been only experiencing pain and distrust, anger and hatred for aeons of time cannot understand the unconditional love that is given. It is not of her understanding or of her acceptance. So, you can appreciate the difficulty that lies ahead. But nonetheless, with patience and time you may be able to achieve the results required.'

‘So, what you’re saying to me is that patience is the key and we will succeed.’

‘Yes, you *could* succeed with patience.’

‘And there is nothing more that can be done at this time?’

‘To establish something too quickly would be to cause fear and frustration. Trust can be won over a long period of time, but any misunderstanding would create another barrier of mistrust.’

‘OK, Fine. I thank you very much for your wisdom and your advice. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?’

‘We feel that she is accepting minute energies of love, as grains of sand in the desert. It takes many, many grains of sand to make a desert, so you can understand the problem is vast, but by adding one grain of sand to another it builds into a larger area.’

‘Thank you. And until we need to speak again I bid you farewell with blessings.’

James then spoke to the medium, ‘Bring your consciousness back into yourself and with your permission may we communicate with your spirit guide or whosoever should see fit to impart wisdom and guidance to us. Is there someone who wishes to speak with us?’ A voice emerged from the mediums lips.

‘I will speak this day.’

The voice that spoke was markedly different from the voice of the higher self of Marianne. It spoke with a deeper tone and gave the impression of a higher authority. James was becoming more accustomed to voices with authority and felt less intimidated by them. He responded with confidence, saying, ‘Thank you. Whom do I have the honour if addressing?’

‘My name is Mishu. I have been watching the proceedings with great interest. This is a battle that has been going on within her own physical and mental states of endurance and existence. She has been around for many, many aeons and gone through a great deal of trauma and creating a great deal of misfortune for herself and others who are involved with her. She is a powerful soul of the spirit and we have been watching the way that she has been handling herself. She is so conditioned into her life on the earth plane and finds it very difficult to change or understand the reason for the need for change. She sees only fault in others and believes that she is not at fault. When one is not aware of one’s own shortcomings it is always difficult to put it right.

So, working on these levels of understanding, to show her a mirror with her true self reflected in it would be an advantage to you. For to see truly who you really are can sometimes be quite uncomfortable and quite painful.

Because you have been so close to her on the earth plane for some time now, it’s very difficult because she shies away from love or from anyone who shows her any compassion or love. But nonetheless in sleep state she could be shown who she really is if she, through her own higher self, is willing to look in that direction and see, then it could be a way forward for you. But it could also be dangerous because she would not like what she saw and she could rebel and go even deeper into an existence of pain and distress. So, one has to be careful as to how this is to be done, and whether it should be done straightforwardly or a little at a time. It is with danger and caution if this is to be attempted.’

James thought it was time for him to contribute to the conversation with the spirit guide and offered, ‘Might I suggest that before this is attempted, that a degree of trust needs to be established between her and the person who will be called upon to support her.’

‘This is so true and it is important that the trust is maintained, but because of her present attitudes, something that is said perhaps innocently could be changed and turned around at an instance. So, patience and very, very careful action is needed. Is it very well understood what I have just said?’

‘Yes, it is clearly understood. This still leaves us with the problem of how to achieve this. We are told by her own higher self that patience is required and inactivity at the moment.’

‘Inactivity is essential at the moment, for everything needs to be done very slowly and at a gentle pace. But it seems to me that there is a possible way that we could go forward with this and put the mirror in place, but we could cover the mirror so that it is shielding any full impact of self. That only a slight variation would be seen and the depth of the shield could be lessened with time.’

‘We would be most grateful if that could be done by yourself and your colleagues.’

‘It seems that the action of the shield ... we are having a discussion at this moment. Let us see what the best way for us would be to help this dear soul, and to help all those who are working with her. For it is

important that they are in full understanding. We know that work is being done and it is very slow and a mirror is being placed and it isn't very bright, and doesn't show the full, true reflection. Do you understand? It has a veil over it and doesn't have its full brightness and clarity at this moment. So, when the one called Marianne looks in the mirror she will see a slight reflection of herself but not the true reflection. It is important that she is not afraid to see her true self, for it is not a pretty sight.

After a period of time, as she gets used to seeing herself through this veiled mirror, and when it feels right and correct that one layer should be taken away so that the appearance shows a little more clarity, and so on and so forth until eventually she can see the full impact of who she is. By this time, with a great deal of patience there should be more understanding on her part, but even so it must be done on a very slow and gentle pace so as not to cause any discomfort or harm to her.'

'Understood,' said James. 'And in the meantime, may we ask that she is kept safe and protected from any negative influence that may interfere with this process?'

'But of course.'

'Thank you, you have been most helpful, and if there is anything else that we can do.... We feel that we are doing nothing, and that all the work is being done by you and others in the spirit realms, for which we are most grateful, but is there anything that we can do apart from being patient?' The spirit guide continued in answer to James's question.

'You can carry on sending unconditional love to the dear soul, as she needs so much of it, even though it may be rejected. Nonetheless it is quite nice to receive it. Some people on the earth plane find it very difficult to accept love so they repel. This is what she has been doing and it's a shame really, dreadful, dreadful But if you carry on sending the unconditional love to her gradually with the veiled mirror in place and with patience and understanding, it does make an impact, for you can shield her with your own unconditional love also.'

'Thank you for your wisdom, for which we are most grateful. Unless there is anything else you would like to say I bid you farewell and blessings.'

'Blessings to you. We are aware of what is happening and blessings to you and your team who are working with you.'

'Thank you,' replied James, but the conversation was not yet over. The guide continued.

'Please understand this. If a soul or a person has chosen a difficult path with their life, and they don't want change, what right has anyone else to go in and change the way that person is, simply because others feel that they are not living the correct way? So, if it is alright in the eyes of the one that is experiencing it, and they are living what they perceive to be their own truth, this is why to change anything on a soul level would be very difficult.'

James then wondered if he was doing the right thing in trying to initiate change with the help of spirit beings. He addressed the guide.

'I'm asking the question now. Would we be going against universal law by wanting to effect any change at soul level? The guide responded by saying, 'You already have the answer to that question yourself.'

James then recalled that there was a part of her, the innocent part, that said categorically, 'I don't want to be like this, please help me.' This was her conscious decision to change. 'This part of her wants change,' said James to the guide.

'So, that's alright then?' replied the guide, and James continued, 'I made a promise. And to me a promise is sacred. To that spark of light that wants help and wants to grow, I promised, and I can't go back on that promise.'

'No, of course not. That is understood,' said the spirit guide. James continued half to himself and half to the guide, 'The second thing that answers this question for me is the help that we are getting from the Spirit World. If we were not supposed to be doing what we are trying to do then we would not get that help.'

'Yes, that's right,' reinforced the guide and the conversation ended.

The third spirit guide 9th Oct

The medium connected with a spirit guide and began to speak.

‘This one has been with me a few times and I am well aware of who he is. He comes in a pure white light. Silver. All I see is an energy form rather than a being, if you see what I mean. And the communication is mind to mind rather than hearing a voice. With the other guides I sense them here, but with this one I can’t. He is beyond the level of the angels. From the high realms.’ James addressed the spirit guide through the medium.

‘I would like to bid this guide welcome. You must be aware of what we are about to do. We are children of the Light, and we are attempting to work for the Light. We bring ourselves here today offering ourselves as instruments of God’s will. What we ask is this. Would we be permitted to be used as instruments of God’s will in this way? We need all the help and advice we can get, and if you are here to help and advise us we welcome you. Before we begin the task of today is there anything that you would like to convey to us?’

‘You realise the task that you have endeavoured to pursue is on realms that have never been reached before.’

‘I didn’t know this.’

‘There are realms that have been in existence for aeons and aeons of time, and they have the very lowest forms of energy in existence. Energy forms from these lower realms are making their way forwards through the levels of consciousness onto the earth plane and have been manifesting for some time past.’

‘So, we are learning something new?’

‘If this is how you perceive it, then this is so.’

‘So, we need all the help and advice we can get.’

‘The help and advice will be given. You must realise that anyone from the higher planes can only work according to their knowledge, and you have called upon us from the higher realms to manifest and to help in whatever way we can.’

‘Knowing this, can you advise on how we should proceed?’

‘With caution comes to mind. As you know, you live in the physical world. And these energies can manifest into the physical and cause damage to the medium who is working at any particular time.’

‘In that case we have to be absolutely sure that everyone concerned is well protected. Are we well protected? Is the medium well protected?’

‘The protection is there. It has always been there.’

‘Thank you.’ James continued, ‘The way that we have been taught to clear a negative entity is to ask it to transform from dark to light, to release it from its own suffering and to experience the joy of coming into the Light. Is this method going to apply in this case?’

‘This would be a very dangerous step forward. For this entity, or the darkness you are about to encounter is one that has not understood light in any way shape or form. It has been materialising in its own energy for many aeons, so it is very powerful in its essence. There have been steps taken from those in the higher realms to help to create an arc whereas the entity cannot go any further than it is at the present time. And as we speak there are great beings of Light who are appearing around this being to form a ball or as you would understand it, an oval shape of metal type energy that is being placed around it. But you must realise that its tentacles reach out very finely and we have to be careful not to leave any behind.’

‘And this work is being done now?’

‘This is being done as we speak. This is going to take a great deal of energy, so I ask you to be patient for a moment while energy is brought down, not only to the person you are working with at this time, but also to all those others who have been affected by this entity. For they too are experiencing distress.’

There was a long pause as James waited patiently for the guide to continue speaking through the medium. Following the pause, he continued, ‘There is great pain and anger. It feels trapped. There is pain in its own being. And a blackness, so black that you could not contemplate or understand the blackness and the smell that is being acknowledged. We understand that you need to know what is happening. This is why it is being spoken of.’

‘I thank you for that.’ There was another long pause.

‘There is a great deal of fear and anger. It may not be possible to communicate with this creature.’

‘I understand.’

'Light is being pushed in around it, but it is a form of red that is going in. Because of its darkness, it would not be able to cope with anything lighter than the dimmest of red at the very lowest end of the light spectrum.' Another long pause.

'The energy is confined within the ball of light. Red is being wrapped around it.'

'Do we know the origin of this entity, and if so would it be possible to return it home?'

'It would not be advisable to return it home. For it would only serve to....' The voice of the guide tailed off, so James intervened.

'So what must be done?'

'You are a little impatient my son. It is containment that is needed at this time, and until we are sure that it cannot break out again, decisions will be made at the very highest source in how we deal with this creature. As you know we work on the love vibration and it does not understand and has not received any love in its existence.'

'And because of this, is this how it affects those people it comes into contact with?'

'This is so. Because it has no love to give it cannot understand love. It is afraid of anything it does not understand. And the pain it has been in, it has only seen ugliness and hatred and anger.'

'So, with this entity removed what we have to do next is repair the damage that has been done.'

'This can be done. It has now been decided what will happen with this creature. It is in a bubble of containment and it will be fed slowly on a continuous basis and changing from colour to colour until eventually it will be able to tolerate a lighter colour vibration. Eventually we will be able to discuss and proceed with its rehabilitation or disposal as the case may be. When we say disposal, that is exactly what we mean. For if it is not willing to accept or to be helped in any way there would be no other course of action other than to dispose of it.'

'In that case we have you to thank and those powers from the high realms for finding a way of dealing with this entity. Can I ask on behalf of the person we are trying to help here on the earth plane, are they completely free now from the effects of this entity?'

'There are some remnants left that are still attached, but we are dealing with that and severing them now. As they are cut they shrivel.' There was a long pause and James had learned his lesson to not be impatient and interrupt. So, he waited until the spirit guide spoke again.

'Because of the attachment of this being, it is going to be some time before progress can be seen to be achieved. For many years she has been under control and has now to learn to accept that she is a being in her own right. So, all the experiences from past and present have to be changed and released.'

'What difference would it mean to her in how she feels with this release?'

'Confusion and insecurity of who she is. The help that she has been receiving can change the outcome of who she feels she is.'

'We would like her to know that help is available on the earth plane, and when she feels the need for it she needs to know who can help her. Can we ask her higher self to find a way to allow her conscious awareness to know that she can come to us for help?'

'This is already being done. She has been living in a state of non-existence for a long time in a truth that is not hers. For her to change her truth is confusing and disorientating for her. Those who she felt she could trust and then to discard them has been a pattern during her life. The higher self is now taking control but patience and consideration have to be given. Continuous help will be given but patience is needed. Healing has to take place on structural levels of the higher consciousness and also in the mental and physical dimensions.'

'We know this is going to take time. But we can do nothing until we are asked to can we?'

'As beings of Light you are here on the earth plane to manifest healing wherever it is needed. Although it is often said on the earth plane that no one may receive healing unless it is asked for, the soul and the higher self of this person you have been trying to help have been crying out for healing for some time now beyond the acknowledgement of the conscious mind. Therefore, it would be acceptable to proceed to carry on transmitting healing wherever it is needed or thought to be needed.'

'So, until such time as her conscious mind chooses to seek help we can continue to work at the soul level?'

'This is so.'

‘Thank you. In the meantime, we have to ensure that negative thoughts are not attracting other entities that would interfere with this work. Can we have protection that would prevent this from happening, do you think?’

‘This can be placed, but as you know we cannot interfere with the free will of any being on the earth plane. We cannot change anything that they wish on their own. So, this is where a difficulty may remain. It is to put in place a stronger feeling of love for this dear soul, for her to gradually accept her position. The protection needed and the protection sought for would be renewed whenever asked for.’

‘Thank you. Is there anything else we should know at this time? Is there any other work we should be doing at this particular time before we say a final thank you?’

‘There is always work to do from the spiritual realms for those on the earth plane. It is an unlimited supply of help that is needed, so it is not a case of us finishing our work.’

‘I’m sorry. You misunderstand me. I mean is there anything we need to know at this moment in time regarding our work today?’

‘We shall go to the person whom has been involved as the medium with this work to send to her some of the healing she needs at this time.’

‘She would appreciate that. She has worked hard. Thank you.’

‘Indeed, she has and she will feel the benefit on awakening.’

‘Well I thank you and the others from the higher realms for all your work this day. Is there anything else you would like to tell us before we sever the link?’

‘I am in constant touch with the channel that we speak through, and I shall communicate any other necessary practises through her to you when necessary. Blessings.’

‘Blessings. Thank you.’

When the medium returned to her normal waking consciousness she explained to James more of the nature of the guide that he had been communicating with, and he then asked her, ‘Whilst your guide is still with you there is something I would like to explore if that’s OK?’

She acknowledged his request and James addressed the guide again, ‘I would like to explore the concept that being bad is more exciting than being good in the exercise of power. People seem to find the exercise of power more rewarding for them if they can use their power to inflict pain, and they seem to have no understanding of the joy of exercising power to bring happiness to people.’ The guide responded by saying.

‘This is so. And there are so many people who look to others to find power rather than to seek it within themselves. The power that many seek in controlling other beings is that of self-importance. This is why some on the earth have control over so many others. There are those who look at the ones with power as something to be admired and looked up to. But it is not the case, for they do not realise that when they look up to someone in a position of power, they are giving their own power away to another being, or another soul. And as this other gets stronger and stronger from the power he is taking from others he is looked upon as something to be revered. This is where you get so many who are cruel and destroy. They take lives for the sheer thrill of doing it. They have no compassion or understanding for others. It is only by receiving the power of others that they can continue in this way. So, it is not that individuals do not have their own power, but that they are intent on giving it away in reverence or fear of another. This is where the dark forces can manifest and create havoc on both the earth plane and on the spirit planes.’

‘Thank you.’

As always James had been given much to think about as he travelled the forty-five-minute journey home. He had encountered a dark force entity from such a low vibration that it represented new knowledge. This entity appeared to be affecting many other people besides Marianne and would have left severe damage to the consciousness if her and many other individuals. Uppermost in his mind was what the guide said about patience. He said that Marianne would ask for help if her own free will should emerge, and James resigned himself to wait.

Shortly after James returned home on that very same day he received a telephone call that shook him to the core. ‘Hello James. I bet you are surprised to hear from me.’ Surprised was an understatement. It was Marianne. James’s shock at receiving the call so soon after the release of the entity that he was hardly able to acknowledge a word she said. But contact with her was re-established and he could resume his work with her at the conscious level. He praised the powers of the beings of light with whom he had been

communicating and gave thanks that his prayers had been answered. James was elated to hear from her and could hardly contain himself. All his hard work was paying off and he couldn't wait to see her again.

Chapter 30

A Final Twist

Denial. Oh, what a wonderful defence, thought James. *It is so profound, so complete, so final.*

James had not heard Marianne's voice for more than two and a half years, and when he did hear it, his heart had leapt with joy. 'This is a surprise,' said James. 'I didn't expect to hear from you.'

James was genuinely taken by surprise and was therefore not prepared, and had trouble finding words. There was so much he wanted to say to her, to ask how she was, and he wanted to know whether the work he had been doing on her behalf had been having any effect. But he was lost for words, and after Marianne had put the phone down after having told him again that he was not the father of her little boy and that he was wrong to have slept with her, he felt the knife twist in his guts. It was a final twist.

Why had she called him? She hadn't asked for help as he had expected following all the distant healing work he had done with the two mediums. All she had done was to deny him his fatherhood and accuse him again of inappropriately sleeping with her.

Just how cruel can a person be whilst talking in a controlled non-emotional way? James asked himself. And then he tried to explore the true meaning of the word 'denial'.

James searched his own memories to see if he could identify within himself the use of denial as a self defence mechanism. When he first began to investigate the possibility that Marianne may have a personality disorder he found it difficult to accept and therefore chose to deny it. Later, when confronted with the possibility that Marianne could have been influenced by an external spirit entity, again, he had tried to deny it. When she had asked him if it were possible for a person to be born bad, he had denied the possibility. When she had first told him that she was bad, he had denied that possibility too. All the text books on childhood sexual abuse said the same thing, that the child who thinks they are bad is only expressing a false belief – a cognitive error, and that they are not bad at all in reality. But James had come to learn that a part of Marianne actually preferred to be bad, and another part of her abhorred the very idea and denied it. Double denial. *Is there such a thing?* he thought. Then he realised that her denial of her own denial was a characteristic of her true personality. He remembered the conversation he had with the dissociated four-year-old sub-personality and it all fitted into place. She denied all that was good, and right and proper. Every positive suggestion was automatically rejected and every time this simple fact had been pointed out to her, she rejected and denied it. He just could not win, and neither could anyone else within her realm of relationships.

James concluded that in order to fully understand the concept of denial, he had to find something in himself that he had successfully denied. Marianne had told him shortly after their affair had begun that she had specifically warned him not to accede to her request for him to make love to her. He remembered no such warning. In fact, she had specifically asked him to father a son for her. That was not denial. That was an inescapable fact he remembered and he finally began to acknowledge how she had successfully used his compassion and empathy to seduce him and plant the seeds of his own doubt, deliberately and with malice and aforethought. Professional codes of ethics and the client-patient relationship would have protected him had he been a committed professional. But he wasn't. He relinquished any ambition to be a professional therapist because his proposal for a doctorate had been denied him. The light went on and he saw it – there was that word again - denial.

James retraced his steps through his experience of his personal, emotional relationship with Marianne from the very start when she had willingly and deliberately exploited his compassion in order to achieve her objective to seduce a psychologist. He retraced his steps in his research to understand the psychological composition of someone who could switch personalities, project her negativity onto others and then deny everything. He retraced his steps through the journey of spiritual knowledge of learning how to deal with

dark force entities and earthbound spirits. His most recent interactions with the spirit world revealed the deception of those who would pretend to be from the Light, the impostors. He could now see the growth of the deception and denial as each incarnation unfolded through eons of time, like a new skin on a growing onion where the surface corruption grew further and further away from the purity of the core self at the moment of spiritual conception. James could now see how each incarnation created a new skin and reinforced the denial and corruption of earlier incarnations. If the karmic debt was not rebalanced then each new incarnation would grow a stronger defensive denial. The solution had been given to him before, in his thoughts, but the most recent communication with a spirit guide confirmed it. All it takes is acknowledgement of the divine nature of the true self – the core spirit of the person. To deny that is to continue with another life-time of despair and emotional destruction, until the agent of trust came to the rescue. For Marianne that agent of trust had been foretold to James and he could do no more because it was not him.

James began to search for any relevance or meaning of this in a wider context. Then he began to come to terms with what he recognised as ‘institutional denial’. Marianne was a living product of a society, a culture where every truth was denied. Politicians lied as they scrambled to reach the top of their greasy pole, governments lied to the people about everything, those who purported to treat the sick lied in favour of making money from drugs that they called medicines.

Modern western society lied to itself about death and dying and the afterlife in a realm of spirits. The denial, James came to realise, was endemic and total. Only a relative few were able to acknowledge the truth but were powerless to get wider society to see it.

He could now see that Marianne represented an individual example of a much wider, almost universal denial of reality. There was only one course of action open to him. He would use his knowledge to heal the sick for those who could acknowledged the realms of light and dark and he would not waste any more time in trying to overcome resistance in the form of the greatest of all of man’s ethical crimes – denial of what is true and good and beautiful – the divine light of creation that lives within us all.

James sat back and reflected on his journey from the darkness of ignorance into the Light of knowing and he thanked Marianne for inviting him into her pit of despair, only to find his own way out without her. He reflected on her denial of her own reality and acknowledged, at least for himself what was real – the truth *does* set you free. Amen.