

The background of the cover features two views of Earth from space. The upper view shows a large, rounded portion of the planet with a blue atmosphere and dark, textured landmasses. The lower view shows a similar but more detailed and closer view of the Earth's surface, highlighting the curvature and the intricate patterns of the continents and oceans.

The 2012 Chronicles

Volume 1 To the One World

Linn Vermillion Smith

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The 2012 Chronicles: Volume 1 - To the One World

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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
is available from The Library of Congress**

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This edition published by BookSurge, an Amazon company in the United States of America in 2008.

ISBN 13: 978-1-4392-0497-9 • ISBN 10: 1-4392-0497-7

www.The2012Chronicles.com

www.QuantumLifeChanges.com

www.QuantumHawaiianRetreats.com

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank a few people who made this book possible. First of all, I extend a hearty thanks to the group of friends who gave me the inspiration and images for this project and who continue to walk by my side.

To all of the clients and friends who put up with the disappearances into my writing space, which was often at beach classrooms during our retreats; thank you so much for your consideration and patience.

To my friend, author and screenwriter Dawn Ireland, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of your guidance and instruction on how to write a book and what to do once it is written. Your support was invaluable to me.

To my editors, Brenda Conroy and Jane Usher, I could not have done this without you. Brenda, you did a marvelous job of editing the book. I would also thank you for insisting on bringing Jane Usher onto the project. Jane, your insights into the characters and plot were inspired. The rewrites were imperative, and once I ran them by my friends in the non-physical world for approval, we came up with a finished product that pleased all concerned. Both of you added so much, not only because of your considerable talents, but because of your spiritual essence and path. Bless you.

To Nevada, my friend and confidant, thank you for your excitement and encouragement in this project, your wise council, and for believing in me.

I give appreciation to my many mentors including but not limited to: Esther and Jerry Hicks (The Teachings of Abraham), Ramtha, Gregg Braden, Miceal Ledwith, Eckhart Tolle, Dr. Wayne Dyer, Neal Donald Walsh and Louise Hay. Each in their way has been a remarkable influence on my journey and I thank you all.

I want to thank my mother and father, who taught me that I can be and do anything that I choose in this life.

A big thank you to Danny and Linda for loving my book and being there for me when I needed help the most.

Last, and most importantly, I live in a complete state of appreciation, respect and love for you, my dear husband. You have been supportive and loving through this project and I know you will continue to be for the duration of the series, as well as throughout our journey together. Your selfless devotion to helping others improve the quality of their existence upon this planet is an inspiration to me. I thank you for your kindness and wisdom. Most of all, I thank you for letting me be who I am and loving me for it.

Introduction

My husband and I have been on a very spiritual path for many years. It was a natural part of our evolution to land on one of the most spiritual islands in the world, Kauai.

She beckoned us here for a year before we made the move in June of 2007. We rented a magnificent retreat center and prepared for a new adventure, Quantum Hawaiian Retreats. Blending Quantum Physics, ancient wisdom and teachings, NLP and the amazing processes we had been perfecting for the past five years, we created a workshop designed to guide our guests to discover places deep within that had long ago been forgotten.

About a week after we moved in, I began to see ancient Hawaiians in my meditations. This was not a huge shock to me, after hearing many stories from locals about 'night-walkers' causing wrecks on the highway as they marched to the beach. As I would get into my quiet space of no thought, they appeared to me, one at a time, in full regalia. Their headdresses, elaborate necklaces and stern faces did not frighten me, for I fear nothing and they were passive. Usually a dozen or more passed through my mind's eye. They were always men and always warriors. I did not know what they wanted, but I decided

they were greeting us and welcoming us to the island. It was comforting for me to know they were among us in our new home.

They continued the visitations for about three weeks, and then abruptly disappeared. After a few days, I called for them during my meditation. To my surprise, a new group of visitors appeared. The first face I saw was a beautiful woman who smiled and nodded at me. A parade of male and female faces faded in and out. Some were translucent, some very vivid.

This friendly group of entities came during my daily meditation for a few months before they tried to communicate with me. They began to extend their hands, as if beseeching me. Some moved their mouths as if to speak, but I could not hear them. This attempt at communication went on for several more months.

Please understand; I am not delusional. I am a very grounded and rational person. These visitations struck me as odd, but I was not particularly interested in taking it any farther than it had already gone.

My husband Cardell, on the other hand, wanted me to ask them questions to see if they would answer. Because we have been students of Abraham, Seth and Ramtha, he was excited about the prospect of a 'channeling' experience, of which I wanted no part. He ordered several channeling books - which I did not read.

I suppose you could call me a 'reluctant channel'. While I have the utmost respect and admiration for Esther Hicks and

Jane Roberts for their selfless acts of living their lives to channel from the non-physical, I had no desire to do this.

By March of 2008, my visitors were becoming a bit aggressive in their efforts to communicate and their thoughts began to drift into mine. They told me they had a message. I declined. I informed them that while I enjoyed their presence, I was the wrong person for this message. Still they came.

One day, after Cardell again pleaded with me to let them speak, I gave in. When they came, I asked them, "What do you want from me?"

They conveyed to me immediately, "We want you to write books."

"Is that all?" I answered. "I can do that. I love to write."

They also made it known that they chose me because I am spiritual and open to the concept of channeling, have good writing skills, and have traveled all over the world. My habit of immersing myself into the culture everywhere I have traveled lends itself well to this series of books. "Most of all," they said, "you live in a dominant state of love and appreciation, which allows for an easy connection to do the work. You are a conduit - a vessel."

They laid out their plan to me in a block of information using visions, thoughts and touching my intuition through vibrations. I am to write a series of books called The 2012 Chronicles. It is to be written as a series of fantasy novels so as to reach a wide audience. The message is to teach people to live in the higher vibrations of joy and peace. Best of all, the books are to be entertaining.

They instructed me to go to the beach and get into a relaxed state. When I am ready, I invite them to come. As I sit and write, information comes so fast I can barely keep up with it, scribbling as fast as I can. In this process, there is no such thing as writer's block. Hours go by in minutes when I am getting a download.

Now, for any of you who do not believe in channeling, you may choose to just think that I just have a very lively imagination and am a great writer. I am cool with that. Think of it like this; I get into a calm state and then inspiration hits me, like a composer or a painter is inspired. The words pour out of me as I connect with Source Energy, (God, Universal Spirit, or whatever you prefer.)

I finished the first book in four weeks. After rewrites and editing, the book was ready to be published in eight weeks from when I set the first words to paper. I am working on book two in the series now and it should be ready for editing by the time this one comes back from the printer.

Please enjoy 'To the One World', the first book in 'The 2012 Chronicles'. Writing this series is an exciting adventure, to say the least.

Linn Vermilion Smith

Chapter One

As she stepped onto the patio, Rachel could sense the excitement of the new day drawing her like a magnet into the dawn. Glancing out to the courtyard, she marveled at the myriad of bougainvillea, vibrant in pink, purple and orange, speaking to her senses as if to say “Joy! You are here to experience joy!”

Her eyes danced and she felt a shiver of ecstasy up her spine. The honeysuckle blooms filled her with pleasure as she closed her eyes and breathed deeply, thinking only momentarily of her younger brother, Peter, still slumbering in the apartment.

“I would so like to share this with him,” she thought, but she did not allow that thought to diminish the exhilaration she felt in anticipation of her morning walk.

Passing through the still-sleeping complex, she noticed a few lights of early risers and caught a whiff of coffee. On the path to Salt Creek Beach, California, she decided to stop at Just Java for a hazelnut latte, her favorite. Customers were already lined up, and she caught an eye now and then. Most people were afraid to make eye contact anymore, but she radiated love to everyone she could connect with. In this day and age, late 2012 in the United States, everyone was afraid.

Rachel felt compassion but not pity and kept her feelings positive and loving. Some glanced her way and did a double-take, somehow noticing her energy. Some even recoiled. The little white-haired man in front of her stepped back unexpectedly and brushed against her arm.

“Sorry, but you shouldn’t have been standing so close behind me,” he said, and his steel grey eyes glared into hers. Immediately his gaze softened. “Do I know you?” he asked, smiling ever so slightly and cocking his head as if trying to remember her.

“I don’t believe we’ve ever met, but we have now. My name is Rachel, and a very good morning to you.”

Laughing, he replied, “George here. Don’t meet too many friendly ones these days! Glad I bumped into you.” With a wink he stepped up to the counter to place his order.

As Rachel doctored her drink, she noticed George scurrying away, dodging dozens of customers and pedestrians in an angry rush to get to their destinations. She remembered when, not so long ago, the people who came to this coffeehouse and Salt Creek Beach were friendly and laughing. Children chased each other in the grass, and the bicycles were lined up a dozen at a time at Just Java. She recalled smiling rollerbladers zipping up and down the bike path and mothers strolling their babies.

Now the path to the beach was nearly deserted. No more dog walkers with plastic baggies in hand, no more barefoot beach joggers.

She scooped up her latte and headed down the path. She was glowing from the taste of the coffee and the warmth of the

light beginning to peak over the Laguna Hills behind her. Descending to the beach, she began her mantra. “I am the goddess of my being, and from the spark of the Divine that I am, today I am creating a magnificent day and I am affecting the Quantum Field into the reality that I choose. Today I experience joy. Today, I will look for the best feeling thought that I have access to. Today is the best day of my life and abundance in all areas of my life flows to me. I am in the process of connecting to the earth ...” When she reached the beach, she kicked off her flip-flops and squished the cool sand between her toes.

“I am loving the process of connecting to the sea,” she proclaimed as she stopped and gazed across the horizon. “I am connected to the sky and the clouds,” and she noticed the azure blue of the sky and the powder puff clouds tinged with pink from the rising sun.

“You are so beautiful and I am in such a state of appreciation for your beauty.” She spoke with soft passion as she swung her arm up and across the sky, tracing the clouds softly with her fingertips. She noticed the familiar goose bumps spreading all over her body as she continued to flood her appreciation to everything around her. She felt as if she were gliding along above the sand as she slowly and deliberately moved along the water’s edge.

As Rachel continued her walk and her mantra, a man came down the stairs from a house on the bluff, his little Poodle dragging him to the waves. The dog stopped the moment it saw her and cocked its head. The man pulled at the leash, but the dog only had eyes for Rachel and firmly stood its ground.

Rachel smiled at the Poodle and nodded politely to the man as she passed, only briefly stopping her mantra.

“Crazy woman, talking to herself,” the man mumbled, yanking his dog into submission and glancing back at Rachel in disgust. He rubbed his eyes and looked again. He could see the pier right through her. Frightened, he dragged his pet back up the stairs and threw open his door.

“Mona, come here, quick! I can see right through this woman. I’m not kidding. Get out here. One minute she was as solid as a rock and talking a blue streak to herself like a wacko, and all of a sudden she just got kinda misty or something.”

His wife stepped out onto the porch. “She looks pretty normal to me, except yer right, she is talkin’ to herself. And look at the way she’s waving her arms all around. We’d better get the dog in. No tellin’ what a nut like her might decide to do.”

The man looked again and the tall dark-haired stranger was solid again. “Damn, I gotta stop with the late night martinis. Guess my eyes were playing tricks on me,” he said as he closed and locked the door behind the incoming Poodle.

Rachel worked herself into an ecstatic state, and with every decisive step she vibrated faster and faster. As she rained her appreciation on everything she could see, smell and sense around her, she noticed an odd sensation. It was as if everything around her was becoming ever so slightly transparent. The rock outcropping just ahead seemed to fade a bit and the sound of the waves became muffled.

She stopped and did a three-sixty, taking it all in, breathing slowly and deeply. She excitedly recalled Myca's words at the last full-moon gathering of their group.

"Everything is changing. The world is changing and as we raise our vibrations, we will change with it. We are part of a new era, a new awakening. It is the Shift of the Ages." The meeting had taken a more intense turn than usual. The year 2012 was nearly over and this 'Awakening,' whatever it entailed, was supposed to start before the end of the year. Myca was adamant about the date and that time was running out.

"The most important thing we need to do is stay in a place of love and do everything we can to keep our energy fields clean. We absolutely must stay in a place of feeling good. Negative emotions lower our vibrations, so we must constantly look for a better feeling thought and direct our thoughts and emotions to a 'feel-good' state of being. It's not about attempting to change or control thoughts, which could be frustrating to say the least. It's more about directing our thoughts, based upon how we feel. When we feel bad, we are not in alignment with Source Energy. Source is pure positive energy, and when we feel good, we are in alignment."

"What about all the others, the ones who don't seem to be conscious of the changes or understand about vibrations?" Rachel thought to herself. "What's going to happen to them?" Just the thought of that lowered her vibrations slightly. Her surroundings solidified and the odd feeling passed.

She set about her work again, shifting thoughts and emotions to the task at hand, flowing positive energy through her

body and outward into her world. She loved the fact that her mantra helped her overcome feelings of doubt and fear. As she began to tingle again and the negative feelings drifted away, she realized she was getting very good at this. It felt delicious.

* * * * *

Peter rolled over and opened his eyes when he heard Rachel return. As she busied herself in the kitchen, he crawled out of bed and pulled on his sweats pants. “Nice walk?” he asked.

“Wonderful! The coffee’s almost ready.”

They filled their mugs and went out to the walled back patio. This tiny space filled with flowers and a fountain provided them a peaceful escape in an otherwise hectic apartment complex.

Rachel sunk into the comfy loveseat and patted the chair next to her. “I want to share something with you.” Peter sat down and took a sip. “I had that same experience again, where everything seemed to almost blink out. Just like last week. Everything went transparent and colorless. It only lasted about twenty or thirty seconds, but time seems to stand still when it happens.” Her eyes glassed over as she remembered the experience.

“Does it scare you?”

“No, not at all,” she responded. “It’s exciting and exhilarating, like a roller coaster ride, and I think it definitely has something to do with the processes I have been studying and practicing for the last five years. I can direct my thoughts and

emotions and go to a place of no-thought at will. I don't think about the past any longer and live in the now almost all of the time. It's taken me years, but I believe I am raising my vibrations to a point where I may be on the verge of teleportation, thus the transparency of my surroundings. Or, it could have something to do with the big change Myca and the group have been talking about. I, for one, plan to stay positive and feel good, to keep my vibrations as high as possible."

Peter rolled his eyes and let out a long sigh. "That is all so woo-woo. The only big change that's coming is maybe a world war... Speaking of which, I'm going to go check the news."

As he jumped up to go inside, he briefly touched her shoulder. "Rachel, I think you should consider seeing a neurologist about these spells, or maybe even a shrink," he chuckled.

Rachel went immediately to the bathroom for her shower, not wanting to listen to more bad news from the television. She thought to herself, as she often did, "Oh Peter, how much happier you would be if you left that world behind – the news, the wars. Instead of focusing on all of that negative energy, you could focus on getting ready." She let the warm water wash away the salt on her skin but not the excitement of the morning.

As she dressed for work, she could, unfortunately, hear the newscaster's commentary on world affairs. "... and as nearly half the world is now involved in this conflict, it seems that the United States will have no choice but to step in. Since the closing of our borders and the declaration of martial law, tensions at home are rising. The county jails and prisons are

already filled to twice their capacity with curfew violators and protesters.”

“Please don’t listen to that. Do you think it helps for you to listen?” Rachel pleaded with him as she grabbed her bag and headed for the door.

“Don’t you think we need to stay informed?” He glanced up at her only briefly.

“No, I do not. I don’t think my feeling bad about a world war does anything but make it worse. Bad feelings attract more bad. I can only send loving thoughts and wishes for peace. I refuse to get into a negative vibrational state by worrying about a world war I have no control over.”

“It’s not really a world war in the historical sense of the phrase. That is what I find so fascinating about it. There are no allies. Everybody just seems to hate everybody else. It’s just bizarre, like the whole world has gone nuts.”

“I would simply prefer that if you insist on watching that stuff, you do it when I am not home, please,” she said to him, and at the same time she thought to herself, “It’s the change, Peter, it’s the awakening. I don’t know what’s going to happen, I just know that something is, very soon, and I want to be ready.” She pulled the door closed, relieved to be out of the negative space and happy to hear the birds singing.

She stopped for a moment and looked back at the door sadly, knowing that Peter was not ready. “He’s not going to make it.” She shuddered at the thought, fearing what may be in store for him as things got worse and worse.

With that, she skillfully redirected her thoughts and emotions, looking around at everything she could appreciate - the flowers, the palm trees, and the delicate scents on the morning breeze. She felt the familiar glow of positive energy and smiled. “Today is a fabulous day!”

Chapter Two

Rachel zipped along on her bike, grateful for the path, although traffic was never thick anymore with the cost of gas at \$9.50 a gallon. Many people took the transit or car-pooled. She stopped at the light and adjusted her headset, turning up the volume slightly. Listening to uplifting CDs by the great masters was her typical fare on the way to work. It filled her with joy and inspiration, preparing her for the day.

Pulling up to the two-storey building where Dr. Joyce's clinic was located, she parked her bike at the stands, noticing a new sign: LEAVE BIKE AT YOUR OWN RISK - TWO STOLEN LAST WEEK. "Not mine," she thought and knew hers would be perfectly safe.

She could smell the animals as she opened the door. The stench was worse than usual and she knew that Jacob had neglected the kennel over the weekend. Three dogs, a cat and a parrot had been kept for observation, and she could tell by the whining and yipping that they were hungry.

She knelt beside Tasha, a small black Cocker with a leg injury. Looking into her dark eyes, she thought "Are you hungry?" Tasha looked out of her cage and thought back to her, "Yes, hungry. Man not feed. Hungry."

Rachel had started communicating with the dogs, cats and other animals at the clinic a few months back. It came as quite a shock at first when she realized she could read their thoughts, but even more surprising was that they could also read hers. Since then, she had conversed with them daily and had perfected the skill quite nicely.

She fed all the animals and cleaned their cages, singing softly and sending them loving thoughts and feelings. They all settled down. She stopped at Frodo's cage on her way out to the office. Frodo was a large Maine Coon with huge golden eyes and a piercing stare. "You are so handsome," she sent to him in silent discourse. "How are you today?"

He slowly turned to her and sent back, "I am leaving here soon. I want new body. This body old and hurts."

"I understand. Thank you for being my friend for a short time, Frodo."

"Dear friend, do not go home again. Bad thing happen, go far away," Frodo directed her.

She became quite still and questioned him. "Bad thing, what bad thing?"

The huge cat merely blinked his big eyes and shut them. "Bad thing happen," and with that he was fast asleep.

"Interesting," she thought as she opened the door from the kennel into the office and filed Frodo's words in the back of her mind to contemplate later.

* * * * *

Dr. Steven Joyce's Animal Hospital opened at 9:00 a.m. sharp and patients were lined up outside when the sign was turned over. Rachel and her co-workers, Jennifer and Barbara, were ready for them. Jacob, their technician, which was really just their glorified title for 'the one who does all the odds and ends,' was fifteen minutes late. He was obviously embarrassed that someone had not only found him out about the missed day but had also done the work for him. He glanced around nervously to see if he could figure out who had covered for him, but everyone was busy, so he went about making sure the treatment rooms were ready.

Lunchtime came fast and as the waiting room cleared, Rachel grabbed her bag to head out. Jennifer and Barbara were waiting for her outside. "Wanna grab a bite at Souplantation, Rach?"

"How about tomorrow? I'm meeting friends today," she answered and she bounced off to the curb to wait for Joseph and Karen. Joseph, the quintessential ski bum, had stopped by for a couple of weeks between ski trips and had been attending the Full Moon gatherings with them.

Karen worked at a daycare nearby, and Rachel often had lunch with her. The three of them were college buddies with the same passion for personal growth and had remained close friends since then.

Joseph's little AWD hybrid pulled up to the corner and the door swung open. "Hey beautiful, hop in." Music blasting and sunroof open, he and Karen were beaming like Cheshire cats.

“What’s up?” Rachel inquired, knowing they were excited about something. “Oh my gosh, you won’t believe this one,” Karen replied. “Andrew Wilder is speaking over at Palm Springs tonight and if you can get a couple of hours off, I think we can make it.”

Joseph jumped in, unable to contain himself. “Myca is taking a car over too and Jeremy is riding with her.” We just found out about it an hour ago. Reno called from Lake Las Vegas and said she’d meet us in Palm Springs. She said it is sure to be amazing.”

Rachel considered the idea, knowing it would be a profound talk and also that she’d probably have to spend the night. “You guys getting rooms?”

“Yeah, Jeremy wants to share with me. We may head up to Lake Tahoe for some skiing after, if you guys can ride back with Myca. If we get up early she can have you back by ten. What say you?” Joseph waited for her response, smiling widely, knowing full well she would agree.

“Okay, let’s do it. I have my bag at the office.” These days, everyone kept overnight bags and emergency supplies handy. With the curfew in affect, you never knew where you might have to spend the night. “I’ll take a couple of hours today and tomorrow morning. It’s slow this afternoon, and I can get Jacob to cover for me. He owes me one. I’ll call Peter to let him know.”

“Do you think he’ll want to come too?” Karen asked tentatively.

“No way! He’d be bored to tears,” Rachel told her, little doubt in her mind.

As they slid into the booth at the Harbor House, she called Peter. “Hi Peter. I think I’m going to go with the group tonight over to Palm Springs to hear Andrew Wilder speak. Yes, we’ll have to spend the night. I’ll be home after work tomorrow. Would you like to come? I didn’t think so. Okay, I’ll call you when I get my room. Yes, we’ll be careful. Now Peter, we’ve had this conversation before. I personally do not consider this a waste of time.” Her eyes darted around to see if the others were listening to the conversation, but they were all politely deep in their menus. She laughed nervously and continued, “See you tomorrow, baby brother. Love you.”

After lunch, she sat and savored her latte on the bench outside the office, and it hit her that she wasn’t going home after all. Frodo’s words came back to her. “Do not go home. Bad thing happen.” As she passed his cage, she knelt down and told him “Well big guy, looks like I’m not going home.” His only response was a smile, and he blinked his feline eyes in approval.

* * * * *

The trip to Palm Springs was most enjoyable. Although it was blistering outside, the air conditioner worked great and the three of them were comfortable in Joseph’s little car. With the ‘moon-n-tunes’ package, his sound system rocked and they listened to fabulous music all the way. Myca and Jeremy followed in her vehicle. The other two who were planning to come begged off at the last minute, so it was only the five of them.

As they rounded a corner, Rachel noticed the cacti shimmering. In fact, everything outside the car was glowing with brilliantly colored auras.

“You guys see that?” she asked.

“What?” asked Joseph.

“The street signs, plants, even the other cars are giving us quite a show.” Rachel stated happily, gazing out the window in awe.

“You seeing the auras again?” Karen looked at her with fascination as Rachel nodded. “So what color is mine?” she teased.

“I can’t see human fields yet. Still working on that one.”

“It’s probably that you are vibrating so fast, you can pick up their electro-magnetic fields. I think it’s way cool, and I can’t wait ’til I can see them,” Karen said wistfully.

Joseph nodded and added his two cents, “I think I saw an aura once last week after a couple of margaritas.” They all laughed, and he punctuated his joke by pumping up the volume on the CD player.

Pulling up at the hotel, they noticed a long line at the front desk. “Checking in, or just here for the speaker tonight?” the valet cordially inquired.

“Both. Any chance we can forgo that line?” Joseph slid a fifty dollar bill into the valet’s hand and he became most obliging.

“You bet. You got reservations?” As they gave him confirmation numbers, Rachel noticed Reno gliding across the lobby toward them, free and untamed - wearing an Armani suit and oozing confidence, power and style.

“Masters, hey! Welcome.” Her eyes danced. “Isn’t this exciting?” She was almost giddy and that was quite a stretch for Reno.

“Reno, thanks so much for letting us know. We were meant to be here!” Rachel answered and hugged her friend. “It’s great to see you!”

“It’s great to see you too. What’s it been, a couple of months? This was kind of spur-of-the-moment for us too. I didn’t even know he was coming and if he hadn’t sent me that email, we would have missed this.”

Andrew and Reno had been friends for many years, but the world was fast these days, with all of his speaking engagements. “He’s been in Europe and Canada and he forgot to give me advance notice. Thank goodness he remembered and sent me a note last night.”

After getting settled into their rooms, they all grabbed a quick bite at the Deli Stop and headed for the Grand Ballroom to pick up their tickets. “Looks like a full house. It’s a good thing we called ahead,” said Myca as she stepped up to the will-call window.

“Myca Jefferies, five tickets,” she told the soft-eyed receptionist, who responded by finding the tickets, sliding them across to Myca saying, “Sign here please.”

Myca passed out the tickets and they got into line just as the doors opened and people started to enter.

Reno and her boyfriend, Batey, joined them and they all found seats together. The crowd chattered boisterously as the

music pounded Safri Duo. Everyone worked themselves into a fever pitch as the room filled.

Suddenly, the lights dimmed and a single spot hit stage left. The crowd roared and was equaled in volume only by the music rising to a deafening peak as Andrew strode out onto the stage with that mischievous smile and declared, “Are you ready for this?” Of course this brought the audience to their feet. They all danced and laughed and the evening with Andrew Wilder was under way.

* * * * *

After the presentation, Rachel joined Joseph, Myca and Karen in the coffee shop for a snack and to compare notes. “Unbelievable, as usual,” Joseph said, as their server put a fat piece of apple pie ala-mode in front of him. “He must never sleep. It seems like he has something new to share all the time.”

Rachel smiled at the warmth she felt and added, “He is doing great work. I just wish more people could grasp the concept of how important it is that we feel good. It’s like they do not understand the correlation between feeling good and high vibrations.”

“Well of course they don’t,” Myca piped in. “We didn’t either until someone explained it to us, right? That’s one of the marvelous things about Andrew. He not only delivers an amazing message, but he makes sure everyone in the room is feeling good while he does it.”

Karen looked thoughtfully at her cake and spoke softly, “Doesn’t it seem like all the tension and anxiousness in the world disappears in a room full of like-minded people, all vibrating well-being and looking for more?”

They nodded in agreement. “Oh yeah,” Joseph replied, “it was like stepping ten years back in time to when everyone was still civil to each other and families got along. The way things are today is so awful. My neighbor built a huge fence around his yard and doesn’t speak to anyone. His son came over the other day, and they were screaming profanities at each other through the gate. I finally had to put in ear plugs.”

Karen glanced around. “Where’s Reno and Batey?”

“They went with Andrew for a nightcap, I do believe,” Myca informed them.

Rachel yawned. “Ahhh well, not me. I’m beat!” she said as she finished her half of the chocolate cake she spilt with Karen. “See you guys in the a.m. Can someone call me? I don’t have an alarm.”

As she lay in bed, going over her thoughts and her day, she shivered with excitement over what she had experienced that evening. Thinking of Peter, she wondered if he would be interested in hearing about tonight. “If he could just get it that he needs to always be reaching for a better feeling thought to raise his vibrations...”

Andrew’s words rang in her head. “As the world changes, we must change with it. The frequencies are getting faster and faster. That is why much of the population is experiencing such discomfort, and why they are getting more and more irritable.

Millions of people are searching for answers. It is the Awakening. Just remember, you are the creator of your own reality. You can choose to change. You already know that as you deliberately choose positive thoughts and emotions, you are raising your vibrations. What you want to keep in mind is that not only will the positive emotion make you feel better, but as your vibrations go up, you will be better equipped to handle the increasing vibration of the planet. That will keep you more grounded amidst the chaos around you. Those who are raising their own vibrations are more peaceful, limitless and free.”

She began her nighttime mantra as she basked in the enchanting afterglow of the event, and soon she drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Three

Rachel opened her eyes and gazed happily around her. “Whoa, great sleep,” she thought as she stretched her arms out and extended her toes, wiggling them as she began her morning mantra. “Today, no matter where I’m going, no matter what I’m doing...” and she was interrupted by the loud ring of her telephone.

“Is this my morning wake-up call?” she chirped into the receiver.

“Rachel, it’s Joseph.” His voice was a whisper.

“Good morning and thanks for the call, but I was already awake.”

“Turn on the TV right now, any channel. Long Beach has been destroyed.” His intensity startled her and she immediately slammed the phone down.

She flipped on the light and scrambled for the remote. She found the button and got the TV going “... and it is too early to know how many are dead and dying. There is no communication from anywhere within a five mile radius of the blast. We are bringing you these reports live from our San Diego newsroom.

“Once again, for those of you just joining us, it appears that just before dawn this morning, the port at Long Beach, California, was the target of a deadly terrorist bombing. There have been no reports of shockwaves or firestorms. Leading experts speculate that this was not an atomic or thermo-nuclear device but a relatively new weapon known as a D bomb...”

The newscaster’s mouth was still moving but Rachel heard no more words. Suddenly light-headed, she collapsed on the bed.

Slowly she became aware of pounding and yelling coming from her door. Stumbling up, she felt like her body was on fire. She sensed her way to the source of the noise. As she slid back the chain and opened the door, Joseph, Reno, Jeremy, Karen and Myca bolted into the room.

“Did you see the news?” Myca asked but already knew the answer when she saw Rachel’s face.

The news was still pouring out of the TV, and all six of them lined up at the end of the beds.

“The speculation here is that a terrorist group planted the bomb in a cargo ship docked at Long Beach, although no one has claimed responsibility as yet. Casualties are predicted to be in the millions. The prevailing winds are blowing the radioactive cloud north over Los Angeles, and it is sure to devastate much of the population in its path.

“For those of you unfamiliar with the D bomb, it is the latest ‘weapon of mass disruption.’ It can be fairly easily manufactured by terrorist factions. It is a dirty bomb of massive proportions, greatly outstripping earlier versions in that it

disperses a much denser field of radioactive materials, affecting a far greater area from ground zero than we ever believed possible.

“We have been given to understand that anyone within a five mile radius of the blast will have received lethal doses of radiation. We turn now to national meteorologist, David Chen, who is predicting a path of destruction from the fallout based on current temperatures and wind conditions...”

In desperation, Rachel flipped to another station.

“Seal Beach is also affected, probably devastated, but we have no word yet as to the extent of the damage there. It is south of Long Beach, but close, so it is sure to have suffered heavy loss of life.

“Laguna Beach is sending news that it has not been affected, so everything south of there appears to be clear of the radiation. Dana Point and San Clemente are just now reporting in. Inland cities closest to the blast have not yet responded, and the Greater Los Angeles area remains silent.

“For those of you just joining us, today, November 24th, 2012, at 4:34 a.m. Pacific Standard Time, a dirty bomb of massive proportions exploded at Long Beach harbor. The main brunt of the blast hit Long Beach and surrounding areas, and the fallout is drifting northward over Los Angeles. Millions are dead and millions more are at risk. Our satellite infrared images show a cloud of radioactive waste blanketing the downtown area of the City of Los Angeles.”

Karen lurched to the bathroom and hunched over the toilet retching. Joseph turned off the TV. "I think we've seen enough for the moment." Everyone agreed.

Reno spoke first. "You guys can't go back there. The free-ways are probably closed or impassable."

Rachel was thinking about all the people she felt closest to, glad that Peter was well south of the blast. She found her cell phone to call, but got the 'no service' indicator. She picked up the hotel phone, pushed the button for an outside line and dialed her home number. "Busy signal. Lines are probably destroyed, or everyone on earth is using the phones." She tried to sound calm, but her voice shook.

"Well, it's started. Right here at home, right in our own backyard. I was hoping for more time before the war actually hit us here in America," moaned Joseph sadly, looking up as Karen came out of the bathroom, white as a ghost.

She lay down on the bed and started crying softly. "My sister and Mom are only two miles from the harbor." Then she sobbed loudly, "*Were* only two miles from the harbor."

Reno put her arms around Karen and held her until her sobbing subsided. "Karen, they died instantly, and you know they are now completely connected with Source Energy, in their non-physical forms," she said, gently stroking her hair and brushing the tears from her cheeks.

"I know, I know, but I will miss them so much." She looked into Reno's eyes and choked out the words. "I totally get that and you are right. Thank you," she said, searching for a calmer feeling that wasn't there yet. "I know you are trying to help."

The group sat for a few minutes in stunned, sickened silence. The vibration of gloom was thick enough to slice with a knife. Reno and Myca, always the strong ones, exchanged glances, knowing something needed to be done right away to raise the vibrations of the group, or at least get themselves to a slightly better place, to gain some relief.

“All right, listen,” Reno stated, quickly and decisively, “I have a huge house. You guys come home to Lake Las Vegas with us. You couldn’t go back there, even if you wanted to.” She walked to the door as she spoke, letting in a breathless Batey.

“Freeways west of Riverside are closed. The front desk is informing all the guests,” he told them anxiously. “It’s a mad-house down there!”

“Batey, I think they should all come to our place, and we can figure out what to do in a few days as things settle down.” Reno knew he would agree.

“Of course. That’s a great plan!” he concurred.

Myca was the first to respond. “Thanks, you guys. I agree. Let’s all pack up and head out. Hopefully the roads won’t be too slammed toward Las Vegas.”

Everyone started moving as if in slow motion; they were shell-shocked, heart-sick and confused. Reno held open the door and gave the order, “Let’s meet in the lobby in fifteen minutes. That work for everyone?”

They all agreed and rushed off to their rooms. Rachel was already shoving things into her bag.

* * * * *

Tens of thousands of people had poured out of Orange County and Riverside before the freeways closed. The group's three cars got pulled into the endless snake of traffic as they began their journey to Lake Las Vegas. They all agreed not to turn on their radios and instead listened to CDs. Karen rode with Reno and Batey at their insistence. Even though the freeway was bumper to bumper, the traffic moved at a respectable pace and they made decent time.

"I'm glad we just got groceries. We definitely don't want to go out right now," Reno remarked. Fear permeated the air, and she knew the group needed to get level as quickly as possible.

"Yes, and I'm also glad that Andrew got out to Denver last night, and that he routed through Las Vegas and not LAX."

Reno nodded and opened the garage doors. All three vehicles pulled into the five-car garage and everyone got out. Karen's legs buckled momentarily, and Batey grabbed her, putting his arm around her waist for support while she got her bearings.

Apollo and Zeus came barreling out of the doggy-door to greet them. "I will never understand how you can have two Great Danes in the house and still be so immaculate, Reno," commented Myca, kneeling down to get face-to-face with Apollo, who promptly gave her a big kiss with his giant tongue.

Rachel, who had a special fondness for the two Harlequin Danes, took Zeus's head in her hands and looked lovingly into his eyes. "Hello, old friend," she thought to him.

"Rachel," he thought back to her mournfully, and it tugged at her heart.

“It’s okay, Zeus. We’ll be okay,” Rachel comforted him.

“Many people go away. Many people sick. So happy you here, so happy Reno here. We afraid,” Apollo shared with her. Both of the huge canines seemed to shiver, but Rachel knew they felt some relief to have friends around them. They felt safer.

“The dogs know,” she told the group. “They know a great many people are dead and dying. They are very happy to have us here.”

“Yes my babies, Mommy’s home and brought familiar faces,” Reno baby-talked to the dogs, and they responded with huge tails wagging.

Batey picked up bags and directed everyone into the spacious kitchen. The earth tones and stainless appliances were always a welcome sight to Rachel. “Your kitchen is as big as my whole apartment, Reno. I love it,” she said, and kicked off her shoes to feel the cool tile beneath her feet.

“Well, you know me. I always do everything in a big way, Rach,” said Reno, as she placed bottle of twenty year-old Scotch on the island countertop. “Honey, will you fill the ice bucket please? I’ll get the glasses.”

Soon everyone was more relaxed. Batey had assigned bedrooms, and bags were all delivered. Rachel’s room was small, decorated in Southwestern style, one wall painted like an Arizona desert. All eight bedrooms had private baths. Rachel’s bathroom replicated a desert, some walls painted like landscape, some mirrored.

“I just love this room. It’s my favorite,” Rachel said when Reno stopped by to check on her.

“I know! That’s why I told Batey to put you here. Come on, let’s get somethin’ to eat. I’m famished.”

They sat at the large stone table for a few hours, eating and talking. Long Beach was not a topic of conversation. Everyone drifted off to bed around midnight, and the dogs slept in the foyer, nervously watching the door, ears cocked and one eye open.

* * * * *

The morning sun peaked through Rachel’s adobe-style window at 6:20, and she stretched lazily, smiling, until she remembered where she was and why. She pulled herself up and headed for the kitchen and a cup of coffee.

“Here sweetie.” Reno shoved a mug into her hands. Everyone else was beginning to stir, and showers were running. Joseph appeared in the doorway next. “Coffee on?” Reno directed him to the cups and fixings.

Rachel wandered out onto the patio, looking around for the dogs. She noticed a few plants knocked over and dirt tracked by large canine paws over the Kool Deck. She grabbed a broom propped against the wall and began to clean up, hoping to save Batey from seeing the mess.

“Wonder what got into those dogs,” Batey commented as he joined Rachel by the pool. The centerpiece of the patio was a large triangular pool with matching hot tub and tropical plants.

It was a lovely area that, at this particular moment, was covered in dirty doggy prints and overturned planters.

“No real damage here, I don’t think. The plants all seem to be okay,” Rachel answered, as she helped him set the planters upright, replacing what soil they could and sweeping up the rest.

“These palms are really much sturdier than you might think. I ordered them special just for that reason, so the dogs couldn’t hurt them,” Batey responded.

“Your landscaping is really pretty. You do a fine job!” Rachel commended him.

“Thanks! Reno always teases me about my passion for gardening,” he said, waving his arm around at the lush surroundings, “but she is glad I love to do it and I am glad she loves her business.”

Reno’s neighbor, a tall gray-haired woman, was also taking her coffee outside. She spied Batey and insistently called him over. Batey took off across the large expanse of green that separated their homes and leaned across the four-foot rock wall. Rachel could tell that the woman was very disturbed by the way she was throwing her arms around.

When Batey returned, he reported. “Looters, even out here, and even in houses where people are home. My neighbor, Jan, had a man break into her garage last night. When she confronted him, he ran off. That’s probably what set the dogs off last night. I have a feeling we are in for a rough ride for a while. Thank goodness for Great Danes,” he sighed and sat down on the chaise lounge.

* * * * *

The next few weeks passed slowly, dogs sometimes waking them at night with excited barking, but no intruders set foot on the place, or if they did, they high-tailed it out of there at the sound of the dogs. Every day, the small group did their processes, calling on the teachings of the masters to keep themselves in high vibration. They turned on the television only briefly and only a few times, not wanting to get sucked into the continuous reruns of the 9/11-like gloom which was, of course, a thousand times worse.

Every day they worked on feeling better, meditated, read, listened to CDs and watched DVDs of their favorite teachers. These processes had been a part of their daily lives for many years, but this moment in history was one of the greatest challenges Rachel had ever encountered. Many times, in desperation, she fell back on her mantra, “Right now, I will reach for the best feeling thought I have access to,” as a source of inspiration and relief. Many times she wondered how the United States and the world would recover from such a tear in the very fabric of human existence. She always knew she would be okay, but she wasn’t so sure about Peter. She had yet to make contact with him. Still no phones there. Still no word.

Usually one or both of the dogs slept in her room. Lying in her bed, she felt comforted this particular evening by the company of Apollo.

“Worrying will not help, so I must take care of me and that’s the best I can do right now,” she thought to herself and

to Apollo, as she drifted off to sleep. The Dane sprawled on the bed with her, taking up more than his share of the space, with one eye cracked open.

Chapter Four

The morning had a particularly exciting feel to it as Rachel walked in the large garden beside the house. She felt more comfortable than she had in weeks. Looking around, she noticed bands of lavender and blue emanating from the trees. Joseph and Karen were close by, and she could see the others along the paths in the half acre of palms and tropical plants. Birds serenaded her and the dogs sat in the shade, dripping from their romp in the fountains, tongues lolling.

Suddenly, there was the familiar sense of her surroundings beginning to fade. She could see the plants and benches, but she at the same time could see right through them. She sat down on the stone bench next to the fish pond, feeling light-headed.

Joseph and Karen rushed over to her, their eyes wide with excitement. “Woohoo, Rachel, we both saw what you’ve been telling us about. Like everything gets kinda surreal and we could actually see right through the bushes and trees.” Joseph gasped as he spoke, short of breath from his jog over but also from the thrill.

The others came over too, and all were elated by the moment. “Whoa, you guys saw that, right?” Jeremy’s eyes were full

of wonder as he scanned the surroundings, as if hoping for a replay. All seven of them stood in silent anticipation, like statues in the garden, eyes searching with peripheral vision. After about ten minutes, Jeremy's stomach got the best of him, and he announced that it was time for him to head back to the house to get something to eat. With the moment passed, the rest of them drifted off slowly, not wanting to let it go, but hunger had set in at the mention of breakfast.

Rachel took a bran muffin and coffee to her room. The lush garden view was irresistible and she sat in the rocker facing the window. Nibbling on her muffin, sipping her coffee and listening to the birds and the soft breeze, she let her eyes shut in appreciation. Ten seconds passed, and when she opened her eyes, she reached again for her mug. To her amazement, her hand passed right through it. She could see it dimly, but she somehow lacked physicality. She looked at her hand in disbelief and rubbed her eyes. Everything was fading in and out in waves - her arms and legs, the furniture, the walls, her breakfast.

Jumping to her feet in astonished confusion, she flew half-way to the ceiling effortlessly, and then slowly dropped back down, touching lightly. With that, she lost consciousness and dropped to the rug in a heap.

* * * * *

Rachel's eyes fluttered open, long lashes blinking rapidly, face against a thick carpet of sweet smelling grass. She moved her head, looking first to the left and then to the right. She was in a

meadow of tall green grass and a rainbow of wildflowers. “What in the world...?” she thought to herself. As she began to move arms and legs, they seemed foreign at first, like they didn’t really belong to her but had been borrowed from someone else. Finally getting them to respond properly, her hand brushed a blossom and she stroked the flower softly. “Now this is a great dream,” she said out loud. “Daisies, my favorites. Ummm...”

She started to get up on her hands and knees and felt light, as though she were nearly floating. “Odd,” she thought. “Even for a dream, this feels pretty darned real.” As she stood up, she rooted her feet, not trusting to walk yet because she felt so weightless. The smell of flowers filled the air and delicate butterflies flitted across her view like bits of brightly colored paper blowing in the breeze.

One large beauty came so close she could almost touch it. As she held out her hand, it settled right on her finger, slowly opening and closing its wings and looking at her intently. “Now this is a very strange dream,” she thought, and to that the butterfly responded, “Not strange at all. You wanted to touch me, beautiful lady, and I wanted to touch you. Did you just arrive?”

“I’m not sure,” said Rachel, “Arrive where?”

“My dear lady, this is One World, a most delightful place to exist.” The butterfly seemed to take extreme pleasure in the discourse.

“The One World,” Rachel pondered, and the butterfly lifted in flight from her rest. “Please come back. I have so many questions,” she called out after the exquisite creature.

“This is One World, where everyone and everything has the volition to choose in the moment for themselves. I choose to fly, but we will meet again.” Her voice drifted off as she flew away, stopping at this flower and then the next in a dance of flight across the daisies.

Rachel watched until the butterfly disappeared into the brush at the edge of the meadow, and then she began to study her surroundings more closely. The mountains to her left and the grove of trees winding down through the valley all seemed familiar. The scene didn’t feel quite right, but she recognized the overall lay of the land as one of her favorite childhood getaways. She slowly began walking toward where she remembered a little creek ought to be and caught a glimpse of water through the bushes, cascading over boulders she had climbed on as a young girl.

“I’d never forget this place,” she thought to herself, “and yet it’s somehow different.” She found the large flat rock she loved to sit on and lowered herself down, not quite trusting her balance. Kicking off her sandals, she dipped her feet slowly, expecting icy water, but it was merely cool and tantalizing.

She proceeded to count wildflower varieties, one of her favorite pastimes as a child, knowing there would be nearly thirty. When she reached forty-two, she realized that she had never before seen many of them and that she was unfamiliar with several of the colors.

Then she remembered she was dreaming and smiled to herself in satisfaction for her wonderful imagination. “I’m good,”

she announced out loud to herself and continued admiring the delicious display.

Her eyes followed the stream along its path, where she was surprised to see an odd-looking man on a rock about a hundred yards downstream. He was leaning his head toward the water, either for a drink or to wash his face. He was slender and wore a large-brimmed straw hat with a huge blue sash tied around it and falling to his shoulder on one side. His strange loose-fitting pants and top were made of a shimmery material that reflected many shades of blue and green.

“Flamboyant character. Is this my ‘dream man’?” she chuckled to herself and headed downstream to meet the fellow.

“Water’s not safe to drink,” she announced with a smile as she drew close enough to be heard. He lifted his cupped hands to his lips and took a long drink of the crystal clear water.

“On the contrary, my dear, it is perfect to drink and tastes marvelous,” he responded and jumped to his feet. He was very tall indeed, well over six feet, and his dark hair curled up and around the edges of his hat. His brilliant green eyes mesmerized Rachel, but as he reached his hand out to introduce himself, she flinched.

“Sorry, I did not mean to startle you,” he said as he quickly withdrew his hand. “My name is Michael and I came to greet you. I am your guide,” and he extended his hand again for a shake.

“Hi Michael, I’m Rachel. I know this meadow well and do not need a guide, but I welcome your company.” She was happy to have this interesting fellow in her dream.

Smiling from ear to ear he explained, “You have just arrived on the One World. I am here to help you acclimate, to answer your questions and get you settled in over the next few weeks. It’s my job.” And with that he removed his hat dramatically and gave her a low and stately bow.

“Okay, I’ll bite. I’m pretty sure this is a dream, but you are very sweet and entertaining, so I will spend a while with you and you can tell me about this One World, as you call it.” They sat together in the grass and Rachel listened intently to his story.

“You have come here to the One World from the Dark Planet, along with many others. We have been preparing for you. This place is called One World because we are all connected here, and we know it, unlike where you come from. On your planet, people live in separation, seeking fulfillment from outside themselves. On our world, we constantly strive to evolve spiritually, finding our happiness within. This is a place where the human race can still experience physicality and the contrast it affords, but do so in an environment of peace and love, surrounded by positive energy. There is no dark energy here. We are excited to be able to offer you a home here. You are our family, we are connected to you and we love you dearly.

“This world looks much like yours and, when created, was identical. We have not desecrated our world with pollution and destruction as those on Dark Planet have done. There is no war here. There is no hunger here; there is no poverty. There is no fear. People do not age, unless they so choose. There is no sickness.

“This is a place of constant learning and joy. During your schooling here, you will learn how to tap into a part of yourself that has always been there but has been forgotten. We are all extensions of Source Energy, we are divine. People here are as one in joy, abundance and mutual admiration and love. On this world, we are perfecting unlimited possibilities in creation. Not at first for you, mind you, but after your ... um ... orientation and schooling. Your mind has been temporarily veiled for your protection and ours, until you learn to use this power as you were intended, as a divine entity.”

He paused for a few moments and Rachel pondered his words carefully. She wondered if this was a dream about ‘The Shift of the Ages,’ as Myca and so many others called it. They said it would be in late 2012. “Michael, is this about The Great Awakening, The Shift of the Ages?”

Michael thought about that and did not speak for a few minutes. “That is on the Dark Planet. That is the raising of the vibrational frequencies of those of you who came at this time. That is the transition of over a million people right now, and even more over the next few years. Our frequency is much faster here. Yours needed to be raised to more closely match ours before you could be transported here.”

Rachel jumped to her feet, color rushing to her face. “This is a dream, isn’t it?” she cried, hardly able to contain herself.

“No Rachel, this is not a dream. You are here. You have made the journey from Dark Planet to One World. This is real. You are not dreaming. And your exciting journey has just

begun. All of the dark energy that was around you there is gone from your experience forever.”

She shook herself and jumped up and down, trying to wake up. She slapped her hands on her arms and legs, thinking she would certainly open her eyes and be in her bedroom at Reno’s place. She laughed and cried at the same time, while Michael sat back and watched in amusement. Finally, Rachel closed her eyes and took four deep breaths. As she opened her eyes, a knowing came over her and she sank to her knees, extending her arms up to the sky. Tears of joy and relief flooded her eyes and rolled down her cheeks.

“I am here,” she announced, and Michael echoed, “You are here.”

Chapter Five

After the initial shock had worn off, Rachel was emotionally and physically spent. She told Michael she needed a nap. Curling up in the deep grass and flowers, she fell asleep fast, enjoying the innocent sleep of a newborn. She was out for quite some time, and when she awakened Michael was not there. Her throat was dry and she headed over to the stream to quench her thirst. Cupping her hands, she dipped them into the cool water again and again. After drinking her fill, she noticed her reflection in the shallow pool and smiled sweetly at herself.

“You really are quite beautiful,” Michael said to her, appearing as if out of nowhere.

“Well you’re just full of surprises. How did you do that?” Rachel asked him as she reached for the hand he offered.

“It’s called teleporting and you will learn it in due time,” he responded, helping her to her feet.

“I have heard of it, I just haven’t seen it demonstrated before. Where were you? I didn’t see you when I woke up. For a minute I thought I had only dreamed you,” she laughed.

Michael held her hand and they walked out into the meadow. “I have seven others that I guide. They came at the same time as you.”

Immediately Rachel thought of her friends back in Lake Las Vegas. “Michael, do you know if the rest of the group I was with came here too?”

“Yes. Let me show you.” He spread two fingers of his right hand and drew them back and forth through the air in front of him three times. Rachel watched a fold appear, like a window into another dimension, and there before her was Myca, speaking to a man much shorter than Michael, with sandy hair to his shoulders. It was as if they were right in front of her in the meadow.

Myca was rapidly firing questions at the man, who was answering them just as quickly. Myca was animated and radiated joy. She was vibrating so fast it seemed to Rachael she was floating.

Michael again drew his fingers across the air three times, and Joseph appeared in front of them. He was sitting on a chair in stunned silence, listening to his guide, a young woman who looked as though she couldn't be more than sixteen.

“He'll be okay, it just hasn't sunk in yet,” said Michael, noticing the concerned look on Rachel's' face.

One by one, Michael showed Rachel images of Karen, Reno, Batey, Jeremy and Joseph. The entire group had made the transition and each was in a state of astonishment and excitement.

“What about my brother?” she asked hopefully.

“He did not come this time, but maybe he will make it later. Many more will come later. We are sending emissaries to help others transcend.” With that, he spread all five fingers and ran

his hand across the movie of Jeremy and his guide. The colors blended in a liquid blur, like oil paint on canvas, getting smaller and smaller until they disappeared.

“It’s okay. Focus on you, as you have trained yourself to do. You will learn much over the next few months. We’ve only just begun.”

Rachel cocked her head to one side, thinking she heard a familiar melody. Michael winked again and asked, “Are you ready to meet some other people?”

Her eyes widened and she grinned. “You bet, bring it on!”

Michael stood with his palms facing her and she instinctively placed hers against his. “Close your eyes and breathe deeply with me,” Michael instructed. After five deep breaths, they faded out, and the butterfly on a nearby flower nodded her head in contentment and floated off across the meadow.

* * * * *

They appeared together on a quiet lane. The street itself was a stone paved path about twelve feet wide, with hedges and trees lining each side. Houses were spread out on large parcels, at least five acres each. Greenery was so thick between lots that every home was completely private. Rachel could hear birds singing and smell roses and honeysuckle in the air.

Michael waved at a young boy riding a bike and turned Rachel toward a house that was at least a quarter of a mile off the road.

“This is your home, for now. You will find it very comfortable. There are people here to care for you. They are not servants, this is their home, and they are pleased to share it with you. Think of it like foster care. You will stay with them, if you like, until you are ready to be on your own.”

They walked up the path and rang the doorbell. The couple who answered were so striking it took Rachel’s breath away. Michael spoke, “Hello Gabrielle, Rodney. This is Rachel. She has just arrived.”

Gabrielle was petite with thick blonde hair that flowed past her waist. Her big brown eyes charmed Rachel at once, and she stepped forward and enveloped Rachel in a warm hug. “My husband, Rodney,” Gabrielle said, turning to him. Rodney took Rachel’s hands. He was dark and handsome, and his black eyes smiled deeply into hers. “We are so blessed to have you. Please come in.”

Michael removed his shoes and Rachel followed suit as she stepped into the foyer, careful to be respectful of this amazing and oh-so-white house. Almost everything in it was white, with only a few splashes of color here and there. White marble floors, white furniture, white curtains. On a table was a white vase filled with white roses surrounding a single yellow rose.

As Gabrielle and Rodney led them through the house and onto the patio, Rachel felt as if the home was the most pure place she had ever seen.

Waving them into white wicker chairs, Gabrielle nodded. “Yes, it is very white. We just love the simple and elegant look. But for your room dear, anything you desire. Have you eaten?”

Rachel shook her head, realizing she was really hungry. Rodney went into the house and reappeared quickly, setting a huge platter of delectable looking finger foods onto the round glass-topped table. He placed small white plates and lace napkins in front of all four chairs.

Michael looked over at Rachel and encouraged her to start. “You will like the food,” he said. She popped a tiny sandwich into her mouth and began to chew. When she let out a huge ‘ummm’ of pleasure, the rest of them laughed.

“You see? The food is wonderful. Everything is fresh and we do not use preservatives or additives as you do on Dark Planet,” Michael explained to her as she swallowed the morsel and looked for another.

“How do you stay trim when the food tastes so incredible?”

Michael answered first, although Rachel could tell that Gabrielle had politely stopped herself from jumping in. “No one is obese here. We are compelled to eat for sustenance and enjoyment and are easily satisfied when we have had enough. No one overeats — thus, no overweight people. We are not driven by addictions, as people are on Dark Planet.”

They chatted about the flowers and birds in the yard, the fragrances and the food while they enjoyed the refreshments. Then Rodney set his plate down and brushed his lips with his napkin. Looking at Rachel, he asked in a matter of fact way that intrigued her, “So Rachel, what décor would you like in your bedroom suite?”

“Well, let’s see,” she began, throwing herself into this new game. “I like comfy. Big overstuffed furniture, lots of animal

prints and bright accents. I love a huge pillow-topped bed, and ... a hot tub.” She winked at Michael, treating him to some of his own humor.

“We’ll see what we can do,” Rodney said as he picked up a custard tart with a dollop of chocolate in the center and strode out into the garden, taking a narrow path between the rose bushes. He was talking to himself and gesturing to the plants around him. He disappeared into a side entrance of the house. Rachel looked at Gabrielle and Michael, who watched only briefly after Rodney. Her puzzled look brought smiles to their faces but no explanation. Gabrielle merely asked Rachel if she would like a glass of wine and the three of them continued chatting.

A few minutes later, Rodney came out of the house and motioned for Gabrielle’s hand. She rose and stated, “Let’s get you settled in, Rachel.”

Gabrielle glided into the house and turned left down a corridor to a set of double doors that she swung open wide. Rachel gasped as she entered the large triangular room. Against the long wall was a huge bed covered with a leopard print comforter. The black and white hot tub in the corner had a ledge around it with candles and carafes of liquids. A painting of a tiger looked down from the wall above, lit perfectly for viewing from the tub. In the other corner sat a massive mauve armchair between twin bookshelves filled with books in multicolored jackets.

“How did you do that?” she cried and threw herself onto the bed, knowing before she hit it that it would be a pillow-top.

She shrieked with delight, then jumped up and ran over to the sliding doors that opened before she could touch them onto a spacious balcony. She plopped down onto an oversized lounge chair to study a small tile-topped table. Each little tile was painted with African animals — giraffes, lions, zebras, and elephants. Her balcony overlooked gardens that framed the patio where they had just been relaxing.

Taking a long, deep breath, she drank in the fragrance of the garden and closed her eyes, letting the breeze gently brush her face. She was very good at appreciating the moment and right now there was much to appreciate.

How long she stood there, she did not know, but Michael's voice interrupted her sensual reverie. "Rachel, why don't you take a few minutes to freshen up and then we can go over to the university. I'd like to show you where you will be taking your studies for the next few months." She came in reluctantly, doors closing automatically behind her, and Gabrielle waved her into the bathroom area. The bathroom had a black and white marble floor and counter, with towels and mats in jungle flower prints. It was glorious and spacious, with an arched doorway leading to a walk-in closet.

"There are a few garments in here which should suit you, my dear. If you'd like to shower and dress, Michael can wait with us downstairs." Gabrielle closed the door and the three of them left her to enjoy her new boudoir.

As she disrobed and stepped into the shower, the water came on automatically from three crystal shower heads. Even though the temperature was perfect immediately, she jumped

and squealed. “I’ve got to get used to this,” she thought and smiled in amusement at herself. She was embarking on a magnificent new adventure and she welcomed it with every ounce of her being. She let the soft warm water wash away any traces of the Dark Planet that were left in the corners of her mind and her heart.

Chapter Six

Glass decanters of sweet-smelling toiletries lined the shower's ledge. Rachel picked a musk-perfumed liquid soap and applied it to her hair and face. Her hair turned to silk as she washed out the suds and her skin tingled deliciously. She reached for one of the thick towels on the rack next to the shower and dried off.

Since Gabrielle had been wearing a simple, elegant gown, Rachel picked a similar style in gorgeous soft green fabric from the assortment she found in the closet. It slid over her head so light to the touch that it felt like wearing nothing at all.

She stood in front of the mirror and wished she had a blow dryer. Immediately her hair was dry, shiny and flowing. A huge smile crossed her face as she extended her arms and twirled around, giggling like a little girl. Next, she bent toward the mirror and looked closely at her face. She glanced down for drawers, thinking a toothbrush and some lip gloss would be nice. She didn't find any drawers, but she realized that her teeth suddenly felt clean.

She noticed an odd looking mask on the end counter with a small note attached and was beginning to feel a bit like Alice in Wonderland. She picked up the mask and read the note:

Once you use this, you never have to do it again, unless you want a change. Just push the buttons on the side to program what you want and then press the mask to your face until it beeps. It is semi-permanent, meaning it only changes when you want to change it. Love, Gabrielle

Rachel turned it on its side and looked at the small buttons: lash darkener, brow style, Inner Beauty, eye shadow colors, lipstick and lip gloss, and blush. Making a few selections, one of which was Inner Beauty (she loved that one), she placed the mask to her face and removed it when it beeped five seconds later. She looked incredible — soft and natural with just a hint of color on her lips and cheeks, skin clean and smooth, lashes perfectly curled. “I am soooo loving this,” she said as she gave herself a last once-over and headed for the double doors.

* * * * *

“You look rested and refreshed, my dear, and quite stunning,” Michael stated as he rose to her entrance into the sitting room.

“Yes indeed,” Rodney added, “and I see that you figured out the B.E.M.”

Gabrielle quickly chimed in, “Beauty Enhancement Mechanism. Purely designed to bring out the inner and outer beauty of women *and* men. We all use it. It is not only cosmetic; you can also choose to just let your Inner Beauty shine the brightest, which I can see you have done.”

“Thanks, I loved it. What is this fabric?” she asked as she rubbed the sleeves of her gown between her fingers.

“It is from the Chamelear plant,” Rodney answered. “All fabric comes from this gracious plant. We tell it what texture and color we want, and it provides fluffy clumps that we use to weave the fabric. We love this little plant and its station in our society. Maybe you will learn more about this in your studies at the university. Perhaps you will speak for the plants.” He looked at Michael for a response.

“Only briefly in her general studies. Her main focus, if she desires, will be in animal communication. Rachel, would you wish to become an animal interpreter?”

Rachel considered this carefully and nodded, “I just might. I have a gift.”

“I know you do. Less than a dozen people on One World are gifted with this talent. We could really use more. We are discovering that the consciousness of animals is far more advanced than we thought, and we desire to learn more about it as we work on our own consciousness. Your work will be invaluable to that end.” With that, he started for the door, beckoning Rachel to join him, and they said their goodbyes to Gabrielle and Rodney.

As they stepped onto the porch he told her, “The house will remember you when you return, and no doors will be closed to you — except Rodney and Gabrielle’s room.” His eyes twinkled at his own joke as they walked down the path.

“You said you had seven others that you guide. How are you managing all of us?” she asked. He looked puzzled at first and then he smiled.

“Of course, of course. I forget that you do not yet know our ways. On Dark Planet, you were very limited. As a guide, I can be in many places at once. I have been with my other charges simultaneously as I have been with you.”

Rachel shook her head, unable to fathom this. “Do you mean like clones?”

He laughed and explained, “No. I know this must sound very strange to you. As a guide, I can choose to be in several locations at once. You will learn about it in your basic studies.”

“Wow, I can’t even imagine that.” As they walked along the path, she commented, “I have not seen any cars, or any other form of transportation, other than the little boy on the bike. Is teleporting your only way to get around?”

“Aside from recreational vehicles that we use for the sheer joy of it, like boats, bicycles and pico wings, all we need to do is think it and we are where we want to go. You will learn soon.”

Again, Michael stopped and faced her, palms up. “It’s time to begin your education. Are you ready?” She placed her hands flat against his; they took five deep breaths and faded from sight.

* * * * *

They appeared on the grounds of what seemed to Rachel like any small college campus. The buildings were simple and

functional and surrounded a large, rectangular green. As she looked into the windows of the nearest building, she could see small classrooms set theater-style.

She and Michael strolled over to a large fountain in the midst of the green. Music unlike anything she knew filled the air, and the fountain danced in time to the sounds.

“What is that music, Michael?” It sounded to Rachel like a choir of soft voices, flutes and violins, a bit jazzy and a bit classical at the same time. It was an ethereal sound and touched her spirit deeply.

“Everyone hears what they choose to hear. It is different for all. I hear the Beatles.” With that a chorus of “Love Me Do” filled the air and the fountain lit up with psychedelic colors and changed its dance to match.

“You have the Beatles here!” Rachel exclaimed and blissfully swayed to the beat.

“We have many of the fine artists here who once briefly blessed Dark Planet. When they pass, many of them reincarnate here. But, we also borrow the best works produced there. We have all of the greats. Many of those with us now have created even more wonderful works here on One World.

“We do not have any dark music,” he continued. “Nothing violent or fear-based, as you can well understand. All music on One World is uplifting.”

Rachel looked around at the people milling about and noticed they were all attractive and healthy looking. “Everyone is pretty here. What’s up with that?”

Michael touched his temple. “Remember the B.E.M? You are seeing these people as they really are. Most people set the B.E.M. on ‘Inner Beauty’ because that is how they prefer others to see them — as they really are. Just like you did, my dear, except you tweaked it just a bit,” he teased her.

He then directed her to a tall, stately building with broad stone steps. “That is the Registrar’s Office. Let’s get you set up with your courses.”

On the way to the building, they passed small groups of students sitting on the grass, sharing deep discussions. By the smiles and laughing it was evident that they were happy and excited to be there. Some greeted the pair warmly as they passed, and suddenly Rachel caught a glimpse of a familiar face.

“Karen,” she cried, and ran over to her friend, who jumped up and threw her arms around Rachel. “You look radiant. Great robe!” she told Karen, as she admired the gold and lavender garment which sparkled in the sun.

“Rachel we made it, we really made it.” Karen was laughing and crying at the same time. “You look amazing too. I saw Myca yesterday and she is so jacked. She knew all along. Hey, check it out!” Karen pulled her robe aside to reveal her left shoulder. The seven-inch scar from a motorcycle accident that used to run down onto her collarbone was gone.

“Your scar is gone! Somehow, that does not surprise me. I feel like a kid again, I have so much energy. In this place, I constantly have that blissful feeling I used to get on my walks, but I don’t have to work at it here. It just flows.”

Michael had gone on ahead a short distance and stopped to wait for her, leaning against a tree. Rachel told Karen, "I think it's time for us to go, but I am sure I'll see you around. If you see any of the others, tell them 'hey' for me." With that she kissed her friend on the cheek and caught up to Michael.

"Your friend seems to have taken quickly to the One World," he said as they climbed the steps.

"Yes, I hope the rest of them have adapted as well." Michael merely nodded in agreement.

Stepping up to a large expanse of mahogany desk, they were greeted warmly by a woman seated behind stacks of papers and booklets.

"Good afternoon Grace, this is Rachel," announced Michael.

"I have been expecting you," Grace replied with a wide smile, as she opened a small booklet and took out a pencil. "Welcome Rachel. We are so glad you are here. This is University Number Six. There are hundreds of these temporary stations set up worldwide for the arrival of people from Dark Planet. Let me go over your classes with you. Have a seat." She waved them toward a small sitting area framed by windows on three sides, where three tall-backed chairs faced each other. They took their seats and began looking over the pamphlets and class summaries.

The basic studies were designed specifically for the newcomers to the One World. Some were brand new classes: Social Integration, The Laws of the Universe, Evolution of the Dark Planet, and Spiritual Expansion. Some were based on courses

taught to small children on this world: Teleportation, Remote Viewing, The Quantum Field, and Telepathic Communication.

Rachel chose Animal Communication as her field of interest. She was required to be tutored for six months to receive her certification as an animal interpreter. Grace was obviously very pleased by Rachel's choice. "We had all hoped you would decide to use your special gift here. We are close to discovering how the animals achieve such a high degree of consciousness and are hoping to integrate some of their amazing connectedness into the human experience. So few people have the DNA and telepathic ability to do this work. Your colleagues will be very happy. Because of the nature of this field of study, we do not offer it as a class. You will be coached by your colleagues, who will take turns. All of them excel in different areas, so you will gain a wide perspective by spending time with each of them."

She presented a completed class itinerary to Rachel and handed her a map of the campus. The three stood and Grace hugged Rachel. Taking her hands, she said, "You are going to do well here. You should have your A.I. certification about the same time as you complete your basic studies. Good luck, and most of all, have fun!"

"Thanks so much, Grace. I will. It was nice to meet you and hopefully I will see you again." Michael said his goodbyes as well, and the two of them took their leave.

Descending the marble steps, Rachel paused to take it all in. The vantage point afforded them a view of the whole campus. The grassy quad was bordered by the classroom buildings, lilac

bushes and trees. Clouds flew across the blue sky above and the aroma of the lilac flowers sang to her senses. She took a deep appreciative breath, and then her mind began to race with questions.

“Michael, how it is that I can learn so much so quickly? It seems like this should take much longer.” She was remembering the long and laborious years she spent at the University of Southern California.

“My dear, in this place there is no limit to the amount of information that can be downloaded, or how fast. Hours will go by in minutes, and although you will be here days on end from sunrise to sunset, the time will fly by for you.” Michael watched her in amusement, for she was already deep in concentration as she scanned her courses again.

He continued, “Some are mini-courses. The Evolution of the Dark Planet, for instance. Merely a brief synopsis of what your home planet has gone through and where it is headed. Others, like Social Integration are intensive and necessary for daily functioning on One World. You may, of course, take continued studies after your initial schooling. Most people on our world are constantly studying and learning. All continued education will be at other locations. The curriculum at these temporary universities has been specifically designed for you who have come here at this moment in time.”

Michael finished his discourse and waited for any additional questions, but Rachel was reflecting on the day’s experiences. She was excited and a bit scared, like getting on the first car of that giant roller coaster at Magic Mountain. Everything she had

done for the last five years on her world was in preparation for this, and the realization gave her immense satisfaction and joy.

After a few moments, Michael interrupted the silence and asked, "Would you like to see the dining area?" Realizing she was famished again, she quickly accepted the invitation.

"After that, I will show you the library."

Chapter Seven

The dining hall was more like a charming restaurant than a college cafeteria. Wide cushioned booths lined the walls and French doors opened onto a patio with checkered tables and matching umbrellas.

The center of the room was like a food court, with stations offering entrées, salads, soups and desserts. Rachel and Michael took trays and utensils and made their selections. Rachel chose a Chicken Caesar Salad and looked around for something to drink. Spotting a coffee stand, she let out an "ooooh" and dashed over to find her favorite, a hazelnut latte.

Michael, delighted by her childlike zest for every new discovery, chuckled to himself as he poured a glass of freshly squeezed lemonade. Carrying their trays outside, they headed for two unoccupied seats.

"Do you mind if we join you?" Michael inquired of a couple already seated and obviously enjoying their meal.

"Please do," responded the man as he motioned for them to sit.

They all introduced themselves. Tim, a redhead with plenty of freckles, hailed from Oklahoma City. Beth, his dining companion, was from Tulsa. "Is this exciting or what?" she exclaimed.

“I have been into quantum physics for years. Many of the books I’ve read hinted about this big event, and now ... BOOM. Here we are. It’s wild!” She giggled and popped a pastry into her mouth.

“So Michael, what will you do now that you have us enrolled? I mean, you guides in general.” Tim looked around and added, “What else could we possible need?”

Michael responded, “We will be here to answer questions, discuss concepts and help you to go over what you have learned so you can integrate it more deeply. And of course, implementation. Since the job is now less time intensive, I will take on another eight charges.

“I chose this commission, as did we all. Your guides,” Michael nodded to Tim and Beth, “are also eager to help with this historic event. Thousands of us were asked if we would like to participate, and those of us who chose to are very excited to help with the mission.”

“Michael, perhaps you can answer a question for me?” Beth asked. At his nod, she continued. “I have many friends who came when I did, but they are at different universities. Only my friend Tim here is attending this school. Why would they separate us like this?”

“Ah, my dear, part of your studies here are about getting outside of your ‘comfort zone,’ so to speak, and making new friends. We also located people based upon their probable choice in occupation, but that is not set in stone. Of course, once you learn teleportation, you may visit all of your friends any time you wish to.”

“I can’t wait for that!” Tim grinned, and he and Beth stood to clear their dishes. “Rachel, Michael, fabulous to meet you. I’m sure we will see you around campus. Enjoy your meal.”

Michael was eating a thick avocado sandwich with sprouts. “Wow that looks good, Michael. Can I ask you a question? Is this food created like Rodney created my bedroom? I mean, does it pop in out of thin air, or what?”

Michael laughed and finished the bite he was eating. “No, we have not evolved, as yet, to that point. We have wonderful agricultural techniques and a great relationship with our plants and animals. There is a kitchen,” he said, pointing to the back area of the cafeteria, “where the staff is preparing the food. They shop in the village, like everyone else. The kitchen has computerized preparation help. They input the orders and the system gives them a finished product, like your salad. As for your bedroom, we are just beginning to learn Quantum Creation and only our most advanced masters are teaching it. It requires a great deal of concentration. Rodney has been studying for over a year. He gave us a splendid demonstration, don’t you think?” He paused, and then added, “Well, are you about ready to see the library? I am almost done here.”

“Absolutely, let’s go!”

Passing the fountain, Rachel was pleasantly surprised to hear Michael McDonald’s sexy voice belting out “Sweet Freedom,” one of her favorite pieces, and she skipped along to the tune. Then she jumped right into the fountain and danced with the water, splashing and frolicking like a child. Michael watched her antics patiently, taking her hand to help her out after the

song had finished. She looked down at her drenched clothing and her eyes widened. Remembering her hair after the shower and with a mischievous look, she said, “Dry.” She was completely dry the moment the command escaped her lips. She giggled and ran off ahead.

Michael mused to himself, “Yes, Rachel, you are going to be a very good student. Outstanding!”

“I can hear you, Michael,” popped into his head. He saw Rachel grinning back at him. “How is it that I can dry myself off? Isn’t that creating?”

“Almost all of us can manipulate small things relative only to ourselves. We are just beginning to learn application of the skills on a larger scale. And please stay out of my thoughts for now, Rachel. You are not ready for that yet,” he instructed her and closed off his mind, thinking he may have been a bit indiscreet with one so talented.

He followed after her, shaking his head. The sounds of Earth, Wind and Fire’s “You’re a Shining Star” were playing in the fountain; water dancing, colors flying.

* * * * *

The library was a grand, dome-shaped structure behind the Registrar’s Office. Skylights circled the top two tiers and there were six broad doors, open and inviting. Entering the foyer of the building took Rachel’s breath away.

Seven levels encircled the massive dome. Around the open atrium, platforms protruded among plants that grew from

hanging baskets, draping long and lush from ceiling to floor. Eight huge planters near each spiral staircase contained palms and bird of paradise growing tall to the skylights.

People sat on couches on the platforms; some were deep in study, some in contemplation. Books were packed into the shelves on Levels One, Four, and Six. Level Two had banks of computers with small flat screens against the walls. She watched fascinated as a young woman took a screen off the wall and docked it on a table. It grew in size until the woman held up her hand to stop it. She then sat down and engrossed herself in the screen.

Rachel and Michael started up a staircase and paused at each level as he pointed out features. At Level Three, they stepped off the staircase and looked about more closely. Thousands of scrolls and bound papyrus documents were stacked on the shelves.

“This section is filled with ancient and modern teachings from masters all over the universe. Some of the documents are very old but may be handled without fear of damaging them. They are perfectly preserved and will never age,” Michael whispered in reverence. “You will probably want to read many of these great teachings.”

They stepped back onto the spiral staircase and continued upward. As they approached Level Five, a sign on the wall just off the staircase left no doubt what this level was — Audio/Visual. Tiny headsets, with even tinier eye cups attached, lined the walls. There were rows of large recliners on the plat-

form. Michael took a headset from the wall and directed Rachel over to a chair.

“Sit here and place the headset on your ears and eyes,” he instructed and helped her get set up properly. The eye cups reminded her of the little glasses at a tanning salon.

Immediately, a table of contents appeared to her, like a movie screen in the front of her mind. Michael told her to pick a topic. She scanned the headings and chose history. “How do I make my selections?” she asked him nervously.

“Just say it, the program is frequent-specific to you as soon as you put the set on,” he responded.

Within History, she chose The Parthesian Era, and it was as if she was actually transported into a thick marsh. She could smell the earthy swamp where she was standing knee deep in water and vines.

Large creatures resembling earth’s dinosaurs were eating tall grasses. One beast with huge limpid eyes looked right at her and thought to her, “Hello, human. Are you here to study us?”

“Yes, but only for a moment. I am most interested in visiting with you and I will come back when I have more time,” she replied and quickly removed the headset. Her breathing was rapid and her chest heaved in excitement.

“Unbelievable,” was all she could muster, and she sat in stunned silence while Michael returned the headset to the wall.

“This area of the library will be a big help in your work,” he said as he helped her up and directed her back to the staircase.

As they continued up the spiral, Michael slowed as he approached Level Seven. “Quiet your mind. Breathe slowly and

stay inward. This is the Akashic Level. You are not ready yet, but I want to show it to you because someday you will be. We do not want to intrude on others using this level, so keep your thoughts at a minimum.”

As they stepped off the staircase onto the top level, Michael whispered to her, “All knowledge in the universe, all thought form, is available here. Information is directly downloaded into the brain while the receiver is in a meditative state. What is received is based upon the consciousness level of the receiver.”

Rachel noticed people sitting on mats, some on platforms, some leaning against the walls, which were bare except for a few pieces of fractal artwork. Tiny alcoves in the walls housed incense burners, and smoke trickled upward from each one.

After a few moments of observation, Michael motioned silently to the staircase and they began their descent downward to the landing, quietly stepping outside a rear doorway.

Stone benches, cushioned teak chairs and a brook that fell over rocks in a series of small waterfalls invited patrons to read outside. “This is glorious, Michael. Is this new? It certainly seems well established.”

“No, this library has been in existence for a very long time. The university was built here because the library is here. Students must have easy access to all knowledge available.”

Rachel nodded, “Makes sense. I am sure I will spend a lot of time here. Thanks for the tour.”

“Yes, indeed! Well ... let’s get you home. You will want to be rested for your first day.” Palms together and five breaths later,

they were on the doorstep at her temporary lodging, Gabrielle and Rodney's house.

“If I were you, I would take some time tonight to look over your schedule and the map so that tomorrow you know where to go and when,” he advised.

With a tip of his hat, he bid her farewell, “Good evening, my lady. See you bright and early.”

Chapter Eight

As she stepped up to the door, it opened for her. She slipped off her sandals and entered slowly, looking around tentatively for her housemates. She did not see them and went to the kitchen in hopes of finding something cool to drink.

The cabinets all looked alike. The only one that vaguely resembled a refrigerator had a ceiling-to-floor door. Stuck to the front was a note:

Rachel, we have gone out flying. Please make yourself completely at home. We will be back later. Gabrielle.

She pulled the handle on the large cabinet and voila! It was indeed the fridge. One shelf held a variety of beverages in glasses and she helped herself to one labeled 'Strawberry Water.' As she put it to her lips, a transparent lid slid back to allow the contents to flow.

"Now that's slick," she thought and let the liquid slide down her throat in a long refreshing gulp. "Yummo!" she declared, and carried the glass to her room.

She set her things down and went out to the balcony to rest and think about her day. So many new experiences to savor. Dusk was falling over the gardens below and the air cooled, giving her a slight chill.

She considered a dip in the hot tub and rose to go inside. As she stood looking at it, she was definitely puzzled. No knobs. She walked around to the other side, thinking they may be hidden there, but all she could see was a spout.

“Okay, let’s see,” she pondered. “Water, flow,” she commanded, and water began pouring from the spout. “Ah, voice activated!” She plugged the stopper, noticing that the temperature was perfect for a bath but not for a hot tub.

“Warmer,” she directed and it warmed up to perfect soaking temperature.

She removed her gown and twisted her hair up into a knot. Slipping down into the steamy water, she leaned back against the soft headrest and instructed, “Jets on!” and giggled with delight as the bubbling started.

“Oh yes, a girl could most certainly get used to this.”

* * * * *

Accustomed to waking early, her eyes flew open before any sign of the sun. She rose and showered at once; knowing Michael would be there at dawn.

Gabrielle was already in the kitchen, and they hugged. “Good morning Rachel. Are you excited?” She motioned to a coffee service on the counter.

Rachel poured a cup and helped herself to a bowl of granola. “Yesterday was remarkable and I am anxious to sit in my first class and start learning. Yes, you could say I am excited!”

They carried their breakfast to the window seats. “My first class is Social Integration, Room 214 at 7:00 a.m. I can hardly wait. Michael should be here soon. Hey, you mentioned in your note that you went flying yesterday. Is there an airport nearby?”

Gabrielle laughed, nearly choking on her toast. Catching her breath, she replied, “That is so cute. No dear, no airport. We went flying with pico wings. They attach temporarily and seamlessly to the body, and we fly like birds. It is great fun. Here, look here,” and she used Michael’s two-finger method of visual presentation to reveal several people soaring above the tree line and along the rolling foothills of a mountain range.

“Ooh, that looks like fun. How do they operate?”

“When you don them, they become a part of your body. Your muscles actually extend into the wings and your molecular structure changes to accommodate them,” she said, noticing Rachel wriggle in her seat imagining what that must feel like.

“We’ll take you with us sometime,” she added, and there was a knock at the door.

“I’ll clean up. You go and have a wonderful day,” she called out to Rachel, who was already dashing to the door.

“Thanks Gabrielle, you have a great day too,” she hollered from the hall, and the doors swung open to reveal Michael, as promised, bright and early.

* * * * *

Room 214 had a theater-style set up with three rows and a center aisle, seating for twenty-six students. She took an aisle seat in the second row. Excited students with bright faces milled around, introducing themselves. Most appeared to be about twenty to forty years old, but there were a few teenagers and two people who must have been well into their sixties. The air was thick with anticipation, no one knowing what to expect but all thrilled at the prospect of their first day. Looking around, she spotted Karen in the back row and waved.

The big round clock on the wall hit 7 a.m., and a very tall man in a white robe entered the classroom. Students quickly found their seats and a hush came over the room.

The man stepped up to the center of the teacher's platform, which was about six inches high. He announced in a gentle, yet commanding voice, "I am Professor Matthews, but you may call me by my first name, Jonathan."

He was even taller than Michael, and his skin was the color of cinnamon. He had deep blue eyes and long black hair that hung down his back. To her, he looked like a handsome blue-eyed Native American.

"Today, in addition to distributing your course materials, I will summarize this class and we will get to know each other. I will also give you a reading assignment before you leave.

"There are no grades here. We do not judge one student against another, as everyone is different and people excel at different things. You are all exceptional or you would not be here," he added and spread his arms wide open and bowed his head slightly to honor his students.

The room was utterly silent, the students, including Rachel, hypnotized by his charismatic presence.

“Now, let us begin.” He pointed to a young man sitting in the front row, nearest the window. “Would you please lend me a hand?”

The student jumped up and stepped forward. “And what is your name, sir?” inquired the teacher.

“John. My name is John,” he stammered.

The teacher smiled, and the sun seemed to shine from his perfect white teeth. “Is it now? Very nice! John, please help me distribute these compu-packs.”

The packs were about ten inches square and looked to Rachel like small computers or individual DVD players, but when John placed one on her desk, she could see that they were not. They were more like metal books.

“Please do not try to open them until I say to,” Jonathan told them as John finished passing them out.

“Okay students, on the front of your pack is a small keypad. At this time, enter your first name and the student number on your itinerary.”

The students scrambled for their itineraries and after a minute or two, all had completed the tasks, which immediately caused the front of their pack to pop open. The cover was made of thin metal. Inside the front cover, Rachel found her name and classes engraved in gold.

The pages were like metallic parchment. The sections were titled with her classes, one blank page between each section.

“You have just personalized your pack. It has your name and classes inside, and you will notice your name is also on the front cover, bottom right.” The students all closed them to see. A problem became apparent when they could not open them again. Try as they might, prying, pulling and button pushing did nothing.

Jonathan watched, obviously entertained. Rachel instinctively placed her hand on the cover and said, “Open.” Her pack flew open in her hands.

The professor smiled approvingly and walked over to her. His closeness was electrifying, as though she were ‘in tune’ with his vibrations. She looked down at her desk to hide her nervousness. He continued, “Very good, and almost perfect.”

He turned to the class and held up Rachel’s pack. “The pack knows you now, as the doors in your homes do. Place your hand flat on the cover and it will open itself to you.”

All around the classroom, there were “Ohs” of comprehension as the packs opened magically.

“This pack will hold study materials for all of your classes. Each day’s lessons will appear there for you as needed, indexed in the back for reference as they are replaced with new material.”

Many students opened to sections with blank pages and looked up at him in bewilderment. He smiled again. “Many things are new to you, I know. That is precisely why you are in this class. I am going to teach you as much as I can about life on One World.” With those words, a silvery sheet materialized

behind him. It hung in mid-air, with no visible means of support.

“First I will give you a brief history of our world.” As he spoke, words wrote out like handwriting across the fabric.

It reminded Rachel of a PowerPoint presentation, but it seemed as though Jonathan was directing it with his mind. He continued, “We will not go into a lot of detail on this subject because you do not need to know all of it to function here, but I suggest that if you find the topic stimulating, you visit the audio/visual section of the library to study further.

“The next subject we will discuss is Occupations. There are many occupations for you to choose from. Our culture depends upon the exchange of services and goods, each person contributing to the whole. This system utilizes the gifts and talents of the individual for the overall enhancement of the entire society.

“For instance, I am a teacher. I contribute to society. When I go to the market, the vendors there contribute their goods. We all exchange goods and services.

“It is important for you to begin thinking about your occupation as soon as possible. Some of you may need additional training and you will want to get started on that right away.”

The topic heading wrote itself out in dark script across the sheet of silvery fabric that hung behind him.

“Our next topic will be Awards Exchange. We do not use a monetary system here; it is not needed. We trade services. However, we do have an ‘awards’ system. ‘Awards’ are earned by contributions of personal time and service beyond the norm.

“They may be exchanged for additional houses, luxury items or extra services from shopkeepers, who in turn may trade them for extra goods or services. This facet of our society will be phased out soon because we are all learning more about creation in the Quantum Field. For now, the system still exists and you will need to know more about it.

“Next, we will move on to Housing. You are all living within our existing population at this time, but when your schooling is completed, you will be living in your own homes.”

He continued his list of study topics, each appearing behind him on the silvery sheet:

History of One World

Occupations

Awards Exchange

Housing

Recreation

Mediation

Meals and Shopping

Continued Education

“During some of these studies, for instance, Mediation, you will be taken on field trips to witness the application within our society. We will allow a few days during your last week here in this class for any additional items that you may need to learn about. This is a new class and we will build on it as we go. You will help with that,” he pointed around the class, “as you discover challenges that need to be addressed.”

He paused and walked toward the back of the platform, waving his arm at the sheet, which faded from sight, amidst groans from the student who were still taking notes. “You should also know that you never need to take notes here. There will be a complete transcript of all your classes in your pack. We would much prefer that you give your entire attention to the class.” He sat on a padded stool that he pulled from the back of the platform to center front.

“Any questions thus far?” he asked the class.

Students were looking in their packs, and the topics and the notes were indeed there, as promised by the teacher. A woman in the front row raised her hand timidly, noticing that no one else’s hand had gone up.

“Yes, you. What is your name please?”

“Jessica,” she replied, in a voice as soft and sweet as her appearance.

“Hello Jessica. What is your question?” he continued, as he directed every ounce of his attention to her.

“Well, uh ... Jonathan,” she began, as if to make sure she was addressing him appropriately. When he nodded, she began again, “Is there a court system here?”

He smiled ever so slightly and responded, “We have no crime here, so there is no reason for a court system. We use a mediation system to settle minor differences. We will cover that topic in detail later.”

He turned his attention from her and addressed the class, “Anyone else?”

Someone spoke out, "What about transportation?" Much of the class giggled at the question, knowing that teleportation was the only transportation on One World.

"Very good question. You have an entire class dedicated to teaching you Teleportation, the only means of transportation that we need."

One of the older students raised her hand. "Are there bees here? I am allergic to bees."

"Yes, there are bees. However, they do not sting. In any case, there are no allergies here, so you need not let that cross your mind again."

The woman was obviously extremely pleased and looked around at her fellow students with a grin.

Rachel noticed in awe that he was gracious and not the slightest bit condescending. She was thinking to herself that he was a splendid and gifted teacher, when his eyes settled upon her momentarily. "He may well be the most beautiful man I have ever seen," she thought. Then she realized he could probably read her thoughts. "Dang, get a grip Rachel, this is your teacher," she scolded herself.

His eyes twinkled as he looked right at her with a broad smile and announced, "Write down any questions that come up for you in class, and we will explore each and every one."

He stood up, waved his hand, and the sheet of fabric appeared again. "Okay class, let's get right into some history."

Chapter Nine

“The One World and the Dark Planet were created at the same time and were identical in many ways. Early evolution was nearly a mirror, and most plant and animal species that evolved on the Dark Planet evolved here too. There are a few exceptions. We do not have poisonous creatures of any kind on One World, and there are some insects on Dark Planet that do not exist here.

“A main distinction between One World and Dark Planet is that there is no dark energy here. Our vibrational level is too high for it to exist.

“We have always been aware of our divinity and of our connection to Source Energy. We have been nurtured and allowed to evolve without the interference of the dark energy that pervades Dark Planet. We are constantly growing and learning to use our power in this physical form and to evolve consciously and be closer to Source Energy. To what end, you may ask. The deeper our experience of Source Energy, the more rapturous our lives. Upon achieving the highest levels of enlightenment, one may exist on any dimension without the constraints of time, space or physicality. Living on a world where no dark

energy exists has allowed us to advance much farther toward that end than most of the beings on Dark Planet.

“The drawback to not having dark energy on One World is that we do not have as much contrast. Why is that a drawback? Because creativity borne of contrast is much more intense and varied.”

As he spoke, video and still images appeared on the fabric, making his teaching vivid. A movie of thatched-roof huts displayed behind him. The scenes reminded Rachel of indigenous cultures on her world — children laughing and playing, men and women performing day-to-day tasks and sitting around fires. Everyone looked radiant.

“Our planet’s inhabitants lived in peace and harmony, but we maintained a primitive existence longer than the inhabitants of Dark Planet did. That world has been a place of extreme contrast, giving birth to rapid growth. Men and women reincarnate on that world over and over, gaining more and more wisdom through their trials. From great experience and knowledge comes great wisdom.

“When an entity on Dark Planet created great new wisdom, whether it was mechanical, artistic, philosophical, scientific or personal growth, it raised their consciousness and vibration. That being was then given the opportunity, at the end of their life, to choose incarnation here, instead of back to the dark place. Many decided to live on One World.

“That is how we not only progressed in all of those areas — technologically, artistically and spiritually — but we progressed

much farther than Dark Planet did. The greatest minds that ever graced the Dark Planet are here.

“When beings from Dark Planet incarnate here on One World, they come with the memory of their greatest gifts and the wisdom they have gained from many lifetimes of contrast. This anomaly exists because we are sister planets. Among our peoples are some of the finest minds you know from your planet: Einstein, Shakespeare, Galileo, Gandhi, Yeshua ben Joseph, John Lennon, Mozart, Deladono, Michelangelo, Da Vinci. The list goes on and on. When they incarnate here, they may choose a new physical form or retain the one from their last existence on Dark Planet.

“Some of these great entities are members of a committee dedicated to helping those on Dark Planet raise their vibrations for this event that has brought you here. They go to and from that planet, teaching and inspiring. They will continue to do so for the remainder of this generation, helping many more people in that place make it here.

“Our world has about two hundred million inhabitants, not counting our beloved brothers and sisters who have arrived here from Dark Planet. On this world, entities are able to explore physicality in a positive environment, unaffected by dark energy. The vibration of this planet is much higher than on Dark Planet, which is why you needed to raise your frequency before you could be transported here.”

At this point, the teacher rose and took a drink from the glass that rested on the table to his left. You could have heard a pin drop in the room.

“We have only recently begun accessing the Akashic Records, which is how we have become aware of the current events on Dark Planet. So we began the massive undertaking of integrating millions of people into our society. We are honored to be a help in this epochal event in the history of the universe. There will be a whole class — The Evolution of the Dark Planet — dedicated to teaching you about how and why this is occurring.

“Well class, that is a brief history of One World,” Jonathan concluded, still standing, glass in hand. “You can read the study notes in your packs, which are indexed in the back. I have covered only what we felt was vital to your emergence into our culture. If you are interested in delving deeper into this subject, you will find footnotes directing you to additional information in the library.”

With that, he waved the screen away and announced, “We will now take a short break. Please return to your seats within ten minutes,” and a bell chimed three delicate tones.

* * * * *

When the bell chimed again, the students were all in their seats in anticipatory silence.

“I am sure many of you have questions. Please keep them relevant to this learning. You may use the library for other questions,” Jonathan began.

“Yes, what is your name?” He pointed to Rachel, whose hand had gone up instantly.

“Rachel. Were the inhabitants of the One World always aware of the Dark Planet?”

Jonathan smiled at her and replied, “Very good question. No, not at first. For a long time, we lived primitively, albeit very peacefully, with no knowledge of a sister planet. When entities on Dark Planet began evolving and raising their vibrations, they started incarnating here and sharing their stories of the place from which they had come.

“At first, our people considered their stories amusing, merely the result of creative minds. But when more and more of these brilliant beings graced this world and offered the same stories, our inhabitants finally knew them to be true. At the same time, we were able to further our growth because of what they shared with us.”

Several hands went up and Rachel could tell he was pleased at their desire to learn. “Yes, you. What is your name?” He called on a woman in the front row.

“I’m Janet. Why would anyone keep incarnating over and over on the Dark Planet, instead of choosing to come to the One World?” she asked.

“Well, Janet, when entities are ready to incarnate again, they reincarnate at the same vibration as when they left physicality. If they are in a low vibration and consciousness, they do not have the choice to come to One World, which is of a different vibration.

“Entities evolve as they gain the wisdom from many lifetimes, often experiencing, say pain or fear, until they own the wisdom gained from that experience. When they are faced with

fear, something inside them, that spark of the Divine that is in all of us, causes them to think — something must change. At this time, their Inner Being, which is that eternal part of them, drives them to remember, to vaguely recollect a shadow of past experiences with pain or fear. They deal with the situation differently. They take responsibility and say, “I must change!” They ‘own’ the wisdom and this raises their consciousness. Unfortunately, some entities incarnate countless times before they own that wisdom. When they come into physical form, they forget who they are and are overcome by social consciousness. This is compounded by interference from the dark energy on that planet. As they fear and resist, the dark energy multiplies. That is how the dark energy has become so ubiquitous.”

Many hands went up again. “Yes, what is your name, please?”

“Jody. I would like to know how the original inhabitants on One World achieved a degree of consciousness in order to be able to live here.”

“Excellent question! Our early inhabitants evolved vibrationally at remarkable rates as they had no interference from dark energy. As the vibration of the entities here evolved, the planet evolved. It is now and has always been a symbiotic relationship. Every entity who lives upon this world at this time has evolved to a higher consciousness, a faster vibrational frequency, whether that happened here or on Dark Planet”

“What about other planets or dimensions?” Jody asked.

“We have some highly evolved beings who come and go to other planets and dimensions, but members of the general

population do not as a rule.” He looked closely at her and paused while the class ‘ahhed’ at that piece of information. “Do you have an interest in exploring other planets and dimensions?” he asked her.

Jody answered quickly. “You bet I do. Somewhere deep inside I have always had an inexplicable feeling about this and I’m passionate to learn more.” Rachel watched her intently.

“You would do well to speak to your guide about this. There are avenues for exploration. Thank you for your question.” Jonathan moved on to the next question, and Rachel made a note to introduce herself to this interesting woman as soon as possible.

He called upon John, his assistant from earlier. “Does John Lennon still look the same as he did on our planet?” he asked sheepishly, unable to help himself.

“That is a question for you to research at the library,” Jonathan laughed.

“Yes, you in the back,” and he pointed to the last row. “What is your name please?”

“Karen.” Rachel turned as she recognized her friend’s voice. “I know we are all learning telepathic communication, but is there a universal language here? I mean, if we are all connected, wouldn’t language differences separate us?”

“Excellent question. You probably think we are speaking English, do you not?” All of the student’s heads nodded and “yes” was uttered here and there. He continued, “We are speaking our universal language. It does not have a name other than – the One Language. It was imprinted into your mind upon your

arrival here. The others who came here from different regions of Dark Planet are also speaking this language and are probably asking this very question in their classes.”

This seemed to astonish most of the class, but to Rachel it made perfect sense. Karen continued. “One more question please. Were some of us who came here from the Dark Planet children?”

“Yes indeed, many children made the transition,” he responded. “They are at universities set up for families and for children who came here alone.”

John raised his hand again. “Jonathan, if you can imprint our minds with language, why not with all of the rest of the information we are learning here?”

“Splendid question, John,” he answered. “We want you to learn this in stages and apply it as you go. That way, it becomes wisdom, instead of just knowledge. We cannot imprint wisdom on a physical entity. The only way to gain wisdom from information is to apply it, to experience it. Another benefit of presenting this information to you in this manner is that it affords us an opportunity to perfect this process as we go along, for the benefit of those who will transition from Dark Planet later.”

Taking a deep breath, he once again spread his arms out to his side, palms up. “Any more questions will have to wait for tomorrow, or you may ask your guides. The class is finished for today. Your reading assignment will cover Occupations, and you will find it in your pack. I will answer questions regarding that lesson when we meet again, day after tomorrow.”

With that, he bowed slightly and proclaimed, “We are complete.”

As the students filed from the classroom, Rachel hurried out to see if she could find Jody. She finally spotted her, striding along under the trees, headed for the building across the courtyard. She ran after her and hollered, “Excuse me, Jody!”

Jody stopped, and turned toward the voice, seeing Rachel jogging in her direction. When she caught up, Jody asked, “And you are?”

“Rachel. I wanted to meet you. I found your passion about life on other planets intriguing. Do you have a moment?”

“Sure. Tell me, Rachel, where did you come here from?”

“I lived in Southern California before my transition. You?”

“Originally Manhattan, but I moved to Laramie, Wyoming, two years ago. To get away from the masses, if you know what I mean. My aunt and uncle had a ranch and needed the help, so I dropped out of the rat race and put on my cowboy boots,” Jody laughed.

Rachel immediately felt comfortable with Jody, who was striking, with full lips and tawny skin. She was muscular and sensual, the type of woman who, back on the Dark Planet, some would have found intimidating. To Rachel she was exhilarating. “What is it that gave you this feeling about extraterrestrial life?”

“Let me ask you a question. What do you think the people on One World are? For that matter, all of us, now,” she said, looking around at the nearby students. “Are we not extraterrestrial beings? Or maybe, other-dimensional beings?”

“Good point. But I mean, before you came here, you had that feeling, right?”

“Yeah, I used to read everything I could find about space. I was fanatical about it. Something about those books just resonated with me. I can’t explain it, but I have always had the feeling that I came from somewhere out there. I used to spend as much time as possible at the Wyoming Infrared Observatory, studying the stars. It was close to my uncle’s ranch, and every chance I got, I was there.” For a moment she seemed to drift off to faraway places. “Well, Rachel, regretfully, I haven’t learned a thing about you, and my next class is starting. Would you like to join me for lunch some time?” she asked.

“Yes I would. Let’s talk soon. I enjoyed meeting you,” Rachel replied, and Jody rushed off to class.

* * * * *

Rachel and Karen sat together on the grass in the courtyard, contemplating their lives here on One World. “It has taken me weeks to get over the astonishment I feel every time something new comes along,” Karen remarked.

“I know what you mean. It’s a bit like learning to walk and talk all over again, isn’t it? One thing I am pretty good at is the Telepathic Communication. My guide, Michael, has suggested that I be allowed to take the advanced class, and I’m excited about that.”

“You are good at everything, Rach. Speaking of that, let’s practice teleporting. I just can’t seem to do it. I get almost to

the point where I think I might dematerialize, and then I lose my focus. What am I doing wrong?"

Rachel thought for a moment and took Karen's hand. "It's okay. That's why we call it practice. You are trying too hard, and then when you feel like you might not be able to do it, your focus shifts to the negative and you get nowhere. If you could just relax and play at it, I think you would find that you accomplish it quite easily. Just don't take it all so seriously. Here, let me show you." Rachel stood up and centered herself, breathing deeply. "Now, this is fun. I think of it as a game." She smiled broadly and took several deep breaths, then slowly began to dissolve. She reappeared twenty feet away, to Karen's delight.

"I see what you mean. I am so intent on making sure that I do it, that my focus goes to not doing it. You make it look so easy."

"You'll get it. It wasn't easy for me at first either, until I realized I was too serious-minded about it," Rachel reassured her. "Now, your turn. Relax, breath deeply. *Smile!* That's good. Okay, put your focus on where you intend to go. How about over there by the tree."

Karen smiled and took several deep breaths. Then she slowly faded out. "Woo hoo! Now that's what I'm talkin' about." Rachel cried, running over to the tree to look for Karen, who was nowhere to be seen. "Uh, oh. I wonder where she's off to." Then, she heard giggling. She looked around the tree to see Karen, hanging from a low branch.

"Well, I think I got the hang of it." They both hooted as Karen dropped to the grass.

Rachel sat down beside her and smiled. “You did great! Just keep at it. I have a feeling you’ll be popping all over the place really soon.” Changing the subject, she asked, “So, have you made a decision about your occupation?”

“Well, since I can do anything I want here, I think I might go into education. I have always loved children, and I know there is a huge need. Now especially, because of all of the children who came here when we did. My guide, Daniel, has shown me some of the temporary universities where children and families attend together but in different classes. I would like to specialize in teaching the children’s classes.”

“That’s fabulous! I know you have always loved children. You will be a marvelous instructor. I am so happy for you,” Rachel said, hugging her friend.

“How are your studies going? Especially your A.I. classes, I mean.”

“Wow, it is amazing Karen. I have several wonderful coaches who all excel at different aspects of this work. Being able to get into the mind of an animal is an incredible experience. Nothing like what I did back on Earth — I mean, the Dark Planet. There, it was just about communicating thoughts. Here, it is much deeper. Animal entities know that their very existence is life’s meaning. They have an intimate relationship with all species of plants and other animals. They so identify with the essence of life within themselves that to doubt the meaning of it is a completely foreign concept. It is not that they do not have the intelligence to contemplate, but that the meaning of their life is so apparent to them.”

“So what exactly do animal interpreters do? What is their main purpose?” Karen asked.

“Ah, interesting to say the least. My job will not only be to ask animals questions to understand them psychologically, but to actually connect with their consciousness so completely that I can internalize what runs their innate connection to Source Energy. Even though humans are very connected here on One World, we still do not have that instinctual understanding down in our DNA that completes us. We are always striving toward higher consciousness. As it turns out, animals own it so completely that they don’t look for it elsewhere. They are it.”

“Whoa, that is deep, Rach. I never thought of it that way. You must feel honored to be a part of this,” she remarked, her eyes tearing up.

“Yes, I’m loving my studies. I can’t wait to actually get started, but I have a lot to learn. I know my colleagues would like it to be faster too, there are so few of us. The animals speak to whom they chose, not the other way around. They picked me. We don’t know why they pick certain people or why so few. Maybe it’s DNA. I would love to be the one who discovers the answer to that.”

“Let me know when you do! Oh my, I need to get to my next class. It’s Remote Viewing. Have you started that one yet?”

Rachel shook her head. “No, but it will be fun I am sure. That’s using the two-finger thing in the air, right?”

“Yes. I had my first class day before yesterday,” she replied as they stood to say goodbye.

“It’s been fun,” Rachel remarked. “If I don’t see you before, I’ll see you in Jonathan’s class.”

“I think we have a sub this week. I heard someone say he has gone to speak at another university,” Karen responded. “You know he is often asked to speak at other locations. Gosh, he’s cute.”

A slight smile crossed Rachel’s face and Karen teased her. “You kinda like him don’t you?”

Rachel blushed. “He’s our professor and that would be inappropriate.”

“Well, I have to tell you that he sneaks more than a few peeks at you. I have seen him watching you,” Karen confided with a wink.

“It’s like we are a vibrational match or déjà vu or something,” Rachel said. “I can’t explain it, but I think he feels it too.”

“Ahhh, and I just thought he had a crush on you.” They laughed, and kissed each other goodbye lightly on the cheek. “See you later, Rach!”

Chapter Ten

Rachel and Jody sat on a grassy hill, away from the campus. They could see the library's dome to their left and a wide expanse of rolling hills to their right. Directly in front, the hill sloped to the village of Teropia, about three miles down.

"This is one of my favorite places to come at lunch time," Jody said, taking a sandwich for each of them from her bag.

"Thank you for bringing me here and for lunch. Yes, it's a lovely view. I haven't had much of a chance to get away, except with my A.I. classes, of course."

"So you are the famous animal interpreter," Jody teased, taking a bite and gazing at the valley below. Rachel responded, "Not famous and not an animal interpreter yet. I still have to study for several more months. But it's coming along."

"Well, I think it's a worthy occupation and you seem very capable. I, on the other hand, have no idea what I will do. Maybe research about other planets and dimensions."

Rachel thought about it. "It seems to me that would be valuable information for our society. But what do I know."

“We may be new here, but we are not totally ignorant, Rachel. One wonders why they don’t just open the Akashic Records for all to see.”

“An interesting observation. I’ll have to ask my guide about that. Have you seen this?” she asked, as she finished her water and set the bottle on the grass. Placing her hand on top, she shoved it down until it collapsed and disintegrated into dust.

“Whoa, that’s hot. Instant recycling! Who thinks up this stuff?” Jody rolled over onto her back. “Look up there,” she said, pointing to the sky. “I like to make clouds.”

“What do you mean?” Rachel asked, lying down on the grass.

“Okay, see that big patch of blue sky? I’ll make a dolphin. You like dolphins? Great!” Jody began breathing deeply and whispered a mantra. “I am the cloud,” on the out breath, “I am,” on the in breath. Within a few minutes, a perfect dolphin formed in the blue space. It was a work of art.

“How did you do that?” Rachel was impressed.

“I don’t know how I do it; I just know that I can. I’ve always been able to. I learned the mantra a few years ago, and it helps me focus, but I have been able to create cloud sculptures since I was a little girl.”

“That’s incredible Jody! Maybe you will be one of our masters, teaching Quantum Creation.” Jody laughed out loud. Rachel loved her husky, uninhibited laughter.

Jody sat up and crossed her legs. “Wanna try some remote viewing?”

“I just started the class and don’t have it down yet,” Rachel answered, sitting up.

“Well I’m getting pretty good at it. Check it out.” She breathed deeply and drew her fingers through the air to reveal a close-up of the market in Teropia. A farmer with his fresh produce was smiling at patrons and at the pretty flower vendor at the next stand.

“I saw him yesterday. He is smitten. She doesn’t seem to notice his attraction, or is choosing to ignore it.” The man picked up a ripe peach and walked over to the woman, holding it out and speaking to her.

“Wish we could read lips,” Jody laughed.

Rachel giggled. “You are so bad, watching this private moment.”

“No harm done, and it certainly isn’t private with a market full of people around them,” Jody defended.

The woman’s face reddened, though she took the fruit. The man returned to his stand, obviously pleased with himself. “He is a bit clumsy, but he’ll get through to her. He’s determined.” Jody wiped the scene away and began gathering her things. “Rachel, it’s time for me to get back to class. Hey, if you like, we can practice remote viewing together.”

“That would be great! Do you teleport yet? I am getting pretty good at that.”

“Only as far as I can see. Let’s help each other,” Jody suggested.

“Sounds great. Let’s skip the walk and head for the dome,” she answered, pointing to the library.

“Okee-dokee. Last one there ...” Jody proclaimed as they both dissolved.

* * * * *

Rachel waved goodbye to Jody, as she headed off to class, and stepped into the atrium. It was busy with students yet still held the quiet reverence of the library she had come to know. She glanced up at the levels and noticed dozens of occupied chairs.

Climbing the spiral staircase to the audio/visual level, she took a headset off the wall and settled into a recliner. She positioned her head set and chose Geography. A globe looking just like her earth appeared in the front of her mind. It spun slowly, awaiting her command. A list of regions and sectors displayed along the side, but she was unsure of their meaning. “Manual selection please,” she stated. The globe enlarged and she could see the names of the regions and sectors on the continents. She selected Region Five, Sector Eight, which was where central China would be on Dark Planet. Immediately, she was standing on a rutted street in a village, much like Teropia. She had expected the inhabitants to look Chinese, but was surprised to see that the population was eclectic, as it was in her village.

“Clarification please,” she commanded. The female voice of the computer program responded, “What do you wish to know, Rachel?”

“On Dark Planet, this region is populated almost exclusively by Chinese people. It appears that only about a third of the people in this village are Chinese. Please explain.”

“One moment please,” the computer responded. “Chinese is a term to denote people in the country known as China on Dark Planet. There are no country distinctions here. However, you are referring to the people who are indigenous to this region — black hair, almond shaped eyes, creamy skin. The people on One World do not hold the same attachment to land and historical culture as those on Dark Planet. This world has shared new knowledge and technology on a global basis. When teleporting was adopted, over a hundred years ago, the peoples of our regions began to blend together.

“Today, you will find that the world’s villages are a mix of people from all regions. Preference for location is based upon climate and landscape. Does that answer your query?”

“Yes, thank you,” Rachel responded. “Why are there only villages? I know there are no large cities on One World. Why have the inhabitants chosen to live separated from one another?”

“Cities are substantial groups of people living in one small area. The villages on One World are not for housing. They are for sharing and trading services. Homes are for housing. The inhabitants of One World are connected to one another so intrinsically that they do not need to band together into crowded living spaces. The homes are spread out to afford the inhabitants of this world a quiet place to connect with the consciousness of the planet and nature. This also provides them a better opportunity to express as individuals.”

“Has this always been so?” Rachel asked.

“There has never been what you would term ‘cities.’ The peoples of this world have lived in small groups from the beginning of the time they inhabited the planet. As communication over wider distances developed, living spaces began to spread out, away from the villages. The people do not wish to live in another person’s energy space. It is part of honoring each person’s individuality. Every entity is a valuable part of the whole society, contributing their talents to the good of all. In honoring each person as an individual, the culture as a whole is stronger and more diversified. Do you need more detail?”

“No, that will suffice, thank you.” Realizing that her time was limited, Rachel returned to the table of contents and chose history, going back to the Parthesian Era to pay a promised visit to the beautiful beast she met her first time at the library. Once again, she stood in the swamp. The air was dank and she could hear the cawing of distant birds. Large herbivores grazed nearby and she rose out of the water and floated to within twenty yards of a familiar face.

“Hello my friend. I told you I would return,” she thought to the creature. “Hello human,” the giant animal responded. “Did you return to study me?”

“I am here to befriend you. To merely study you would be a great disservice. May I join with you?” she asked.

“As you wish,” the animal thought to her, bowing his puissant head.

She took several deep breaths and got into trance state, connecting deeply with the consciousness of the majestic beast.

A strong feeling of oneness washed through her. She felt as though everything around her was a part of her. The plants and trees became as extensions of her cells, and she could not feel any distinction between the air and the water. It was as though she were a part of one giant organism, which was everything.

Rachel lingered in this ecstatic state for a several minutes, until it began to overwhelm her. She drew her consciousness back and disconnected from the creature.

“How is it that you experience such separateness?” the massive herbivore asked of her. “It was most disconcerting.”

“And your connection to All That Is was sublime, and yet overpowered me. I believe that as we become better acquainted, we can learn much from each other.”

“Human, I do not wish to learn that which separates me from all. I am, however, pleased to teach you what I experience.”

“Thank you. I am honored.” Rachel bowed her head. “I will return, my friend.” The animal blinked his tranquil eyes at her and responded, “As you wish,” returning to his meal in the swamp grass.

Rachel removed her headset and sat in contemplation, thoughts reeling. The connectedness the beast experienced was undeniable. She was still tingling from the experience. She was thrilled to think she might learn to experience that oneness in human form and eventually be able to share it with others. It was an intriguing thought.

“Oh my gosh, I’ll be late,” she thought to herself and quickly returned her headset to the wall and descended the stairway.

As she hurried into the quad, she heard a familiar voice in her head. “Here I am, by the trees on the left.” She smiled as she approached. “Hi there, Michael! I have so missed you,” she said, giving him a hug.

“I have missed you too, Rachel. They are keeping you too busy if you don’t even have time for me,” he told her as they embraced. “Where would you like to go?”

“How about a warm sandy beach?”

They grabbed a couple of bottles of water from the cafeteria and teleported to a stretch of white beach bordered with palm trees. “Perfect,” Rachel exclaimed and sat in the sand, removing her shoes. “This is fabulous!”

Michael sat beside her. “Yes, it is. What have you been up to?”

Rachel enthusiastically shared her experience at the library. Michael listened attentively, pleased at her willingness to stretch.

“Rachel, this is precisely why we have been so excited about you coming here and joining the team of animal interpreters. Some of our A.I.s cannot meld their consciousness with the animals, and the ones who can have worked at it for years. Your experience was outstanding! I am very proud of you.”

Rachel beamed. “Thank you. I can’t wait to share with my colleagues.” She paused for a moment, and then continued. “I also did some traveling. This world is interesting. On the surface, it appears to be primitive — little villages here and there, no big cities, no corporations, no huge infrastructure. Yet, it is

actually so advanced technologically and spiritually that it is almost beyond comprehension.”

“It has always been our way, so I cannot imagine it otherwise. I have seen visuals of your Dark Planet’s cities. To me, that is so alien I cannot even conceive of it.” He shuddered at the thought.

“Touché! Now that I live here, I much prefer it this way.” She took a sip of water and lay back on the sand. “I have always loved the beach. The sound of the waves is music to my ears.” He stretched out beside her.

“Michael, I have a new friend. Jody. I had lunch with her today.”

“What do you like best about her?”

Rachel mulled that over. “She is wild and adventurous. I am invigorated when I am near her. She is fun!”

“That is quite a list. A different type of friendship than you have had in the past?” he asked.

“Yes, I think so. My friend, Reno, has always been a bit on the wild side, but it feels different. I wonder what she’s up to. I haven’t seen her in over six weeks. Hey,” she sat upright, “could you show me where she is?”

“Yes I could,” he responded, sitting up. “Would you like to see all of your friends who came here with you?”

“Oh my gosh, yes! Thank you.” She settled into a comfortable position and waited in excited anticipation.

Using remote viewing, Michael revealed a scene of Reno and Batey sitting in a crowded dining establishment in a village. The tables were outdoors and people were strolling by, nodding

pleasantly to the diners. They were both dressed in robes, Reno's resplendent with sparkling stones.

"She always was flamboyant," Rachel remarked, smiling fondly.

Their waiter opened a bottle of wine and poured each a glass, which they lifted in a toast. "They look so happy. Where are they?"

"They are in Region Fifteen, Sector Two. On Dark Planet, it would be France," Michael responded.

"Wine, fashion and art!" Rachel declared. "So perfect for them."

"The area is known to have many fine wineries and more than a few excellent museums filled with the works of some of our greatest artists. Fashion is simple on our world, as we prefer comfortable, loose fitting garments. However, we are always open to new ideas. Is Reno a designer of garments?"

Rachel busted up with laughter. "No! She's more of an admirer! She's always had a great sense of style."

They watched Reno and Batey talking and eating for a while longer. They looked like they were enjoying themselves immensely.

"Would you like to see Joseph and Jeremy next?" Michael asked.

"Yes, very much. Thank you." Michael wiped away the scene and opened another. Jeremy's gaze was fixed on a fiber-screen. It was a Social Integration class, and he exuded the same excitement that Rachel experienced for that subject.

Michael manipulated the view, pulling back for a wider angle, which revealed Joseph in the back row. He appeared more intrigued by the beautiful redhead in front of him than the lesson. When she turned and caught him staring at her, she smiled coyly. He blushed, but smiled back.

“This could be a budding romance,” Rachel chuckled. The class concluded and the students began to leave. Joseph watched the woman leave, but did not follow her. Jeremy walked over and they exchanged a few words, then Jeremy shoved him and laughed.

“How cute,” Rachel said. “He’s sweet on her, and Jeremy is teasing him.”

The two left the classroom, and Michael’s view followed them into the courtyard. Rachel saw hints of snow around the edges of the buildings and asked Michael to widen the view again. An energy field surrounded the campus, keeping the ground dry, while the landscape around it was a blanket of white. “I’ll bet they love that. They are both skiers. Joseph spent half his life in the Sierras, and Jeremy goes with him often,” Rachel exclaimed.

“Precisely why they are there,” Michael explained. “They have chosen to work in recreation. Maybe a vacation for you there sometime?”

“I don’t ski, but I would like to visit anyway.”

Michael smiled. “We don’t ski here, either. It’s more like riding on waves of energy. It’s great fun, and they could teach you.”

“Hmm, no lifts, probably never get cold or wet ...” she pondered. “Maybe I would enjoy it.”

“Well, little one, we should probably get you back.”

Rachel agreed and Michael wiped away the view. “Thank you so much! It was fabulous seeing them all. They look so acclimated and content.” She hugged him.

“Yes indeed. Would you like to go for a real visit sometime soon?”

“That would be fantastic. Well, I have an appointment, so let’s fly, my friend.” Rachel held his hands and kissed his cheek.

“Goodbye Rachel. Call on me anytime, I am always here for you.” They vanished simultaneously, each off on their own path.

Chapter Eleven

A week had gone by since Rachel's last A.I. class and she was excited to get back to her studies. "Today, we are going on a field trip," Marcy, her teacher-of-the-day informed her.

Hundreds of miles of rolling green hills and pastures appeared before them as they materialized. "This is where our cattle live." Marcy searched the horizon and spotted a large herd in the distance, which she pointed out. "These beautiful creatures are free to roam at will. There are no fences needed, because they have chosen to be here. They are honored and respected for the role they have chosen in this lifetime."

"I have wondered about how we can eat these animals, and others. How is that okay?" Rachel asked, troubled.

"One thing you must keep in mind is that these animals, and all animals for that matter, have an intrinsic understanding of the food chain. The cattle eat grass. Grass is a living consciousness. They do not question if it is right or wrong; there is no such thing in their existence. All animals expect to be a part of the food chain, as do plants. It is part of the cycle of life. We humans are an extension of the Divine and our very existence is to expand the mind of God through physical experience. These

animals,” she nodded at the cattle grazing, “consider this to be their way of contributing to the expansion of All That Is. There are vast differences between the One World and the Dark Planet in how we treat the gift they offer freely to us.”

“We do not eat veal on the One World. Every animal picks their time, and most of these cattle prefer to graze these fields for a year or two before offering their bodies. There are places like this all over the world, homes to many animals.”

After this discourse, Marcy took Rachel to a large building with a wide open center arena, padded with hay. Cattle, each adorned with a thick garland of flowers, were coming in the open door. Rachel could see the animals passing through a narrow area where staff placed a garland around their necks and said a blessing of thanks and love.

“This is where they come when they are ready to offer their bodies in this lifetime. They are blessed and then take a place inside in the soft hay. They slow their breathing and go into a state called transgeneration - similar to what you know as hibernation. In this state, they are ready to leave their bodies.

“When the arena is full, special tones are struck on the overhead bells that trigger a passing from the transgenerative state into the non-physical, leaving their bodies behind. At that time, they can choose to reincarnate as any animal they desire to be.”

Rachel stepped close to a black and white steer with huge brown eyes rimmed with long lashes. “Hello, you beautiful entity. Do you know what is happening here?” she thought to the beast.

“Of course I do,” answered the creature with a flick of his tail. “I am ready. For two years I have been preparing for this sacred task and I am most happy to give my body to human-kind and return in another body. This has been a short life with a wonderful purpose. My next life will be longer. I believe I may return as an eagle.”

Rachel smiled into his face. “May I touch you?” she asked.

“Indeed you may, if you scratch my ears,” he replied. Rachel scratched his ears and rubbed his back, all the while sending love and appreciative vibrations from every ounce of her being into this lovely animal.

“Human, I love you too. I will see you again, but I will not look like this. I shall be soaring overhead and I will remember you, child,” and with that he stepped up to receive his flowers and blessing.

Rachel watched him walk inside and take a place among the others. “This is so interesting,” she said to Marcy, who was standing at her side. “Just a blip in time to them, like a mission, then off to some new adventure. It is no wonder they would choose this calling.”

Marcy noted, “Yes, that is a pretty accurate description, a calling. Some of these animals love this experience so much that they repeat it many times. All animals are revered here, but the animals who choose to come for this mission are loved beyond description, and they know it.”

As Marcy and Rachel stepped together for teleportation back to the campus, Rachel pushed visions of the slaughter-

house horrors on the Dark Planet out of her mind, and they faded from her thoughts as she and Marcy faded from sight.

* * * * *

As she found her seat for the second session in her one-day course, 'The Evolution of the Dark Planet,' Rachel looked around for Myca, whom she had spotted during break. She caught a glimpse of her friend in the front row and rushed over to speak with her. Myca jumped up and hugged her, "It is good to see you Rachel," she exclaimed. "Are you enjoying your classes?"

"You have no idea how much," Rachel responded. "I love my A.I. classes, and I have tried to be patient but could hardly wait for this class. I can't believe it has been three months! How are your studies going?"

Myca positively glowed. "Superb! This place is beyond my wildest imagination. I am particularly interested in this class too, because I have been asked to be a member of the Emissary Committee," she shared happily, and the two hugged again in excitement.

"Oh my gosh, Myca! What an amazing honor, and you are so well suited. They couldn't have chosen a more appropriate emissary. You will be a great inspiration to those left on Dark Planet. What type of special schooling will it require?" Rachel asked her friend, noticing the students beginning to take their seats around them.

Myca noticed too and whispered back, “That has been a challenge for me because none of my actual training starts until I complete my basic studies. Once that is done, I go to Caledonia’s Keep for two years of intensive training.”

The bell chimed three times and she added, “Let’s talk later.” Rachel nodded and headed back to her seat.

Their professor, Dorianne Jordon, took the stage again. Dorianne had a gloriously infectious laugh and perky hair that framed a heart shaped face. Green eyes peered out through long curly bangs giving her an impish look — the perfect teacher for a not-too-pleasant subject — the Dark Planet.

“Welcome back,” she began, with a slight bow. “This morning’s first session was mainly a refresher of what you already learned in your Social Integration class. During the break, one of you asked why we wait until three months into your schooling before giving this course. The magnitude of this information could have distracted you from your studies at first, before you became more acclimated to our culture. Now that you are more comfortable and beginning to feel like this is your home, you are ready.

“We will now discuss the future of Dark Planet, but before we do, we shall prepare ourselves emotionally so as not to include any negative emotions in our space as a result of this class. Please, everyone sit back in your seats and close your eyes. Relax and breathe deeply. Move into a no-thought space. Take another deep breath through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Understand that the lesson here and everything happening on Dark Planet is as it should be. May this

learning empower us. We will take today's lessons and grow from the knowledge, sending only love to that place."

She paused, letting the students get into a calm, meditative state and then said, "Good. Open your eyes. We shall begin."

She waved the fiberscreen into place and began speaking, as a moving collage of the lesson displayed behind her. "When your group came here from Dark Planet, it seemed to the inhabitants there that over a million of you just disappeared. You did not die; you brought your bodies with you. Your people were at quite a loss as to what happened to you. There was speculation of a mass kidnapping by aliens. Some religious groups suggested it was what they call the 'Rapture.' Eventually, it was decided by the medical community worldwide that a flesh eating virus had attacked certain DNA patterns - and that would account for all of you," she said, looking around the classroom.

"You can well imagine the panic that hit globally. Added to the tension that had already been brewing worldwide, it was disastrous. Many people went into hiding, thinking to escape another wave of this virus and also to protect themselves. Right now, on Dark Planet, neighbor is pitted against neighbor. All over the world, people have stockpiled food, water and weapons. It is mass chaos. No one trusts anyone outside their immediate families. There is not a border on that whole planet that can be crossed legally. That being said, let us get to the reason for this incredulous event.

"Please keep in mind that humans were specifically created for the purpose of housing a spark of the Divine, thus god-

man/woman. Our very existence is to expand All That Is, which is everything non-physical. Source Energy, the divine energy of the universe from which we all sparked, created both Dark Planet and One World at the same time. One World was designed to offer a place of peace and harmony for entities to explore physicality without the interference of dark energy. Dark Planet was designed to offer the same physical exploration, but dark energy was allowed to exist there.

“As new entities emerged from Source, they were invited to be a part of this and asked to choose which planet they would inhabit. One World offered peace, harmony and joy, but much less contrast. Dark Planet offered more contrast, thus the chance for more challenge and opportunity for growth. An interesting decision to say the least. Whether to choose to live in peace and joy for eternity, possibly never advancing experientially, or to choose a place that offered so much challenge that the capacity to grow could be unlimited. Most chose Dark Planet, in anticipation of the delicious contrast.

“Those who chose to be a part of this understood that they would remain on their respective planet until they advanced in consciousness enough to move to a place of higher vibration, and that until they did advance, they would have no memory of their choice. They agreed, considering it to be a greater challenge.

“So how did this turn out? You have seen for yourself. One World, as you know, advanced spiritually and vibrationally beyond expectations. Some entities who overcame the challenges on Dark Planet have joined us here, teaching us what

they learned from the adversity. They have added to our own advancement.

“Unfortunately, on Dark Planet, the dark energy developed and grew, multiplying and controlling the minds and emotions of the human-gods that inhabited the planet. They were so controlled by dark energy that they became incapable of remembering that they were of the Divine. Here, we may not always have known of our choice of One World, but we have always remembered we are a spark of the Divine. The entities on Dark Planet became intoxicated with physicality and started an endless cycle of reincarnation where very few evolved.

“When an entity reincarnates, they are fresh from Source Energy, possessing the love and wisdom of All That Is. Babies are born with absolute knowledge of who they are. The population on Dark Planet, under the influence of so much dark energy, immediately sets about reprogramming these young ones to live in separation and in fear. By the time babies are old enough to talk, they are enveloped in low vibration, and it gets worse the older they get. Big business, corporations, religions, governments and the media are all used to control and subjugate humanity. The dark energy has become as a virus that is destroying the planet.

“The human-gods who live on One World, and that would now include you, have become aware of this catastrophic situation, thanks to the Akashic Records. We have agreed to help as many of the entities as possible on Dark Planet to raise their consciousness levels to make the transition here, to continue their expansion.

“This generation of people on Dark Planet have a great opportunity to do as you have done; raise their vibrations and transport here to One World, bodies intact. The teachings to make those shifts are already there. There are certainly more than a few people who do not believe the ‘virus’ story perpetrated by the medical community and the media. Many people are asking questions and looking for answers.

“As entities on Dark Planet find those teachings and apply them, they also can begin raising their vibrations to make the shift. This awakening will spread through the population, and for the rest of this generation, we are hoping that millions more will make the transition.

“Our Emissary Committee is moving through the global population to assist in the process of inspiration and enlightenment. Some people on your planet have heard rumors about our committee, although they call it the White Brotherhood, an unfortunate term because we have male and female emissaries from all regions on One World.

“Source Energy has been increasing the frequency of Dark Planet through the electromagnetic energy of the planet itself. This is to encourage the entities to awaken. Some are awakening; some are experiencing discomfort and resistance.

“The current situation on Dark Planet has been called many things: The Great Awakening, The Shift of the Ages, Armageddon. Suffice it to say that many wise entities through the ages on Dark Planet have predicted its coming.”

The teacher paused for a drink of water and took measure of the energy in the room with a quick glance. It was a bit more intense than usual, but nothing alarming, so she continued.

“During this generation, at the time of their passing in what is termed the death experience, each entity who has not already made a transition to One World will be given the opportunity to attend a sabbatical to raise their vibration, their consciousness, to closely match our world. This sabbatical will be at the farthest reaches of our solar system. Some entities will choose this option and pass through that time quickly. Another choice they will be given is to go to any other planet that matches their vibrational frequency.

“Some entities that have evolved very little will decide to incarnate again on Dark Planet, because of their longing for the energy there. They will do so knowing that all entities of light and all light energy will be gone from that place. Eventually, Dark Planet will implode upon itself and cease to exist. Any entities left there when the planet destroys itself will return to Source Energy.”

With this, she stopped, waved the fiberscreen off and took a seat on her stool. She sat for a few moments in silence, allowing the students to let this monumental information rest in their minds briefly.

“Any questions class,” she softly implored.

Myca’s hand went up in a flash. “How long do we have?”

Dorianne took a deep breath. “A hundred years at the most, depending upon many factors, including the work of our emissaries.”

Myca bit her lip in determination. Rachel raised her hand, trembling with emotion. “My name is Rachel. Are you telling us that we have been a part of some huge cosmic experiment?”

“That is one way of looking at it, I suppose. Please remember, you chose to be involved and you chose Dark Planet. You also raised your vibrations and transcended here, body intact. That is a very good thing!”

A woman in the front row raised her hand. “Yes, and your name?” The woman answered, “Gloria. The planet imploding will cause a colossal disturbance. Will that damage One World?”

“Good question. There could be some repercussions, but not to One World, which occupies a different spatial reality. We will not be affected, other than experiencing the loss of a once beautiful planet that will cease to be a part of the universe. That will be a tragic occurrence.”

As the bell chimed, Dorianne stood. “You have learned well today. Send only positive loving vibrations to that planet. That is the best thing you can do to help, unless you have been chosen to be an emissary. This is a mission of epic proportions that we are involved in.” She paused, her voice at almost a whisper, “The notes are in your packs. I highly recommend that you discuss this day’s learning with your guides.” With that, she spread her arms, bowed slightly and said, “We are complete.”

Much of the class sat in shocked stillness, trying to fathom the implications of what they had just heard. Rachel was stunned and felt numb. Still, knowing the importance of her vibrations and emotions upon her environment, she found the strength to gather her things and stand up.

She and Myca found the door at the same time and stepped out of the building onto the grass. Myca looked resolute and focused.

“I swear Rachel, this is my quest, and it is my vow. I will help a great many people on earth, on Dark Planet,” she corrected herself.

All Rachel could do was nod, “I know you will Myca. I know you will.”

Chapter Twelve

Rachel sat alone at a table outside the dining hall, enjoying her latte and a piece of carrot cake. Noticing her surroundings and accidentally connecting to random thoughts, she was very glad she would soon be taking the advanced class on telepathic communication so that she could learn to turn off the eavesdropping.

As she sat and grinned at herself in amusement, she saw her teacher Anne approaching the table. “Do you mind if I join you?” Anne asked, and at Rachel’s nod she placed her tray on the table.

Anne, her professor for The Quantum Field, was a sinewy blonde who seemed to be in her early twenties. Rachel spoke first as Anne settled into her chair. “Hi, I’m Rachel, and I am in your afternoon Quantum Field class.”

“Ah yes, I thought I recognized you.”

The two shook hands and Rachel continued, “I find your class riveting and I love how you make it so easy for me to understand what could have been a very complex topic. I particularly enjoyed your presentation on the grid yesterday and only wish the study notes had the visual from the fiberscreen.”

“You know what else?” Rachel gushed like an enthusiastic school girl. “When you diagrammed the Mechanics of Thought and how it changes DNA and reality, I was completely fascinated. I was beginning to study this on Dark Planet before my transition. Some of the masters there were teaching rudimentary concepts in this vein, but not as in-depth as your lesson. And, thank you for including the diagram in the notes. How is it that one as young as you has such a wonderful gift for teaching and such advanced knowledge in what I understand is still a developing science for the general population here?”

“Thank you so much for your kind words,” Anne responded. “I am very happy that you like the class. It may surprise you to know that I have been teaching our young children for over eighty years. Yes, this subject is still developing and very rapidly in the past two years.”

Rachel gasped and then laughed. “Well, no wonder you are so good at it. That should not surprise me. My guide told me that we can choose how we look and how we age, or even if we age. You are a living breathing example right in front of me. I suppose that is why most adults here look between twenty and forty.”

“You may be surprised,” Anne said mysteriously, peering over her cucumber sandwich, “to learn that some of the staff here has been on this plane of existence for hundreds of years.”

“Unbelievable! Well, at the least - startling!” Rachel exclaimed. “Are you naming names?”

Anne laughed, "I'll just leave that to your imagination. Rachel, what is your specialized field of study, if you don't mind my asking?"

"I am to be an animal interpreter. I'll be receiving my certification in about eight weeks."

"Ah yes, I heard we had an A.I. initiate at this location. I am honored to meet you."

"Thank you so much, and likewise. And now, I am so sorry, but I must take my leave. I have an appointment to enjoy one of my favorite pastimes these days - pico wings," Rachel announced as she stood to clear her place. "It was lovely speaking with you, and I will see you in class tomorrow."

"Have a great time. I enjoyed our interaction immensely," the teacher said, tipping her head graciously. "See you tomorrow."

* * * * *

As Rachel winged her way across the hills, rising and swooping in and out of the groves of aspens, she was reviewing her lunch with Anne and yesterday's class in her mind's eye. Anne was certainly talented and brought the subject alive for her. Even now, soaring in the wind, she felt like she was still there in the class.

The fiberscreen was covered in a grid and Anne was explaining the grid concept to the class. "Everything in the universe is connected in all ways. Not only is everything energy, but as we think the thoughts of creation, those thought par-

ticles catch on the grid and at the intersection points of the grid, they begin to coagulate into matter. The grid is the Quantum Field. All physicality is created and held together in the grid. It begins with our thought processes, the emotions and feelings attached to those thoughts and our perceptions of them.”

The professor paused briefly and Rachel could remember the intensity in her eyes as she continued. “Have you ever wondered about the fountain right here on our campus? It is a good example of this concept, and we have made it easy for you to use by enabling it to automatically respond to your thoughts. You have a knowing about it already, do you not? Every time you hear the music, you are creating it, and everyone else is creating their own music.

“The Quantum Field works exactly the same way. Use the knowing you have, the wisdom, if you will, to create in the Quantum Field and you will be the master of your existence. The Ultimate Creator.

“We are only just learning this on One World. In the past few years, some of our masters have perfected it. I myself am getting quite good at it. When I wish to practice, I take a vacation and live on an island that is an ever-changing landscape. I love to paint, and I change my surroundings to match the mood I wish to paint.”

Rachel mused on this as she surveyed the countryside and decided to drop down into a narrow valley to give it a shot. She landed roughly and stumbled, throwing her hands out as a brace. She roared with laughter as she rolled over in the soft

grass, making every effort to keep her wings from becoming entangled beneath her.

When she stopped, she positioned herself cross-legged and surveyed her kingdom. The meadow between the towering cliffs was about fifty feet wide. One side of the ravine was a solid rock wall, with flowers jutting out here and there. The other side was dense with brush and dwarf trees, which grew valiantly in the shaded gulley. She was centered between the two sides of the narrow valley.

As she focused upon the wall to the right, Rachel closed her eyes and got into 'state.' "From the goddess of my being and the spark of the Divine that I am; I am connected to All That Is. I am the creator of my reality."

Breathing deeply, she centered her power onto the cliffs to the right above her, specifically on the bits of color protruding from the cracks in the surface. Opening her eyes, she commanded, "Grow!" Nothing happened. There was a distinct lack of action on the part of the colored bits, and this created even more resolve in Rachel.

Knowing she needed to relax, she took four slow deep breaths and gazed upon the tiny cluster of flowers that were closest to her. Suddenly they began to tremble, as if blown by the wind. "I am affecting them," she thought, and they began to flow outward and down, like trickling water.

She rose to her feet and raised her arms up to them. "GROW!!" she commanded once more and suddenly all of the flowers began to multiply and spread, trailing down the cliffs in a breathtaking display of color. Rachel jumped up and down,

clapping her hands, delirious with glee at being the perpetrator of this dazzling creation.

Within five minutes, the rock wall was completely engulfed in a spectrum of bright blooms, and the valley was beginning to fill with plant vines.

“STOP!!” she commanded, but the flowers did not listen to her, continuing their growth spurt as if they had been let out of a cage and were eager to explore this reality.

“Uh-oh,” she exclaimed, and looked around for a solution, thinking there might be one behind her in this little valley. Then she thought of Michael and softly called his name, directing her thoughts to him.

“Michael, if you can hear me, please come to me. I need you. It is urgent!”

Instantly, he faded in. The flowers were overrunning the whole valley. He was standing waist deep in nasturtiums, geraniums and petunias, while Rachel barely had her head above the growth. He began to laugh uncontrollably, tears rolling down his cheeks.

Rachel joined in the hilarity and hollered, “Hurry Michael, it’s almost got me!” She grabbed her throat with her hands and dramatically fell to her knees. The two of them laughed hysterically at the absurdity of the situation.

Finally, Michael regained his composure, waved his hand and said, “Stop.” The growing garden ceased its rampage.

He was still wiping tears from his face when Rachel got to her feet. She moved aside the leaves to get a better view and looked around in amazement. The cliffs were a brilliant wall of

colorful growth. The valley wore a deep blanket of leaves, vines and flowers.

“Well, it’s a fine mess I’ve gotten myself into here,” she giggled. “Thanks for coming!”

Michael was quiet now and fixed his gaze intently upon her. “Rachel, my dear, as hilarious as this is, you must see the seriousness of the situation also. This is precisely why the minds of newcomers are veiled from this power at first. As I have said before, it is for your protection and for ours. You happen to be very gifted, as you have just demonstrated,” he said, nodding to the king-sized garden around them. “You must wait until you are ready to use this power.”

“Right, right, right. I get it,” she agreed sheepishly.

“Now, let’s fix this,” he said, and planting both feet, he took a few deep breaths. He rolled his head from side to side, like he was looking for a comfortable position and raised one arm. Then he lowered his arm, palm facing out, and proclaimed, “BACK!!”

What happened next was the most miraculous thing Rachel had seen on this world. The flowers seemed to shiver and stood up on the ends of their vines as if a snake charmer were controlling them. The plants danced back and forth for a few seconds and then began to retreat. It was as though they were being sucked backwards into a vacuum. It happened so fast she plopped down on her rear end in shock, sitting on one of her wings.

“Ouch!” she exclaimed.

“Well, little one, what did you expect? They are a part of you right now,” Michael said as he took her wing in his hands and smoothed away the injury. “There, good as new. Now, when I tell you to spread your wings and fly, I am speaking strictly in the literal sense of the word. Fly off now, and do not practice this power alone again, until your teacher gives you the go-ahead. Promise?”

“Yes Michael,” Rachel assured him. “Thanks for coming to my rescue.”

“Before you go, how have you been, other than this?” he asked her. “I have not seen you for a couple of weeks.”

“Thank you for asking. I have missed you, but am very involved in studying for my certification. Sorry I haven’t kept in better contact. I have been spending some time with Jody and we are becoming great friends. She is even more of a rascal than me. The two of us together are a force to be reckoned with.”

Michael’s eyebrows went up. “Oh my, will I be rescuing the both of you?”

“Hopefully not,” Rachel laughed. “Michael, I’d love to take you up on your offer to visit with the rest of the gang. Do you think we could go sometime soon?”

“I don’t see why not. Would you like to go now?” he answered.

“I can’t right now but Saturday would work. Could you meet me at my place at, say, eight in the morning?”

He bowed to her. “At your service, my dear friend. I will see you then. Bye now, and you be good,” and he faded from sight.

As she lifted off again, she was elated by the prospect of using this power again, but determined to keep her promise to Michael. Rising up over the cliffs, she let the wind currents carry her toward the nearest pico landing site. She felt gloriously free. As she approached the pad, she noticed several others coming in also, slowly moving their massive wings. The joy on their faces was indescribable, and Rachel felt this must be the most sublime sight she had ever witnessed.

Upon her landing and the removal of her wings, she heard the call of a bird overhead and glanced up to see a large golden eagle floating across the sky above her. He tipped his wings to her and she heard his thoughts, "Hello, human. We meet again. Next time, let's fly together."

"That would be very nice. See you then," she responded as the regal bird flew off across the horizon.

Chapter Thirteen

Michael and Rachael materialized on a gravel path near a villa surrounded by a vineyard. A few people were in the fields tending the grapes and whistling merrily in the warm sunshine. The main structure was like an ancient stone castle, with several out buildings and a small guest house. "That is where Reno and Batey are living," Michael said, pointing to the little cottage. "They know we are coming because I spoke with Reno earlier." As they neared, the door flew open and Reno ran out, with Batey close behind.

"Woo hoo, Rachel!" Reno cried, throwing her arms around her. They laughed and hugged, Batey anxiously waiting his turn.

"You two are a sight. I have missed you so much. How are you?" Rachel asked, as she warmly embraced Batey and kissed his cheek.

"We could not be better. And this must be Michael." Batey shook Michael's hand firmly. "Glad to have you here."

Michael graciously responded, "Thank you for allowing us to visit. Rachel has wanted to see you."

"The feeling is mutual, I can assure you," said Reno. She motioned to the door and directed their guests in first. It was a

quaint little abode with stone floors and old leather easy chairs. French doors opened out into a small garden framed by a six foot hedge. Two wooden rocking chairs sat among potted plants and jasmine bushes.

“Well, this is very nice,” Rachel declared.

Reno laughed. “Not really my style, but it is cute and comfortable. Here, have a seat. Would you like some tea or a glass of wine?”

“Tea would be great,” Rachel responded. As Reno went over to the stove and put on a tea kettle, Batey noticed Rachel’s surprise. “This old cottage does not have all the modern conveniences, but we do not mind at all. We find it charming.”

They enjoyed their tea and cookies, visiting for over an hour. “It is so good to catch up. It doesn’t surprise me one bit that you will be working in the awards program,” Rachel said, with a playful smile.

Reno feigned indignation. “And why would you say that, missy?”

Rachel giggled, which caused them all to burst out laughing.

“It’s about as close as my girl will get to high finance on One World,” Batey commented. Reno looked thoughtful. “Yes, it has been a bit of an adjustment for me, I must admit. I certainly didn’t bring my millions with me here, and what would I do with them if I had?” She smiled and added, “I’m cool with it though. I haven’t had that ‘yearning for more’ feeling I sometimes got back there.”

Rachel observed, “Yes, you seem serene Reno. It’s nice.” She squeezed her friend’s arm.

“Thanks. You are right, I am.”

“Let’s take our guest on a tour of the property,” Batey suggested as he began clearing the coffee table.

“Yes indeed, we’d love that,” Rachel agreed, helping them clean up while Michael finished his tea.

As they strolled, they passed between thick rows of grapevines. “Batey will have his own vineyard to tend when we leave here,” Reno informed them. “It is much smaller and closer to the village. The couple living there now is moving to another sector, and they are pleased that Batey wishes to take over for them.”

Rachel watched a man handling a large cluster of grapes. He carefully took the fruit in his hands and closed his eyes.

Reno quietly pointed out, “He is checking with the fruit to see if it is ready. This is why the wine is so marvelous. There is that perfect time when the grapes produce the best wine. The plant tells him when. He is a speaker for the plants, and he specializes in grapes.”

“Fascinating,” Rachel whispered. The man gently let go of the bunch and moved to the next row.

Michael added, “This is why all of our food is so tasty. Everything is harvested at its peak. Not when we think it’s ready, but when the plant tells us it’s ready. We learned this from an entity who incarnated here many years ago from Dark Planet.”

“Wow! I don’t know of any such knowledge there, but many people believe talking to their plants helps them grow. Maybe that’s where it started.” Rachel suggested.

The four of them leisurely wandered the property, Batey pointing out all the features and highlights of a well run vineyard. “Batey is learning this occupation as an apprentice here. He has always had a green thumb and our placement in this region was perfect.” Reno told them, as they ended the tour back in front of the cottage. “It works well for me too, with all of the artists around here. I arrange for public displays of their work and awards exchanges for those who wish to have art in their own homes. It is not like the business world I was used to on Dark Planet, but it is fun and the pace of my life is much more relaxed these days. I have even started helping Batey in the vineyard.” She took Batey’s hand and squeezed it, kissing him lightly.

Rachel nodded. “That sounds glorious. I am so happy for you two. Well, I am really sorry to say it is time to go. We are off to see Joseph and Jeremy.”

“We went last month. They are doing well learning snow gliding. Once they become pros, maybe I’ll have them teach me. Be sure to say hi!” Batey added.

“Absolutely! This has been wonderful. Gimme a hug.” She embraced Batey and then Reno.

“Remember, you are only a blink away,” Batey said, eyes moist. “As a matter of fact, after you get your certification, maybe we’ll come for a visit.”

He turned to Michael. “It has been a pleasure,” he said, offering his hand, which Michael took and then pulled him into a hug. “I am most pleased to have met you both,” he said.

“Thank you for bringing our friend,” Reno said, hugging Michael warmly. “You are welcome in our home any time.” As the two teleported out, Reno’s face beamed, tears sparkling in her eyes.

* * * * *

Joseph and Jeremy flew down the slope, hooting and hollering, as Michael and Rachel watched from below. Their exhilaration was contagious and Rachel was spellbound. They were swishing along about six inches above the surface as though they were riding invisible snowboards.

They stopped short, just in front of their audience. “Man, what a rush!” Joseph huffed, short of breath.

“Not just for you, I can assure you,” Rachel confessed. “I want to learn this. When can you begin teaching others?”

“Not officially for another couple of months,” Jeremy replied. “It’s a lot harder than it looks. But for you, maybe we can make an exception.”

“Yeah, we could probably swing that,” Joseph agreed. “It is a bit tricky. The energy wave surrounds the feet in a circular pattern. As you glide the slope, the wave responds to texture and density changes in the snow. You have to learn to adjust your weight instantly for those changes. Once you get the technique, it becomes second nature. It is a wild ride.”

Michael observed, “You gentlemen look like you have been doing this your whole lives. You are much better than me.”

“As instructors,” Jeremy informed them, “we have to be pros. We will start as assistants and work up to being professional snow gliders. Now, I know our amazing snow-show kept you here longer than you had planned, but do you have time to get a coffee before you go?”

They sat by the window in the lodge, watching the enthusiasts on the slopes.

“This has been a great visit Rachel. I have missed you. I have to tell you that my guide let me peek in on you from time to time,” Joseph confessed. “I am so proud of you for the work you will be doing.”

Rachel looked down into her mug, blushing. “Thank you. I am eager to get started. Oh, by the way, Karen and Myca said to say hi!”

“They are both coming here for their vacations. We can’t wait to see them!” Jeremy said.

At this point, Michael reluctantly interrupted the conversation with the announcement that Rachel was due back for class. Standing for their goodbyes, Rachel kissed them both on the cheek and the three stood in a group hug. “Love you guys. Come visit soon, okay?”

“Count on it! Nice to meet you, Michael. Take care of our Rachel,” Joseph said, as Michael and Rachel stepped back for teleporting.

“I will make every effort, but I do believe she can take very good care of herself,” he answered with a wink.

* * * * *

Waiting for Social Integration class to begin, Rachel watched her classmates file in and thought about last week's visit with her old friends. She smiled to herself and let the warm feelings envelop her. Karen spoke to her as she passed. "Hi there, how was your trip?" she asked.

"It was fabulous and everyone says hi! I'll tell you about it later," Rachel replied.

She noticed Jody come in and sit down, and waved at her. Jody smiled and waved back. As the bells chimed, a man entered that Rachel had not seen before. His fair hair and bright blue eyes were a perfect complement to his shimmering blue robe. "Hello class, my name is Marcus. Jonathan will not be with you today. He has made arrangements for me to take you on a field trip. Your Teleportation professor tells us that, with me as a chaperone, we can go to the Hall of Mediation here in this sector so that you can witness a session."

"Would everyone please stand?" he requested. Twenty-six in all, this was a large group for just one chaperone; however, Marcus displayed the utmost confidence in them. "Now I'd like you to tune into my vibration so that you know where we are going. Good. Breath deeply," he said as he placed his hands straight out in front of him, facing the group.

Rachel held her hands toward his and easily picked up his signal. They all faded from the classroom together. Rachel materialized in front of a large round building she recognized as the Hall of Mediation from fiberscreen images in the classroom. Everyone made it safely, although a few appeared at

various locations on the grounds. The gardens and sculptures surrounding the building were inviting, and the students milled about, taking in the beauty of the place.

After a few minutes, Marcus called out, "Let's gather here now, before we enter." They all grouped and filed into the main entrance, which made Rachel remember her fourth grade field trip to the museum in Los Angeles. A few others giggled and Rachel guessed they were thinking similar thoughts.

The interior of the building was spacious, filled with plants and couches. All but one of the twelve ornate doors were closed, with 'In Session' signs out front. Marcus led the group toward the unoccupied room and directed them in.

To the students' surprise, the room was like a garden, with plants and waterfalls, fruit hanging from trees and even birds flitting about. Near one end was a white lattice archway, woven with roses and plumeria.

"Looks like a wedding chapel," Karen commented to Rachel, which caused more giggles.

Marcus spoke in a hushed voice, "Well, of course, you know that we have no marriage here on this world, not in the civil sense of the word. The Mediation Hall is where we settle minor differences of opinion and is designed to be highly pleasurable to the senses in order to facilitate harmony." He walked up to the archway and instructed the class to follow. The fragrance of the flowers was intoxicating.

Directly behind the arch was a low platform. "This is where the mediator stands. Remember from your studies, the media-

tor is merely a guide, or coach. The participants do the work themselves.”

He motioned to two padded seats beneath the arch, facing each other about two feet apart. “This is where the participants sit. When they enter, please step away and sit among the foliage. We shall not disturb them, we are here to observe. They have agreed to allow us to view the mediation. This particular session involves two men who have fallen in love with the same woman.”

Jody asked, “Doesn’t she have anything to say about it?”

“Of course she does, but that does not discount the fact that both of these men love her passionately. No matter how this turns out, there is discomfort involved, and this mediation will help everyone through the situation.”

At that point, the mediator approached and the class withdrew to a respectable distance. The mediator wore a striking silver robe, tied at the waist with a braided rope. She had long white hair, and to Rachel, she looked positively ethereal.

Two men, also dressed in robes, followed her. They all took their positions, and the mediator began speaking softly, but Rachel could not make out what she was saying. However, she recognized from her studies that this was the Sharing Process. She remembered that some of the mediation processes used meditation and some used actions. For this one, each participant in turn answers a series of questions asked by the mediator. While each one is speaking, the other person listens silently, without interruption or comment, and moves into a vibrational space of understanding and learning.

Rachel couldn't remember the exact questions but realized she had her pack with her and removed it from her bag. She found the notes quickly and followed along as she watched the reverent ceremony.

The Sharing Process

Each participant answers the following questions:

1. What is it that you did that caused me to let myself get out of alignment with Source Energy?
2. What was it about this experience that I took exception too?
3. Whose responsibility is it for me to remain at one and in alignment?
4. How can this experience facilitate my learning?
5. What do I appreciate most about attracting this experience into my life?
6. What do I appreciate most about you?
7. What do I love most about you?

After each participant had worked their way through the questions, they both took several deep breaths and went to no-thought, with the guidance of the mediator. Their job at this point was to move into a vibrational match with each other, to become connected and as one.

Rachel continued to follow along in her notes. In this state of high consciousness, well-being and oneness, each participant experiences the emotional vibrations of the other, and they come into the harmony of understanding, learning and completeness. They allow the other to be who they are.

The notes went on to say that sometimes the participants agree, and sometimes they agree to disagree, but it is always from a place of love and understanding. It was also noted that

this process is used frequently in relationship mediations. Open and honest communication leads to powerful unions between partners.

After what appeared to be a short meditation, the mediator asked the two men to stand. They stood looking deeply into each others eyes. They embraced and warmly hugged for a minute. The love in the room was so intense that it brought tears of joy to Rachel's eyes, and she looked around to see that many of her classmates were also wiping away tears.

The two men finished their embrace and pulled apart, and all three at the arch bowed respectfully to each other. Then they silently left the room.

Marcus called the class together. "What did you experience?" he asked them.

"Incredible love and understanding," said one student.

"Honest and harmonious communication," another offered.

Rachel spoke softly, "The second participant was not thinking ahead to his answers or defending his position. He was totally engrossed in the moment, listening completely to the other man's statements from a place of wanting to understand. It was so moving. I can see why mediation is so important in this society and so effective. How could there be disharmony with this forum for settling differences?"

"Good job, class. Now, if any of you have chosen to make mediation your life's work, speak to me after class so that I can help you arrange for your advanced schooling. All right students, ready to take another ride?" he invited, blue eyes twin-

bling. “Tune in to my vibrations and let’s head back to the classroom.”

A single butterfly, perched on a blossom, smiled and nodded to Rachel as she disappeared from sight.

* * * * *

Myca and Rachel met Jody in front of the dress shop at 2 p.m. With only two weeks left before graduation, the students had been encouraged to experience shopping, still a necessity on this world. Although she had been grocery shopping in the village a few times with Gabrielle, Rachel decided a dress would be in order and was glad Myca and Jody had decided to join her.

“Myca, this is my friend Jody. I know you have heard me speak of her.” Rachel introduced the two.

“Glad to meet you, Jody,” Myca announced. “Any friend of Rachel’s is a friend of mine.

“Likewise, Myca. Rachel has told me some interesting stories about your times together back on Dark Planet and about you becoming an emissary. I am honored to meet you.” Jody’s smile could be seen a mile away, and Myca instantly warmed to her, as Rachel knew she would.

The shop was inviting, with a blue awning over the entrance sporting the name in big white letters, The Little Blue Dress Shop. In the window were several creations — robes and gowns in various colors tastefully displayed for viewing.

Rachel spied an older woman with dark hair and a petite younger version of the same through the window. Mother and daughter, she guessed.

The older woman greeted them at the door. "Good afternoon, ladies. What can we get for you today?"

As they stepped inside, Rachel caught the sweet aroma of lilacs. Sure enough, the blossoms were abundant in the shop, lavishly arranged in large ceramic vases.

"Hello," said Myca. "We would like to buy some dresses."

The shop was tiny and quaint. There was a three-way mirror and several comfortable looking chairs. They saw no garments other than those in the window.

The younger of the two shopkeepers stepped forward. "Welcome," she said. "Would you ladies please have a seat? My name is Marsha, and this is my mother, Danielle. Do you have awards you'd like to use today?"

They looked at each other in alarm. "No, we did not know we needed them," Rachel explained, as she took a seat in one of the chairs. "We are newcomers, attending the university."

"You do not need them, my dear," said Danielle. "You mentioned that you wanted to 'buy' dresses and we assumed you wanted to use some awards. You do not need awards to take advantage of our services; they merely enhance what we can create for you. You are the first newcomers to visit our shop, so this will be a learning experience for us all. How long before your studies are completed?"

"Only two weeks. We'll need some clothes," Rachel replied.

“Well ladies, our work is exquisite, as you will see,” Danielle offered, approaching Rachel. “You first?” Rachel looked over at Myca and Jody, who nodded in approval.

“What is your name, dear?” she asked, taking Rachel’s hand and guiding her forward between the mirrors.

“Rachel,” she responded, looking around the shop, a bit bewildered by the obvious lack of merchandise.

“Not to worry, Rachel,” Marsha assured her. “Everything is virtual in the selection of your garment, except for the fabric texture, which is the last step.”

Danielle positioned Rachel, just so, in front of the mirrors and stepped back. A pulsating golden light shone down upon her.

“It’s sizing me up,” she giggled, as did Myca and Jody.

“Not exactly, but you will see soon,” Danielle responded.

The light subsided and Danielle directed Rachel back to her chair. “Honey, would you get the refreshments, please,” she asked Marsha, who exited through a door on the side. She soon returned with wine and a selection of cheeses.

As they nibbled cheese and sipped their wine, they silently sent the ‘so what’s next?’ signal to each other. After a few moments, Marsha announced, “We’re ready, Mom.”

The shopkeepers stood on either side of the grouping of chairs. Danielle waved her hand at the mirrors. A holographic image of Rachel appeared in front of them, dressed in a stunning silver gown, simple and elegant.

Jody coughed, startled at the sight, and sucked her mouthful down the wrong pipe. "I'm okay," she told them, after clearing her throat. "This is so hot!"

Marsha explained to them, "We start with style, in silver. Then, once you have decided upon your style, you will choose color. Lastly, you will select the fabric texture by feeling samples."

"Oh my gosh, this is going to be so fun," Rachel exclaimed. She took a sip of wine and motioned to Marsha. "Bring it on!"

The virtual Rachel moved around, showing all sides of the gown. Then a new creation materialized on her body, to the enthusiastic oohing and aahing of all three shoppers. This one was a robe with a high neck, sleek fitting but not tight, side slits to the thigh. "That is beautiful. How come all these look so good on her? I mean, on me," Rachel laughed.

Marsha explained. "This is a computer program that works in sync with our creative abilities. The computer scans you and the program selects styles that complement your figure and personality. Our input is added, via direct link from our minds to the program. You are getting our talents as designers, coupled with a very sophisticated computer program. You like?"

"Oh, I like," Rachel answered happily. "That robe is perfect. That's the one I want."

"Well that was easy," Danielle cheerfully replied. "Let's pick the colors."

The robe changed to a teal green, then to three shades of blue that bled together seamlessly. “I think I like the blue colors best, but could we soften it up a bit?” Rachel requested.

“Yes, indeed,” Danielle replied and instantly the intensity of the colors paled.

Rachel exclaimed, “That’s it! I love it.”

“Good. I am so glad you are pleased, Rachel,” said Marsha, waving the virtual Rachel away. “Now, here are some fabric samples.” She produced several long swatches of material in the colors Rachel had already selected, and draped them one at a time over her forearm for Rachel to feel.

“When will my robe be ready?” she asked pensively.

Danielle promised her, “All three of you will have your garments before you leave today.”

“Woo hoo!” they exclaimed in unison. Myca bounced up from her seat. “Alright Rach, it’s my turn,” she announced, checking Jody’s response momentarily. Getting the nod sent her straight to the three-way mirrors in delicious anticipation.

Two hours later, the happy shoppers floated out of The Little Blue Dress Shop, garments covered in thin protective wrap, draped over their arms.

“That was spectacular! The best shopping experience of my life,” declared Jody. “I think I surprised them a bit, but it expanded their imaginations, don’t you think?” Her choice of a skin-tight jumpsuit had startled the shopkeepers, but they soon got into the fun of it and created exactly what Jody wanted.

“Oh yeah!” agreed Rachel. “It would be fun to see them put that on some of their other clients.” After the laughter sub-

sided, she looked at Myca and added, “You’ll probably earn lots of ‘awards’ with the humanitarian work you’ll be doing. What do you think ‘awards’ will buy you here?”

“Beats me,” Myca mused. “Hey, I know! Let’s get together again this time next year and spend some. See what they’ll buy!”

“I don’t see how it could get much better than this,” Rachel responded, “but I am totally game. It’s a pact.”

Chapter Fourteen

Rachel and Jody stood in line at the Registrar's Office to return their packs. It was a bright, sunny day and Rachel caught bits and pieces of excited conversations among the graduates.

"Are you continuing your studies right away?"

"I can't wait to see my house! How 'bout you? What did you ask for?"

"My occupational counselor helped me decide. I am going into mediation."

Rachel smiled to herself, so glad that her basic studies were completed and she had received her A.I. certification. She would be starting work in six weeks, with enough time to take a much needed vacation and get settled into her new home.

"A penny for your thoughts?" Jody interrupted her, noticing the peaceful smile.

"Ah, Jody. I am really going to miss this place. It has been like a home to me. I will really miss some of our professors."

"Yes, especially Jonathan, huh? Think I haven't noticed the chemistry between you?" Jody teased her. "You could cut it with a knife."

“No kidding, that obvious? Well, maybe we’ll pursue that at a later time, when I get more settled in.”

Her mind went back to her last day in Jonathan’s class. He had concluded the class and taken a seat on the stool in front of them.

“You have all been brilliant students, so eager to learn and so quick. I shall miss you all. Perhaps we will meet again in advanced studies.”

She watched him intensely, unable to fathom not seeing him again. Her thoughts drifted and she imagined their faces close together. She lost herself in those vivid blue eyes.

As she came back to reality, he was staring right at her. “Some of you have come here with special talents that can be put to use on our world immediately, and for that we are most appreciative.”

His gaze left hers. “Others have yet to decide upon an occupation. You will want to discuss options with your occupational counselor. I am pleased to have been a part of your journey.”

He stood, spread his arms wide and bowed slightly. “We are complete.”

The bells chimed and the students began filing from the room, stopping to thank him and say goodbye. Her mind filled with ideas, “I could ask him for coffee, maybe a walk. I know this can’t be it.”

She fumbled with her things in a nervous attempt to be the last to leave. As the room cleared, she found her composure

and approached him, hand outstretched. “This has been my favorite class, Jonathan.”

He looked at her hand, but did not take it. Instead, he purposely looked up at her face as she pulled her hand back in embarrassment.

“Rachel, I am no longer your professor. We can now be friends. Friends hug goodbye, right?”

She nodded, and he stepped forward and put his arms around her. She trembled as she wrapped her arms around him, noticing that his heart was pounding. They remained locked in the embrace for a moment, and then his thoughts came to her.

“I have felt it too, Rachel.”

Startled, she pulled away, exclaiming, “You have been reading my thoughts.”

“Sweet Rachel, I have not heard anything you did not want me to hear. However, this is not the right time for us. Later, when you are settled in and have started your work, I would like you to join me for dinner. Would you consider it?”

She thought she would melt. “Yes, I would consider it. Is it appropriate?”

“It is. Once you are no longer my student and have taken your place within our society, I believe we can pursue this interesting attraction that seems to have developed between us.”

Just then, Jody nudged her back to the present, “Hello! One World to Rachel! It’s your turn girl.”

Rachel stepped up to the desk and placed her pack in front of Grace.

“It’s been a pleasure, Rachel. Please come by and see me when you visit the library. Now, you did input your preferences for your house, didn’t you? Good girl. Here is your chip,” she said, placing a tiny round computer chip into Rachel’s hand. “It has all your class notes, in case you want them. Fits any computer on the planet.”

“Thanks Grace. I will definitely stop in from time to time.”

Rachel and Jody descended the stairs and stopped at the landing below, taking each other’s hand affectionately. “I will miss you so much Rachel,” Jody confessed. “You have been such a good friend to me.”

“And we will always be friends. I will see you when we get back from our vacations. Where are you going?”

Jody turned her eyes toward the sky. “Maybe to another galaxy. You know me, always the wanderer.” Her deep laugh was infectious and Rachel could not help joining in.

“Jody the adventurer, off to explore the universe!” she declared, raising her arm with an imaginary sword.

“And are you still planning your private sojourn on a deserted tropical island?” Jody asked.

“Yes, indeed. I will have the animals to converse with and plenty of sunshine. I am sure I will return tanned and refreshed.”

“Okay, well you have fun! Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do,” Jody told her, as they hugged goodbye, and she disappeared into the crowd.

Rachel headed for the dining hall and spotted Karen ahead, hurrying to catch up with her. “I believe there is a hazelnut latte with my name on it in there. Wanna join me?” she asked.

“Absolutely! I was hoping to see you today. Why don’t you bring me the same and I’ll get a table.”

Rachel set the coffees on the table. “Karen, you have really blossomed here. I am so proud of you,” she said as she pulled her chair in closer.

“Thanks Rachel, the same can be said for you. I guess all of us who came here couldn’t help but develop and grow in this incredible place.” She waved her arm around her. “We are the creators. Big difference between Dark Planet and here is that now I know this for sure and am learning how to apply the knowledge.”

Rachel watched her friend in admiration, knowing how far she had come. “What kind of house did you ask for Karen?”

Karen seemed surprised at the question. “What else? My mountain cabin.”

Rachel rolled her eyes, “Of course, how could I forget?”

Karen raised her eyebrows. “How about you. The beach house?”

“You know it! Secluded stretch of beach, decks all around, tiled floors. I cannot wait. Man, this is some good coffee. I’ll miss it,” she added sadly.

“Oh please, what are you talking about? You can teleport here any time you want.”

“Oh yeah, I forgot.” They laughed and relaxed into their chairs, savoring the coffee and the moment. Rachel broke the

silence. “I heard from Joseph and Jeremy that you and Myca are going to visit them on your vacation. That should be fun, huh?”

“Indeed. I haven’t seen them since we’ve been here, so it’s long overdue. I know it will be a blast. I’m glad Myca gets to take some time before she enters the Keep.”

“Yes, we probably won’t see much of her for a while.” Both drifted on their own thoughts, contemplating their friend and their immediate futures.

Finally, Karen spoke. “Well, sorry to rush off, but I gotta go. Have fun on vacation. When we get back, let’s be sure to get together and compare homes, okay?”

“You bet, Karen. I’ll miss you. Bye now!” They hugged and Karen melted into the mass of students.

* * * * *

Rachel saw Myca sitting near the fountain across the courtyard. She was engrossed in her pack, fervently studying, as usual. Rachel knew she might not get another chance to speak to her for a while so she headed over.

Myca looked up as Rachel’s shadow crossed her pack. She smiled. “Hi there! I was hoping to see you again before I go.”

“You are my last goodbye. I am so glad to find you here. When do you leave for emissary studies?”

“Right after my vacation. You knew that Karen and I are going to see Joseph and Jeremy, right? I think they may talk me into learning this sport of theirs.” Myca smiled, closed her pack and patted the ground beside her. “Have a seat.”

Rachel set her bag down and spread out on the grass next to her friend. Myca turned to her and said, "It seems like the time has passed so fast, yet we have learned so much, my friend."

"Mmm, so true. You know, I have never thanked you for all of your help in getting me here." She held up her hand as Myca tried to deny the credit. "Now let me finish. You have always been a powerful example to me, and you have no idea how many times I have relied on your wisdom and knowledge to carry me through. You have been an inspiration to me."

Myca glowed, and bowed her head for an instant. "Thank you for the lovely compliment. And you have been my star. Your energy has always shone brightly, and I have relied upon it as a source of inspiration. I believe we have supported each other and that is what empowered friends do."

"That's so right," Rachel agreed. They sat in silence for a few moments, lost in their own thoughts. "Myca, do you think Peter is okay?" Rachel asked softly.

"I have seen much more of the conditions on Dark Planet than you. As an emissary initiate, the council has shown me. It's not pretty."

"Mind you, if he is no longer in physicality, I am okay with that," Rachel added. "I know he is able to choose his own path. But if he is still there struggling in that ominous place ... will you be able to help him when you go there?"

"It's not quite that simple, Rachel," her friend replied. "I can look for his energy certainly, but I am entrusted to work with beings at a certain level on their journey. Their light radiates

outward and attracts me to them. It's a bit like a beacon, or radio signal. Here, I think I can show you." Myca closed her eyes and began breathing deeply, moving her head side to side as she got into 'state.' She then opened her eyes and held up two fingers, passing them three times in front of her, opening a window into another dimension. Dark Planet appeared before them, enveloped in a heavy energy that sickened Rachel, but still she watched closely.

The place was Orange County, near the Irvine Complex. Buildings were devastated and burned. The air was dark, as it is at dusk after the sun goes down, but the sun was high in the sky. There were no flowers or trees, except for charred remains, still smoldering.

Myca touched her arm and she jumped. "Sorry, but I wanted you to notice something here. See?" She pointed to people that were skulking in the shadows of the burned-out buildings, running frantically across open spaces and back into hiding places. It reminded Rachel of film footage she had seen of wars, except she could see their energy fields — glowing bands around them. Most radiated browns and reds, but one who was walking slowly from structure to structure emanated yellow and blue.

"That is a person I can help. You see his energy. He is of a higher vibration. I am to work with beings at that level." Both of them watched this scene for a few moments, and then Myca added, "Most people of higher vibration have already left the cities and are living away from these conglomerations of darkness."

Rachel drew in her breath sharply and implored her friend, “Can you show me where Peter is?”

Myca set her jaw tightly and pursed her lips in thought. It was discouraged, she knew. However, she also knew how much this meant to Rachel. With the flat of her hand, she blended way the scene and again drew her fingers three times across the fold in this dimension to reveal a valley. Rachel recognized the place. It was Laguna Canyon. Homes were scorched, windows broken out and furnishings were strewn around the yards. She did not see any people but heard a faint buzzing sound.

Then she saw it; a seething mass of insects was descending on the canyon, a black cloud devouring vegetation and everything organic in sight. The buzzing was getting louder by the minute.

Myca pointed to the top of the hills, and Rachel caught her first glimpse of human entities in this dreadful scene. There were five in all, crouched in the undergrowth watching the devastation below in horror. Their energy fields radiated fear as they hugged the ground desperately.

As they turned frightened eyes upon each other, Rachel gasped. Peter was among them, holding tightly to a young girl no more than sixteen, who was trembling in fear. His arms were around her and he kissed her on the forehead and wiped her tears. Rachel could see his energy bands, vibrating in red and yellow.

Suddenly, as if the insects below caught a whiff of the humans, they began to rise up out of the canyon toward the group on the hilltop. Instantly, they all scrambled madly toward cover,

a hole in the ground. As the mass of bugs swarmed over the ridge, the last of the group dived into the hole, pulling a metal hatch closed and disappearing from sight.

Myca wiped away the scene and addressed Rachel somberly. "I cannot work with Peter. He has surrounded himself with entities in the very low vibration of fear, and they are sure to affect him. However, there is hope for him. He is strong and compassionate, comforting the others. Some of our emissaries work with people such as Peter. They will find him and help him if they can. As for the others we saw with him, I cannot say. They may have to pass from this life and be given the choice to attend Sabbatical and come here later when they are ready."

Noticing that Rachel's gaze was fixed, Myca inquired, "Are you okay?"

"Yes, I am. It's interesting that I don't feel more caught up in the drama occurring there. I suppose it is because I understand what is going on and why."

"That's a good thing, Rachel," she declared, and smiled. Rachel smiled back, at bit melancholy nonetheless.

"I hope Peter remembers some of what I tried to teach him."

Myca nodded, "I am sure he does." She sensed that Rachel's influence was exactly the reason Peter was the one in the group whose energy shone the brightest.

"Thank you for showing me that. I really do feel better now."

Myca nodded wisely to her friend. "With awareness comes freedom and choice. I am glad to have been of service."

They both paused, knowing this would be their last meeting for quite some time. Rachel felt elated for where they were going but knew she would miss Myca. Even though they both were able to use teleportation and telepathic communication, as an emissary initiate, Myca was required to keep herself removed from society for the next two years, except for two short vacation periods.

Standing face to face, they held each other's hands and looked deeply into each other's eyes. "I love you my friend and I will miss you," said Myca.

"Likewise," Rachel replied, and hugged her friend goodbye, for now.

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