

Exploring the Mystery of Dreams Summer 2012 \$7

Dream Network Journal



CALLING FORTH ANGELS

A Path to Soul Sandy Steckling

The Heron's Demand Paco Mitchell M.A.

Those Pesky Angels! Charles D. Laughlin, Ph. D.

Dreams as Angels Part II Russell A. Lockhart, Ph.D.



PsiberDreaming: The 11th Dimension

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<http://asdreams.org/psi2012>



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Dream Castles in the Sand

21 - 25 June 2013

Virginia Beach Resort & Conference Center

Virginia Beach, VA



CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

The Venue • Virginia Beach Resort Hotel and Conference Center is located on the beach at 2800 Shore Drive in Virginia Beach, Virginia with sweeping views of the Cape Henry Bay. The bay front location provides an ideal venue for beach activities as well as complimentary bicycles, a fully-equipped health club, pool, Jacuzzi, sauna and a professional massage service. The hotel is also less than a mile from historical First Landing State Park, a wildlife sanctuary where you can experience cypress swamp, salt marsh, maritime forest, freshwater wetlands, dunes, and bay shoreline. The park features camping and cabins, 19 miles of hiking trails, and 5.9 miles of biking trails.

The Conference will feature three world-renowned keynote speakers, over 160 presenters from around the globe, an opening reception, the Dream Art Exhibition and reception, a Dream Hike, the annual Dream Telepathy Contest, and the ever popular costume Dream Ball.

Submissions • High quality proposals are invited addressing any of the following tracks: Research and Theory; Arts and Humanities; Culture and Anthropology; Education; Religion, Spirituality and Philosophy; Clinical Approaches; Dreamwork Practices; Extraordinary, PSI and Lucid Dreams; and especially the Dream Castles Conference Theme. Submission Categories include: Paper Presentations; Symposia; Panels; Workshops; Special Events or Major Presentations; Morning Dream Groups; and Research Hot-off-the-Press and Poster Papers. All submissions must be made online.

Deadline for submissions is 15 December 2012
(1 March 2013 for Hot-off-the-Press and Poster Sessions)

Go to www.asdreams.org/2013 for conference information and submission instructions.

Dreaming the Shift

I awaken in the dream right in the middle of the grand shift of the ages. It is chaotic but also there is a weird and familiar order about it all. It feels a bit frantic. The air is permeated by a great excitement. The atmosphere has a purple tint to it that is breathtaking. There is a huge light beam coming out of the tip of Mt. Shasta.

I stop and look around to take it all in and what I see is amazing. Everyone is scrambling around in an orderly way. I see many of my friends going here and there; they know exactly where to go and what to do even though we have never planned or done this before.

I see light ships... everywhere! I will not call them UFO's, because they are identifiable. Everyone thinks this is quite normal.

I see a few Sasquatch looking beings walking around; they are not wild beasts but intelligent beings. Even odder is that they do not seem out of place.

There are many other animals that have long been extinct, like small dinosaurs, woolly mammoths, and odd birds in the sky... as well as new ones that we know nothing about.

There are also strange sounds or tones in the air coming from everywhere. Some people are called to these sounds; each person matches the outer tones with their heart tones. The air ships are glowing with different colors and other people are drawn to these ships by their inner heart color. There are other people gathering in different buildings that have huge stones or crystals that they circle around. Each person acts as if there has been a dress rehearsal. Even though there is a bit of chaos, there is a beautiful order about it all as well.

I can see the dimensions blending together, the past with the present and the future. Anything that had been lost in other times or places is returning to the center point. I think to myself, as I watch this spectacle of controlled pandemonium, "Could it be that anything that was lost in the past can be re-born in this new age? Lost loved ones, lost health and youth, lost abundance, even lost species, etc." It appears that this is possible and maybe this is why great losses have always felt so unnatural or surreal to us.

Mission Statement

Evolving a Dream Cherishing Culture

Since 1982

Our purpose is to raise individual and cultural appreciation for the value of dreams. We will provide information that will assist and empower readers.

We hope to aid in the personal development and healing of our physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual responsibility and well-being, with the help of dreams.

We aspire to unite and serve people who respect dreams by aiding the integration of dreamwork into the everyday life of our culture, always mindful of the dreamer's integrity. We believe dreams can become agents of change that often reveal important new insights about the health and developing life of the dreamer.

Recalling a dream is a signal we are ready to begin understanding the information presented. Our primary mission is helping readers glean meaning from dreams through journaling, studying and dreamsharing one-on-one or in groups. Enacting or manifesting your dream's hint can lead to healing and empowerment.

We seek balance, giving all cultures, nations, voices and schools of thought an opportunity to be heard. There will be times when a particular area will be given greater emphasis, depending on what is surfacing. Given the limited print and online space the emphasis will change from time to time. Still, a wide range of ideas and opinions will be explored and expressed.

We invite you to indicate areas of interest and questions you want to explore or pose in future issues. ☺

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Upcoming Focus
AUTUMN' 2012



Dreaming Politics
& Open to your dreams
Lifeline: 4 Weeks after you
receive this issue.

About Our Cover Artist Deborah Koff-Chapin



The image on the cover is a 'Touch Drawing' by Deborah Koff-Chapin. It was created through the touch of fingertips on paper that was placed upon a smooth layer of ink. The pressure forms marks on the underside that are seen upon lifting the page. The drawing is not preplanned, but takes form through subtle attunement as it is being created. This image was selected from 60 in SoulCards 2.

Find out more about Deborah's work and the process of Touch Drawing at www.touchdrawing.com. Contact her at center@touchdrawing.com.

Editorial

Some years ago, I was waiting for Amtrak at a Thompson, UT café. I took a seat at the counter and soon, on either side of me, sat two women with whom I had a most otherworldly conversation. I wondered at the time, *where these women came from*. When I heard the whistle signaling the train's arrival, I bid them farewell and stood to leave. One of the women stood with me, put her hands on my shoulder and eyes to eyes, she said: "We are being changed, you know, even at the molecular level."

In Seattle, I attended 'Positive Futures' gathering being facilitated by Dr. Robert Muller* author of *Most of All They Taught Me Happiness* (among many other published writings). Dr. Muller was beyond a doubt **the** most optimistic individual on planet Earth. I had the good fortune of meeting with Dr. Muller at his office in the United Nations in 1979 and have been inspired by him ever since.

When I first walked in to the Futures conference, a woman across the room caught my eye; there was something about her countenance that made me decide to introduce myself and learn more about her, which I did. I learned that she was a therapist in private practice and had been for quite some time. I asked how she was able to maintain such a positive, upbeat attitude and in response, she took a step back and explained: "I simply expand my molecules, listen and let the pain, confusion and heartache I'm hearing... flow through."

I could actually *see* the expansion as she was talking; she became (nearly) transparent!

Many of the angelic messages/'contact' experiences I've been fortunate to have, occurred in that precious place I often refer to as the 'intersection' between dreamtime and waking reality. It is a holy space. A place or dimension of reality that I firmly believe is where we would be, how we would be experiencing life, were it not for the 'programming'—the black/white good/bad—labeling we receive as part of our socialization and current state of cultural evolution.

Having been blessed (as many of us have) with experiences in that intersectional reality, I've known for years *That* is where I aspire to be, all the time, though I've also intuited/known there is little I can consciously do to achieve *being there*. It is a pure blessing when it visits and perhaps *being there* on occasion provides us with the motivation to carry on, with a glimpse or pre-view of what is yet to come. Of what will be.

We hear a lot of talk of late about 'ascension' and the collective movement that is underway into 5th dimension reality, higher consciousness levels, the anticipation of a 'quantum leap' or *Shift*... and many seem certain we are moving into that space this very year. I believe the 'signs'

of this happening are evident as we speak: e.g., the recent and unexpected Supreme Court ruling the affordable care act to be constitutional. In that context and with the extraordinary political situation worldwide, we have chosen *Dreaming Politics* as the focus for our autumn issue. Please watch for instructions, pre-views and clues in your dreams and share them here.

Now, I quote an excerpt by Linda Dillon, channeling Archangel Michael.

"When things get as busy as they are now, because people are awakening, rising up, refusing and embracing, I remind myself that, as glorious as it is, it serves only my own personal awakening, your own personal awakening and the awakening of us all. Not an awakening to 2012 but a full and complete awakening to our own true Self. There's nothing else that's happening here but a sleep and an awakening.

"So don't be swept away by the busy-ness of the moment. Don't lose your grip on things. The rush and roar is not what's happening here. It's as much a passing show as a storm of a half-day's duration. There's something more basic happening here and that's your own deepest awakening. Hold fast to that.

"See that as what's happening. Sink down deeply into that. Let all of this, as chaotic and insane as it may seem, serve that."**

Years ago, in DNI Winter 1999/Vol 18 No. 4, pg. 10, I interviewed Gary Bonnell author of *Twelve Days of Light*. Mr. Bonnell is gifted with the ability to access the Akashic Records. In deciphering messages from the Records for humanity, he 'read' that there would come a time—within the time-frame we are now experiencing—when *everyone* would be able to *see... auras, energy fields*, etc. ... even those emitted by a single blade of grass. Hearts and third eyes will be opened *en masse*.

I believe that time is upon us. ∞

* Former Assistant to U Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations and First Chancellor of the University for Peace Studies in Costa Rica. 1923-2010. For more information on Dr. Muller http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Muller

** From An Interview with Archangel Michael, 2012 Scenario <http://www.feedblitz.com/f/f.fbz?Sub=715643>

Roberta Ossana

NOTE:

Regarding Submissions

Individuals from all cultures and walks of life are encouraged to submit dream related manuscript, poetry and artwork to be considered for publication.

We invite you to share transformational experience and any insight regarding effective dreamwork and dreamplay techniques.

Feel free to send in a submission, even if it falls outside the scope of the suggested focus or theme. Your article may be appropriate for publication in one of our other regular features, *The Art of Dreamsharing* and *Dream Education*, or *The Mythic Dimension*.

Given the overall synchronicity that shapes the *Dream Network Journal*, your submission is likely to 'fit' perfectly in an upcoming issue. We always love to hear from you in our Letters column; whether you were inspired or infuriated by the latest issue, please let us know!

Typical article length is approx. 1600-2000 words. A photo of yourself and art work to enhance your submission is requested (.pdf, .tif or .jpg files are preferred for text, ads, artwork & photos). **Always share your dream(s) in the present tense**. We prefer that you use **Word.doc** for email submissions, **sent as attachments**. Artists wishing to have their work considered for our covers, please contact the editor: Publisher@DreamNetwork.net.

Include SASE with Postal Service queries & submissions. Mail queries & submissions to DNJ PO Box 1026, Moab, UT 84532. Visit our website for more in-depth Writer, Artist and Poets' Guidelines: <http://DreamNetwork.net>.

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We look forward to hearing from you!

Letters, Questions, Dreams

Bridgewater State U Chamber Choir Performs Two Movements of the Gilgamesh Cantata

I'd like to take this opportunity to respond to Jeff Lewis' letter in the spring issue of DNJ. Perhaps Mr. Lewis is unaware of another work of Stravinsky's, "Le Baiser de la Fe" (The Fairy's Kiss) which is far gentler than "Le Sacre" and which suggests that his great Russian predecessor, Tchaikovsky, had received such a fatal kiss. Music, of course, has the power to stir up the emotions in the same way that dreams do; and Stravinsky is far from being the only composer to describe himself as a "hollow vessel." When music comes through dreams, we do have to wonder about both the source and the effect. I know that this has been true for my own work on the Gilgamesh Cantata, which is now complete. I hope to have a follow-up article to the one I wrote for Vol. 30, No. 4 (autumn issue of DNJ).

Meanwhile, a recorded live performance of two movements of the cantata is available on YouTube, by the Bridgewater State University Chamber Choir from this April at www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIY3iJ6HP6g.

*Best wishes, Curtiss Hoffman
Ashland MA*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Dream Circle ~ Great Value

It was an unexpected pleasure speaking with you! After we talked, I joined the *Dream Circle* and I do believe it is a great value. I gained access to the member's area in the Website right away—much to see! I'll place a free ad, give gift subscriptions for the coming holiday season and I'm looking forward to the print copy of the Journal.

Thank you, also, for the *Dream Circle* list of contributors, including email addresses (very valuable!). I found some individuals in my neighborhood and also in Southern California where I visit my sister on occasion. I'm sure I'll get up to speed in learning how to network and with whom.

I love the personal way in which you are introduced to visitors on the *Dream Network Journal* website (*Meet the Editor*); didn't realize you had been a presenter at the IASD, but not surprised

either. You have apparently been a trailblazer in this area for decades.

Julietta Leon, Sacramento, CA
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Utterly Grateful

I am assuming that *The Dream Circle* membership is \$100 per year - an incredible value. I'm utterly grateful that we still have the print copy of the Journal. I prefer to read it in the garden, on the beach, in the bathtub, etc.

Thank you for your vision and dedication. I share articles with my Dream Group (we recently celebrated 16 years!), clients, friends and family. Joining you in dreaming this vision forward.

Leslie Schwartz, Friday Harbor, WA
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

To interpret... or not to interpret our dreams

YES! I really enjoyed/appreciated Robert Gongloff's article in the spring Issue of DNJ (Vol.31, No. 1), *Why I don't believe we should "interpret" our dreams*. Especially since I am working on starting a dream group with the LGBT senior community (Open House)! If all goes as planned, I'm making a presentation in April to generate interest, then a space needs to be found.

This article could not have come at a better time for me! I had intended to say I was modeling the group after Jeremy Taylor's style, but now I will include Gongloff's name and sentiments, also. Robert's "rules" are very similar to Jeremy's "The Six Most Basic Hints for Dream work," which I will be handing out.

Once again DNJ is there to inspire and help me get unstuck and take a big step forward. You know, anxiety and insecurity can cripple me over the need to be an "expert" or perfect. So, now I'm ready for the presentation:

Lorraine Grassano, San Francisco, CA
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Happy Dreamsharing Available

How lovely to receive such a quick reply. I did not think anyone would even write. Nice surprise. Thank you!

As I shared, my dream is disturbing, to me. It "visits" me infrequently but when it does, it leaves emotions behind that are quite intense.

I ought to solidify the dream in writing before expecting anyone to help. So I will take that course initially. I had no idea you folks were available. I had seen other dream interpretation sites, of course, but it is obvious from your professionalism that you are not in this for a client base or "other interests."

I shall indeed be in touch for a consult. I look forward to finding some answers about this very peculiar dream.

Continued success in your work and the choicest blessings be to you and yours.

Ciao! MaryAnn Jaggi, Miamisburg OH
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

A Wedding Quilt and a 'Reverie'

My friend collects vintage and antique sewing machines and is part of a large community of quilters. While she was here, she showed me a quilt she has been working on for some time.

The instructions were given one step at a time; she didn't get the next step until you'd completed the previous step, and she didn't know what kind of quilt it would be until she was (almost) done.

The final pattern is quite lovely. When it came time to put all the pieces together, she spoke with much love and affection for her husband, who had an 'eye' for laying out the various pieces in what became the final configuration.

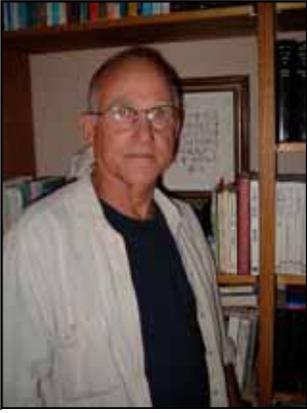
She wanted to stitch everything together (top, bottom, inner batting) with a 'free hand' pattern but, lacking the requisite skill and tools, she contacted another quilter. The results were even more beautiful than she'd expected. I'd been only vaguely aware of the stitching, but when she pointed it out to me -- and that it was done free-hand (including the dolphin pairs in the corners) -- I was awed.

It's a lovely quilt, 3 years in the making. She's putting the 'finishing' touches on it (literally -- 'finishing' as in 'adding the edge trim') and will be giving it to her daughter and son-in-law on their anniversary. So, that's the background on this quilt.

Thanks for letting me share this.

Peace, Victoria A. Vlach, Austin, TX

(Read Victoria's 'Reverie' on page 32, *Editor*)



The Heron's Demand

by Paco Mitchell, M. A.

THE HERON'S BEAK WAS EIGHT INCHES LONG, MAYBE TEN. Sharp as an assassin's dagger, it could have been a prop in an opera, something Sparafucile might use on Rigoletto—a knife through the ribs for a few florins.

This particular beak projected forward from between two intense yellow eyes. Crowning the beak and eyes were two long, parallel, black crest-feathers streaking off the back of the head. The whole assembly sat atop a sinuous neck as long as a good-sized rattlesnake. As I said, it was a heron, a Great Blue Heron, only this one was *six feet tall*, half-again larger than any flesh-and-blood heron. But let there be no doubt: The bird confronting me was a serious hunter, a deadly striker, and he was *hungry*. He appeared in the dream I was having, but that did not make the situation any less real to me, or less fraught with danger.

A reader might ask: "Danger? How could there possibly have been any danger? It was only a dream!"

It was only a dream—true enough, as far as it goes. But reductive platitudes don't go very far, nor do they equip us to deal with dreams loaded with hints as to life-and-death situations in our waking lives. For such dreams we need a deep respect, especially since we usually incur a moral obligation simply for having dreamed them.

The dagger-beaked heron came with a portentous air; and its appearance had a massive impact on my life, did indeed touch on matters of life and death and, even now, presses its moral claim upon me. It was a six-foot bird-of-destiny, and it hovers over me every day of my life. But I'm getting ahead of the story.

Here's the entire dream:

I'm standing in a wind-swept pasture, at a cross-shaped intersection of fences. I have reached some outer limit or boundary between the familiarity of "here" and the strangeness of "there." Suddenly I'm aware of a great thumping of wings as an enormous heron flies toward me out of the distance.

He lands in front of me, fierce and aggressive. His ferocity alone seems a critical part of his message, as if to say: "Behold, I am no creature to trifle with. Whatever draws me here is a serious matter. Pay attention!"

Impressive on every count, he does indeed command my attention.

The longer I look at him the more uncanny he appears, as he starts transforming from bird to human and back again. The transformations pulsate like alternating phase-changes, as if someone is tuning a shortwave radio between two distant stations—from bird-frequency to human-frequency and back.

In his heron-phase he confronts me and begins to speak. This alone is startling enough, but my surprise is compounded because the heron speaks to me in Italian!

The dramatic climax occurs when the great bird demands to be fed. I am flummoxed by the challenge; I've forgotten my Italian. So I wing it, replying with fateful words in Spanish: "No tengo nada que darle." I don't have anything to feed you.

This response is unsatisfactory, for the towering heron instantly strikes with his dagger-beak at my right eye, as if to stab it out. I catch the beak in my hand, but it takes all my strength to forestall injury. [End of dream.]

On waking I knew something big had happened. A larger-than-life, transcendent, transforming bird-man had come to me in the form of a giant heron speaking Italian, demanding to be fed—an *imaginal presence* making a claim on my life. This was a dream for the decades.

Nor was the heron's demand anything to take lightly, as if the pleasure and whim of the ego could be the decisive factors. His eloquent dagger-thrust in reaction to my response left no doubt that I was up against something bigger than I.

I was still working in my foundry at the time, and had specifically asked for a dream because I was about to make my first trip to Italy to work in an Italian bronze foundry. It was a momentous occasion that I wanted to honor with a dream. So, the trip to Italy provided the immediate context; but the dream I got was far bigger than I had hoped for or expected.

The heron-man's qualities as a *transcendent image* were undeniable: Coming from "somewhere else," the *transformations* he underwent evoked the shifty, mercurial substance of the old alchemists with their mysterious retorts, their visions of the elusive guide and tempter they called the *spiritus mercurialis*, part-bird, part-snake, part-human. Mercurius was descended



Artist: Robin Maynard-Dobbs robin@awareeating.com ~
<http://www.awareeating.com>

“The accident took place in the middle of the night on an isolated Mexican highway in the Gran Desierto de Sonora, outside the small town of Caborca. The moon was at third quarter, the point of crisis, and had gone down. The car I was riding in collided with a black cow as I slept in the passenger’s seat. I was awakened, in a manner of speaking, at the moment of impact, and sustained deep facial lacerations, shattered orbital bones, cracked teeth, a concussion. ”

from the Egyptian precursor spirit, Thoth-Hermes, the ibis-headed god of magicians, scribes and language; or better yet, the heron-headed *bennu bird*, who announced the news of creation in a pre-figuration of the Greek *boinu* and Roman *phoenix*, the fire-bird reborn from his own ashes . . .

These attributes of the dream-heron, and the archetypal depths they revealed, touched me deeply. But what fastened me most firmly to the dartboard of destiny was the strike with his dagger-beak at my *right eye*, for this was precisely the eye that I had lost in a strange car accident, fourteen years before the dream.

* * * *

The accident took place in the middle of the night on an isolated Mexican highway in the Gran Desierto de Sonora, outside the small town of Caborca. The moon was at third quarter, the point of crisis, and had gone down. The car I was riding in collided with a black cow as I slept in the passenger’s seat. I was awakened, in a manner of speaking, at the moment of impact, and sustained deep facial lacerations, shattered orbital bones, cracked teeth, a concussion. The car was crumpled and torn as the broken body of the massive cow was heaved skyward. My memories of the worst of it were erased by a period of traumatic amnesia. After slap-dash medical treatment in a four-bed Mexican hospital I was flown to the border in a Piper Cub crop-duster and transferred to a hospital in the States. Three days later I awoke to a relatively clear head, a red cavity where my right eye had been, and jagged sutures running back and forth across my face.

This was my introduction to a new perspective on life.

The years following the accident were turbulent; everything was different. I was pulled into depths of emotion I did not understand, and gradually surrendered to the strange and melancholy mood that engulfed me. I began learning to play the flamenco guitar, listening to the dark laments of the flamenco *cante jondo*. Increasingly, my efforts to conform to the collective went by the wayside, until, finally, in an effort to “get to the bottom,” I plunged into a study of dreams and Jung.

In retrospect, I can say that my mind was “on fire,” that I hungered for insight. Feeling a need to create with my hands, I built a foundry and began casting bronze and making sculpture. In these and other activities, I was re-building my damaged sense of identity; but I was also sensing an invisible path that seemed to have been laid out for me. I had also become fascinated with the Great Blue Herons that fished the local waters where I lived and that had begun appearing in my dreams. I named my foundry the Blue Heron Foundry. If I had a personal *daimon*, it was the heron.

All these developments were, more or less, the direct result of Caborca and its impact on my life. It was as if some deeper, truer, hidden personality than I had been living prior to the accident, was being uncovered. From a life of conformity, collectivity and adaptation to the group, I was being driven in the direction of greater authenticity—at considerable personal cost. Under these circumstances, the heron’s beak dream hit me like a bolt of lightning.

When Dylan Thomas wrote, “. . . the sun shipwrecked west on a pearl, and the moon swam out of its hulk,” he could have been writing about

what happened to me after Caborca—the shipwrecked sun of my right eye had sunk out of sight, leaving behind only one look-out, one sole survivor amidst the wreckage. Only the moon-eye remained, on the left, with its dark-seeing, inward night-vision, its hunting by the dim light of the moon. Perhaps that's why some years later, and against all reasonable odds, I once saw a heron fishing in the darkness of a beclouded night shortly after one o'clock in the morning, the same time that the accident in Mexico had occurred.

After the accident, then, and with no preparation or guide, I found myself swirling in a mythic vortex, like Ishmael on the coffin after the Pequod had gone down. In the kaleidoscopic world of images encountered in my dreams, the heron-man did serve as a guide of sorts, albeit enigmatic and mysterious, like Mercurius. And, like all good angels, he did come to deliver a message, at once subtle, complex and profound. The message was implicit in the dream and its elements: That he shuttled across the boundary between animal and human consciousness; that he spoke to me at all; that he spoke to me in Italian; that he came with a demand to be fed; and, finally, that in striking at my Caborca eye he established a connection between the entire event of Caborca, on the one hand, and his demanding presence in the dream on the other: these were the elements of his communication to me. This was the message from the Other Side, the deeper background, the "heaven" of the dream.

Fortunately, there were other guides available to me for my exploration of this mysterious territory—the magnificent work of Jung, for example, with whose help I navigated the darkness. And the luminous work of Henri Corbin, whose insights on angels sparkled like stars. One statement in particular by Corbin electrified me. He wrote: "How do we feed the angel? We feed the angel with our substance."

That was a tremendous clue to drive me on my search, solving a mystery with another mystery, a kind of imaginal propulsion system.

Eight years later I woke to a *second heron's beak dream*, which filled in a major piece of the puzzle. In that dream, *I once again held the portentous heron's beak in my hand*, only this time I knew that I was holding "a *special writing instrument*." To an extent, this image narrowed the field I would draw on to feed the angel, though it also presented a new mystery—for I had awakened to yet another vocation: the vast field of *writing*.

The fact that Egyptian scribes reportedly used ibis beaks as a stylus confirmed my intuitions about the dream. Yes, I would have to write, and the heron/ibis god would be my patron spirit, my angel. But it would be up to me to fill the cup with my own experience and pass it back to the heron for *his* nourishment. Somehow, my writing would feed the heron but it had to be writing of substance, from out of my own substance, if it was to serve as "angel food." Once again Corbin's cryptic passages shone their crucial light: "The angel, after all, is a *mode of perception*." And in another context: "The angel's individuation comes first, then ours."

The loss of one eye had forced me to develop a different kind of seeing—literally and metaphorically. Now, to feed the angel would require entering the "angelic" mode of perception. My responsibility would be to gaze into the darkness of the Other Side, to see the face confronting

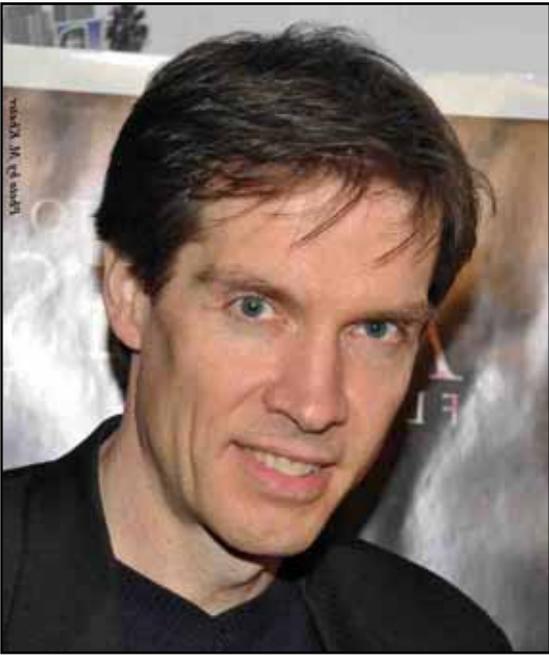
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me in my dreams, and to *feed back* to it, in a sense, its own perceptions, as reflected by my individual experience of the contingencies of time and space. And the writing that provided the means would, in some mysterious way, be sacred.

Perhaps this is what is meant by the terms "co-creation" and "co-incarnation." To paraphrase Corbin: The Creature receives and embodies the gift of Divine Love, then feeds that love back to the Creator, altered by time and space. In this way the Creature participates with the Creator in the process of Creation. This is the essence of Jung's entire argument in his passionate book, *Answer to Job*—that God needs Man in order to evolve. This is also the basis of all art: to offer back to the universe the gift of one's creative response to the universe. It is essentially what William Blake meant by his statement, "Eternity is in Love with the Productions of Time." And perhaps this is what the angels that come to us in our dreams, in whatever form, demand of us: To realize our own individual potential by bringing to fruition the divine potential revealed by the angel, who shows to us our celestial face.

There are many ways to say this, and many traditions have done so. But these varied formulas can all be summed up in Jung's terse statement: "Become the person you have always been." ∞



Met a Man Who Wasn't There

(c) 2000-2012 by Craig Sim Webb

AT A MOST FASCINATING TIME IN MY LIFE WHEN I WAS LEARNING HOW LIFE CAN RESPOND IN REAL TIME TO THE LESSONS I WAS /AM LEARNING INTERNALLY, I HAD THE FOLLOWING EXPERIENCE:

One summer night, I am walking on the street towards the subway. A car passes with dogs barking out of the window. The barking reminds me of a quote I had read recently about “listening to the barking dogs of the unconscious” (i.e. noticing subtle experiences like nightmares that try to catch our attention with an important message). The driver stops and asks directions and I gladly tell him how to find the street he is looking for. I continue to the subway, contemplating a principle I seem to be learning in my life, symbolically exemplified by the passing car and barking dogs... about how it is wise to give help to people when they ask for it. I don't think it applies in every situation but there seems to be some truth to this principle, at least spiritually speaking. Like Jesus might have meant when he said, “Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened.”

As I descend the subway stairs, I am a little lost in my thoughts when I see an old gentleman slowly hobbling down the steps with a cane. Without thinking twice, I ask him if he needs help. He does not look at me but he does say something very odd: “As I was walking down the stair, I met a man who wasn't there.” He has a British accent, which is quite unusual in Montreal. I'm confused by his response, yet out of

good will I repeat my offer to assist him. He shakes his head and says, “*It might be a little convoluted, but hopefully you get the point.*”

Well, I don't get it, but I wish him well and continue down another couple flights to the subway. Nearing the bottom, it strikes me that perhaps the old gentleman is trying to help me learn the precise lesson I was contemplating as I entered the subway, since I twice offered him help when he hadn't asked for it. I immediately run back up two long flights of stairs to speak to him again.

At the speed he was hobbling down the steps—unless he was completely faking it—there is no way he could have either passed me or even turned back and left the subway. In the 20 or 30 seconds it takes me to sprint back to where he *should* still have been, there was, amazingly, nobody there!

His peculiar statement suddenly seems to make sense. He said, “As I was walking down the stair, I met a man who wasn't there.” I laugh at the magic of the moment and return to catch my train, no older gentleman anywhere to be seen. ∞

Craig offers highly transformational online classes in Applied Dreaming, Dream Interpretation, and Lucid Living. To learn more or register, please visit: www.dreams.ca/teleclass.pdf



Those Pesky Angels!

A View from Jungian Anthropology

by Charles D. Laughlin, Ph.D.

I SAY “PESKY” BECAUSE THE DARN THINGS WON’T STAY STILL or maintain their angelic form. Angels for me have always been shape-shifters of the most annoying kind. Every time they appear in a dream or meditation vision, they first manifest in their angelic forms and then transform into hellishly gruesome demons. And that’s not the worst of it. Being an anthropologist interested in dreams cross-culturally (Laughlin 2011), I am aware that angel-like motifs may arise in other cultures’ dreams and visions, but they may not interpret them the same way we do in the West—which is typically as messengers from God (CW 12:209-213, CW 13:97). Indigenous peoples are far more in tune with their dreams than most Westerners, even though they may recognize no single monolithic “God.” Or if they conceive of a god he/she/it may be supremely indifferent to the affairs of people as the So people of northeastern Uganda (among whom I lived for a year) believe (Laughlin 1972). Or they may, like the Navajo people of the American southwest among whom I also lived (Laughlin 2004), recognize many gods and spirit beings.

In my opinion, Carl Jung had angels pretty much nailed. He believed angels are images representing one side or another of a libidinous polarity. In other words, angels and demons are two sides of the same entity and are produced by primordial, semi-autonomous archetypes; one representing the good (the harmonious, beautiful, constructive) and the other evil (chaotic, ugly, destructive) (CW 12:163n). Together they show us the two aspects of how our libido—our psychic energy—may be directed (CW

7:104); thus they are sometimes associated with brilliant or rainbow light (CW 5:115-116) and fire (CW 12:398).

Westerners tend to conceive of angels and demons in dualistic terms, as we do with God and the Devil (a “fallen” angel, by the way) and Heaven and Hell. Most non-Western cultures recognize that humans (and the entire spirit world) have both angelic and demonic aspects.

One problem we face in the West is the over-identification with either the angelic or the demonic. Jung warned repeatedly of the danger of identifying with the one pole to the exclusion of the other (CW 5:186-187, CW 9ii: 447, CW 13:¶50), and suggested that to do so virtually guarantees the “hiving-off” and parallel development of the other in the depths of the unconscious. At the same time, the conscious ego then denies the reality of that half of our human nature. In the Jungian view—a view that describes my own experiences thus far at age 74—failure of a person to acknowledge both the angelic and demonic aspects of their nature thwarts the advancement of individuation and the development of a well-rounded unitary self.

The merging of human and animal archetypes in angelic and demonic dream imagery is found worldwide. Angels are commonly depicted either as a human with wings or as an eagle or other bird. They manifest as messengers, guides for the dead or familiars (protectors, spirit-helpers). Animals that routinely live in two or three of the Earthly levels—underground (underworld, underwater, “hell”), surface (ground or ocean) and

sky (overworld, “heaven”)—are often given sacred significance. For example, the serpent and other reptiles, scary creatures that inhabit above and below ground, are commonly associated with forces that bridge the underworld and surface world, e.g., the serpent climbing up the Tree of Life. Dragons are sacred reptilian images that, with the addition of wings, are able to master all three realms (in a cave hoarding treasure, on land with four feet and in flight in the air). Birds such as the eagle or raven are masters of both the surface and the sky and puffins seen as “earth divers” among certain arctic cultures are at home in the sky as well as in the depths of the ocean. Likewise, turtles can live below the water and on the land, as can certain spiders.

In dreams these creatures can provide potential integrative images and link aspects of our inner nature (unconscious, ego-awareness and sublimity). When images of half human-half beast (common across cultures) arise in dreams they may be interpreted in Jungian terms as symbolizing the interconnection of surface (consciousness) and “underground” (unconscious) domains. My first spirit helper appeared in a dream and was a “human bear” (Laughlin 2011:41-42). I associated it with hibernation in caves (the unconscious), with the bestial aspect of my being and with developing wisdom.

Likewise, the angel with wings symbolizes—just like the eagle and puffin—a spiritual entity or force that mediates the surface and the overworld (and with the inclusion of the “fallen” angel, the overworld, surface and the underworld altogether), the conscious ego and the spirit world. In latter-day alchemy, the notion of meditation is sometimes conceived as a conversation between the ego and its “good angel,” thus making possible a “constructive dialogue” with the unconscious (CW 12: ¶1390). “Man,” as Paracelsus tells us, “is also an angel and has all the latter’s qualities” (CW 132:115). Dreamwork as well as active imagination may function to facilitate growth in this same way for the process is one of integrating the down-to-earth with the luminous sublime.

Looking at angels through the lens of Jungian depth psychology allows anthropologists to explore angels in cultures that do not experience them as we do. Non-Western people may not see angels at the foot of their bed, sitting atop a tree or on their shoulder, but the archetype that produces such imagery is alive and well in all spiritual life. For example, one of the great spirits of the Navajo is called Big Fly (*do’soh*). Big Fly is at times a mentor, a deliverer of messages from the Sun, a mediator and many other roles that require spiritual-level communication. A huge fly as an angel? Keep in mind the root meaning of “angel” for ancient Greeks was “messenger.”

After spending years working with Tibetan lamas learning Tantric meditation techniques (Laughlin 2011: Chapter 13), I discovered certain of their “deities” or spirit-helpers (Skt: *ishtadevata*, Tib: *yidam*) are depicted with wings. There is *Dorje Purba* who appears as a fierce blue male figure, on occasion with wings, dancing in flames and wielding the three-bladed *purba* knife used for the destruction of hindrances to spiritual development. When one meditates upon such a figure with intensity, the image eventually “comes alive” and takes on a life of its own. Whether dancing or flying, the *Dorje Purba* is available to help the practitioner in spiritually trying situations and may appear with some regularity in dreams and

visions. Far-fetched as an angel? Consider the Archangel Michael (of Hebrew, Christian and Islamic fame) who, like *Dorje Purba*, is the protector of the faithful and usually shown with wings and a very, VERY sharp sword leading the army of God against the infidels and minions of Satan.

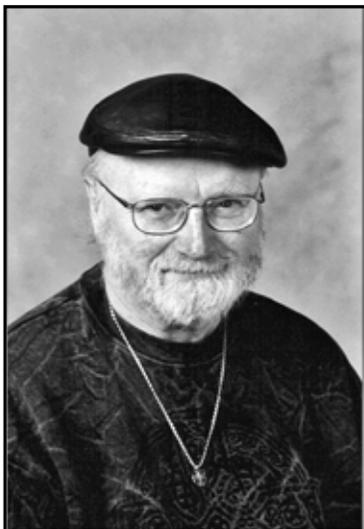
Probably the most common manifestation of the angel archetype across cultures is the “ancestor” spirit. A large percentage of indigenous people consider death to be a transition from life to ancestor status. They consider dreams as another domain of reality and when deceased loved ones appear in a dream, they can take the role of a messenger from the spirit world; they can warn the dreamer and/or his community of potential dangers or act as a mediator between the living and the realm of the gods. Ancestors are rarely encountered with wings or swords, but they are considered to be protectors who must be propitiated and listened to. They fly from the Land of the Dead to visit the living in their dreams, just as shamans do when they guide the dead to their new home or as the Norse *Valkyrie* does when transporting the dead warrior to Valhalla-

Since I am thoroughly Jungian in my understanding of spiritual imagery, the angelic demons I have encountered have been messengers. However, they are messengers of my own unconscious psyche. Dreams are what Douglas Hollan calls “selfscapes.” They are a dynamic representation of what is going on from moment to moment in my psyche. As a consequence I take angels and demons as metaphors for the tensions that exist in my unfolding. There is no longer any temptation to identify with either angels or demons and I allow the pesky things to come and go, transform from one to the other and make my dreams lively and interesting. Bring ‘em on! ∞



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Dreams as Angels

Part Two

by Russell Arthur Lockhart, Ph.D.

(*Note.* At the end of Part One of this piece on “dreams as angels,” my authorial intention was clear. But as the deadline for Part Two approached, I seem to have collected only puzzle pieces that I couldn’t quite fit together. Before I could cobble this cluster into a clear narrative, I was visited by a dream. In the dream, *I came upon a set of small rough stones. As I picked each one up I could see writing on the various surfaces but I could not make out the words. Yet, in some mysterious way, I seemed to comprehend something of what was being expressed.* When I woke, I had the sense that I must give up my initial clear authorial intention and write from this place of stones. I’ve resisted the effort to force the “stones” into coherence, into too definite a shape, wondering if the rough edges might catch your imagination or your breath and lead you into wrestling anew with your own dreams as angels as I have wrestled with this one.)

THE MAN ASKING THE QUESTION WAS GEORGE MACKEY, professor of mathematics at Harvard. “How could you, a mathematician, a man devoted to reason and logical proof ... believe that extraterrestrials are sending you messages? How could you believe that you are being recruited by aliens from outer space to save the world?”

It was May 1959. The man about to answer was already one of the great mathematical minds of the twentieth century, but at this moment, he was a patient at McLean Psychiatric Hospital. The answer John Nash gave to Professor Mackey did not win the Nobel Prize, which would come later in 1994, for Nash’s contributions to economics. But his answer is prize-worthy. John Nash replied: “Because the ideas I had about supernatural beings came to me the same way that my mathematical ideas did. So I took them seriously.”

In his mathematical visions, he saw the vision first and whole, and only later and laboriously did he work it out. Nash was a loner, having no mentors, no followers. Well, not quite. His mind was his mentor and for all its madness and genius he followed what his mind presented to him.

He took the contents of his mind seriously, no matter what. He bore witness, he hosted. This is rare.¹

What and where is the “place” from which these ideas arise? How shall we name it? In part one of this piece, I referenced this place as some “unknown, uncertain, *elsewhere*.” I’m happy with that for now.

Where does one learn to “take seriously” the full contents of one’s mind? Not in school. (Just try to imagine a school where each child’s mind would be taken seriously *from the beginning*.) Not in the workplace. (Just try to imagine a workplace ...) Not in relationships or in entertainments. (Just try ...) Not in therapy or treatment, where medication or other means are used to quell, quiet, still, silence, stop, or eliminate such experiences and any taking seriously one’s ideas about them. Old and primitive cultures may have (hence mythologies and folklore and tales), but we moderns, except in rare cases, do not. What is the cost of not taking the fullness of our mind seriously?

Another who took his dreams, visions, delusions and hallucinations seriously was Philip K. Dick, the novelist and short-story writer who experienced a series of revelations in the period February-March, 1974. He would later refer to this as his “2-3-74,” which he spent the rest of his life trying to understand. His way of doing this was through an unparalleled exploration of his mental processes. This exploration became the basis of much of his fiction² as well as the unprecedented written account of his experiences (more than 18,000 pages), which he called *Exegesis*.³ This prodigious effort was not for his psyche, or for the salvation of mankind. Rather, as he said, these two things were one and the same. In view of my considering dreams as not about the past, but about the future, one idea in particular that interests me that Dick developed was that the future communicates *backward* to our mind and does so through dreams, imagination, and stories. Imagine that!

This stuff of imagination, dreams, and, yes, madness, if taken seriously, can be a great teacher. True listening to the voices of psychosis, as Jung discovered, “reveals the foundation of our own being.” Extending this

idea, Dick says, “What has got to be gotten over is the false idea that an hallucination is a *private* matter.” The implications of this are astonishing.⁴

What these men were dealing with (and others before them and after them of course) was what I call the *fictive* mind, the mind that at its roots engages in the spontaneous production of fictions. By their very nature these fictions are different than what we call reality and should not be judged by what we call reality. Fictions are not false. All fictions create “new worlds” that are stories, whether these be dreams, visions, hallucinations, memories, novels, or our identity stories we create about who we are. This process is inescapable, but how it is regarded is crucial.

What professor Mackey was saying might have been said by Newton, but Nash’s answer would have set Goethe’s hands to clapping and his face smiling. The secret is in taking your actual experience *seriously*—no matter what the content, and this leads on to Goethean stories not Newtonian stories—yet, stories all.

Kids take their own minds quite seriously by nature, resulting in their learning language, learning play, learning art, learning story—none of which have to be “taught” in the usual sense. But when we reach school age, then our being taught in the ways we are taught *fractures* our relation to the natural mind and we begin to lose our capacity to take our own mind seriously. As we grow, we are complicit in deadening the child’s storymind in ourselves and in others. This leaves us totally unprepared to deal with the reality of the natural mind as it cyclically insists on itself at various points in our growth. Separation from the story aspect of the natural mind might be one way of characterizing the origin of the many dysfunctions that begin to take control of most people’s lives. People’s lives are still stories, still narratively structured, but then our stories are more and more populated with *demons*.

Robert Olen Butler has been characterized as “the best living American writer, period.” Arguable, of course, but certainly someone to listen to when he reflects on the process of writing fiction. The 1993 Pulitzer Prize winner asserts: “Art does not come from ideas. Art does not come from the mind. Art comes from the place where you dream. Art comes from your unconscious; it comes from the white-hot center of you.”⁵

While at first seeming to be saying something different from John Nash, I think Butler, Dick and Nash are all referring to the same general perception: that the white-hot center from which “creation” springs is some place *other* than what we usually think of as our conscious, rational, logical, linear mind. The creation place, being other and elsewhere, is why we need messengers and messages *from* there. We can’t just “go there” in the same way we can go to the various habitats of our conscious mind.

Most moderns are desperately cut off from this white-hot center, or are consumed by the fiery demons that result from its utter neglect. Primitive man was immersed in contents thrown up into their experience from the white-hot center. The story nature of these contents, and the storymind that dominated man’s early experience, no doubt played a significant role in human evolution. The many scenarios played out in stories and dreams and imaginings and cave paintings served to prepare the mind and body for whatever would be encountered in so called “real” life.

This evolutionary significance of story and what Butler calls the *story*

space, is being brought more and more to light in contemporary brain research in general and in sleep and dream research in particular. What is now being discovered is that structures at all levels of brain function are *imposing* narrative structure. Because of this I like to think of the brain as a story engine, whether awake or asleep. While we are used to thinking of dreams as occurring only in sleep, it now seems clear that we are dreaming all the time, generating stories all the time. We become more aware of this when we do sleep, when our conscious brain turns itself off, and the body goes into paralysis.⁶ We are defenseless when we sleep, but what we are experiencing then is more crucial to our lives than most people ever know. There is a cost to taking the full range of our experience seriously. But we pay an enormous price if we do not.

As I noted in Part One, “The courier awaits my reply.” What can I “send back” with the messenger to that elsewhere aside from these skeletal observations? And what about the “presence” the messenger and the message engendered in me? My responses to these questions will be taken up in Part Three. ∞



Endnotes

- 1 For an exquisite biography of John Nash and the story of his self-treatment when all else failed, see Sylvia Nash, *A Beautiful Mind*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.
- 2 Dick lived much of his creative period in poverty and obscurity. Recognition of his genius is increasing and especially as an inspiration for more cinematic features of importance (e.g., “Blade Runner”) than any other science fiction writer.
- 3 *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick*, edited by Pamela Jackson and Jonathan Lethem (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), follows the publication of Jung’s *Red Book* by two years. Mining these two exemplars of “taking seriously” will prove a boon to anyone who studies them together.
- 4 The interested reader might consider the work of Marius Romme, the Dutch psychiatrist and founder of the Hearing Voices Movement.
- 5 Robert Olen Butler, *From Where You Dream: The Process of Writing Fiction*. New York: Grove Press, 2005.
- 6 For a brilliant account of this new research and its implications, see Jonathan Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

Kissed by an Angel

by Lorraine Grassano



MANY YEARS AGO, I HAD A BRUSH WITH ANGELS when I was brashly and rather naively experimenting with techniques revealed in *The Art of Dreaming* by Carlos Castaneda.

I wrote in my journal: *I'm about a week into my dream work influenced by Castaneda's book. I realize the power, the danger of all this and I am scared. I need a teacher! I feel like I'm tampering with something dangerous.* The following morning, I recorded this dream:

I practice my "dream attention" on all these antiques in a library that is in ruins from the earthquake (that occurred earlier in the dream). Then I see a strange figure, a gnomish creature dressed as a clown. I immediately recognize it as "alien energy" and before I can listen to my fears, yell out loud, "YES!" I barely have time to worry about this "scout" misinterpreting my "yes" to mean that I "consent to stay" rather than merely go with it, when I am whisked away to a huge yellow dome, criss-crossed with thin, silver beams and inhabited by blonde women and girls; they are dressed in yellow satin gowns and swinging on trapezes. All these angelic-like women resemble my eighth grade math teacher, but are different ages. Everything is a brilliant yellow and the ambiance is sweet and peaceful. The gnome-clown is gone.

One of the women holds me in her arms as we swing on the trapeze and I watch, as well as become part of, a glorious rhythm, a show with hundreds of other trapezes, swinging unattached in the air at a multitude of levels, bathed in the golden light. Shadows mingling with yellow satin. A vision so extraordinary and indescribable that I believe it to be beyond the power of my imagination. Then I remember again to practice my "dream attention" (although this time I fail to use the tongue on the roof

of my mouth technique); I glance at the dome and shadows, but suddenly my focus shifts to right in front of me—on the yellow satin gown of the "angel" holding me. I vividly feel the satin fabric with my fingers, and then attempt to initiate my olfactory sense. Her hair does not seem to have an odor, but then she kisses me and I smell the subtle aroma of her lips and skin.

*Then I am leaving the dome, walking down a hallway, wondering how to wake up. Suddenly, two "angels" (they also are garbed in yellow satin robes)—a little girl and a young adult male—call out my name. I quicken my pace, recalling in *The Art of Dreaming* how the "inorganic beings" will tempt me to stay in their world, and I must not speak out loud my desire to do so. They follow me. I tell them, "I cannot stay." Then I feel bad and sad and say, "Maybe . . . perhaps I will return." I remember that Castaneda visited the "Sponge-cave" world many times. I continue to walk. Another angel—a tall, thin and ominous-looking male with a faded yellow glow—appears way down the hall, back by the dome door. I rush up the stairs, starting to panic because I am unable to wake up. I know I am dreaming; yet it feels different than simple lucidity. I'm aware of my eyes being open—I had made an effort to open them in the dome, as if I was "waking up into another dream"—a pre-requisite to entering the *Second Gate of dreaming*. I decide not to focus on worrying about getting back to my sleeping body. When I reach the top of the stairs and re-enter the destroyed library, I practice my "dream attention" on various books and shelves and walls, but realize that the place is totally devoid of humans; it does not feel the same as before at all, rather like a long time has passed or something. All at once, I bolt awake with my heart pounding!*

At the time, I was recovering from knee surgery and had all the time in the world to indulge in my lucid dreaming practices. Also, I was in psychotherapy, struggling with anxiety, depression and acute feelings of worthlessness and attempting to recover repressed memories of sexual abuse. I had this rather misguided and arrogant notion that I could quickly master the Second Gate of *dreaming*, contact an inorganic being, and make a deal to remain in its world for awhile in exchange for direct evidence of what had actually befallen me in childhood.

Fortunately, where this fool rushed in, angels DID dare tread—although I discovered, just as in Catholic dogma, that not all angels are necessarily good. The angel in the dome who held me, however, was definitely looking after my best interests. I believe she re-guided my attempt to practice my *dream attention* and led me to focus on what was right in front of me—a gentle reminder to maintain awareness of the here and now, and to be cautious in proceeding ahead with my experiments. The fact that she took on the appearance of my junior high math teacher is important for two reasons: not only because I had expressed a need for a teacher before going to sleep that night, but specifically because her subject was *math*: the logical part of my brain needed reinforcement to keep my psyche in balance. I had entered an unknown realm where traditional knowledge was no longer available—signified by the ruined library. My angel kissed me and sent me on my way. She knew I was not yet ready to stay longer or wander farther into the world of inorganic beings. But then I encountered three more angels: two that called my name and I assumed were trying to tempt me to stay (but maybe not). The third angel was no doubt up to no good; his glow was fading and he was beckoning to where “my” angel/teacher had just sent me away.

A few weeks later, I had one more extraordinary and terrifying dream before deciding to give up on these experiments until a shaman appeared in my life to instruct me, or at least until my psychospiritual state was more stable and evolved. Unfortunately, I have been unable to find the paper on which I recorded this dream in meticulous detail. The following account is merely what I recall from memory:

I attain lucidity and practice my dream attention by glancing at objects in my dream room that also exist in my “real” room. Then, I will myself to fall asleep again in the same position as my sleeping body. When I open my dream-body eyes a second time, I am laying in a bed that does not at all resemble the other two beds involved in my journey so far, nor am I any longer in my room or the dream version of it. This bed is on the floor of a loft



in a large, wooden warehouse. I believe that I have crossed over into the Second Gate, as Castaneda described. Three strange beings approach me. I figure they are scouts. One is a fabulously garbed wizard at least 7 feet tall, who floats rather than walks. It offers me what I want most in the world: access to full memories of childhood—if I follow them into the realm of the inorganic beings and express aloud my intent to remain there. The point of no return apparently involves stepping off a loading dock. There are three such platforms ahead of us; I am ushered to the center one. They beckon me to jump—the wizard levitating above the abyss and extending its hand to me and smiling. I’m not sure what happens after that. I do remember hearing myself shout out my consent as I fly off the dock; and noticing that the wizard’s smile contains a glint of wickedness. Then someone intervenes and shows me why and how to change my mind. (The details of this scene are lost to me). I manage to scramble back to the bed in the warehouse, fall asleep and, after experiencing two false awakenings, regain consciousness in my original reality. From my peripheral vision, I sense a tiny, dark form, but it instantaneously dematerializes into a leaf of my ficcus tree. For a long time to come, I am fearful that something malevolent may have followed me out of the dream world.

Is there a reason that I cannot remember clearly the “angel” that rescued me? Or locate that particular journal entry? (I am extremely organized, so it seems odd that this dream is not with the others I recorded during my experiments, and kept inside the front cover of *The Art of Dreaming*.) Was

the angel purposely remaining surreptitious in order to make a point? Perhaps that is the lesson in all this. How important really is it to retrieve all of our memories? Is it not healthier to let go of the ego’s lust for total control and trust that another part of us—a higher power— will help us to remember what we need to and when, instead of forcing the issue at all costs?

Perhaps the greatest angel of all is Wisdom and she acted as my muse when, after dreaming that I was kissed by an angel, I noted the following:

I have a long road ahead to perfect my dream attention and fight my fear. I must strengthen my will to choose life in this world (develop my self-esteem), or else I will be a goner in another world. My dreams still carry a lot of scary baggage. The purer my life gets, the purer my dreams will get. This is a life-long project.

Questions? Comments? Write to Letters-to-the Editor % DNJ. ∞



Light as a Feather

©2012 by Marlene King, M.A.

UNASSUMING DREAM IMAGES, FEELINGS OR IMPRESSIONS can often be dismissed as insignificant in our high-tech world of complexities and left-brained machinations. Morton Kelsey (Episcopalian theologian and Jungian therapist) uncovered a huge life-dream from what was merely a “peach pit” image that led to profound healing insights. Even more so than a dream fragment, a pervasive symbol can be profoundly laden with layers of meaning for the dreamer—in the waking or sleeping realm.

The following dream symbol (and the circumstances surrounding it) was submitted for discussion by Sandy, UT:

“I had a dream about a feather, but didn’t recall it until my friend mentioned the word, “feather,” during a phone call the following day. When the word was uttered, the visuals of the dream flashed and I could see the feather clearly. It /was light-colored, not very big with a few brown accents. I mentioned the feather dream to the person on the phone, then the conversation went in other directions. Later that day, I received an e-mail from the person I had the conversation with informing me that after our call, on her way to a parking garage, she found a feather. I later inquired as to what the feather looked like and was told it was between 3” to 4” long, mostly light-colored with some brown marks.”

To examine the layers of meaning indicated by this symbol, the dreamer might consider a feather’s many universal qualities, in addition to its attributes of color, size and what associations she has to it. In European folklore, feathers were used to construct charms such as the “witches ladder;” the colors of yarn that wove them together, in addition to the feather’s color, determined the type of “spell” to be cast. For example, brown feathers consistently symbolize stability, respect, home, grounding and a virtuous soul.

As birds were considered creatures of the sky and therefore closer to the gods, feathers in North American cultures enabled communication with Spirit, thus empowering chiefs to deliver the wisdom of the deities. The Celts wore feather-covered robes to invoke sky gods and allow the wearer to rise above the earthly arena. In Christianity, feathers represented virtue—in fact, three feathers were used to make signet rings that symbolized Faith, Hope and Charity. Other symbolic meanings of feathers include truth, speed, lightness, flight and ascension.

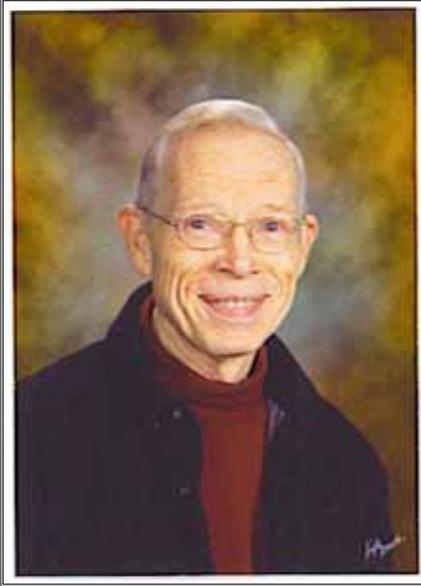
But the most common association to feathers is that they are a form of communication from angels. Alice Landry (in her *Signs of Angels*) states, “If you have prayed to the angels for guidance or for a sign that everything’s going to be okay, be sure to notice feathers, especially white ones.

They can appear as tangible objects on the ground or floating from the air. Moreover, you may notice a random image of a feather, such as on television or on the side of a moving truck. The angels use various means to get your attention and let you know they’re here to help.”

And when feathers appear in dreams, they can signify the ability to move through life easily by achieving a goal or overcoming challenges. Some believe that feathers in dreams remind us we are connected to our higher source and affirm that we are spiritual beings.

Was the brown feather in Sandy’s dream for herself or for her friend? Since the dreamer reported that the friend in the phone conversation was a special anam cara (soul friend), I suspect the friend was the catalyst that enabled the dreamer to call up this suppressed or forgotten symbol. I would suggest the dreamer actually obtain the feather her friend found—a concrete symbol—and observe what thoughts, feelings, ideas or associations surface, then explore them further. As with most dream symbols, there is nothing simple or unassuming about them. They are rich with layers of gold ready for us to mine. ∞





Are Angels like Santa Claus?

©2012 by Arthur Stroock, Ph.D.

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT AT AGE SEVEN TO FIND OUT THAT THERE WAS NO SANTA CLAUS!- When I realized that Santa couldn't cover his tracks in the snow, my dad made a valiant attempt to keep up the deception by saying that the Lone Ranger and Tonto could cover their tracks, so why not Santa? It didn't work. So, Santa had just been a big lie. I never had believed in the Easter Bunny, so that wasn't a problem. I had heard about angels, but never gave them much thought. As I grew older, angels were vaguely moved into a recessed category of my mind that included Santa, the Easter Bunny and characters from fairy tales. They just didn't exist.

Fast forward a few decades and I found my neighbor telling me about how her son with Down's Syndrome had come out of his bedroom one day and noticed a magazine on the coffee table open to a picture of the Archangel Michael. Pointing to the picture, he said, "Oh, there's Mikey, see his fork." Bobby was severely cognitively delayed and didn't know the word for sword, or possibly didn't even know what a sword was.

Bobby's mother, Lois, had often heard him talking to someone when alone in his room, and had previously asked Bobby to whom he was talking; he had always been evasive. But now when she asked about Mikey, Bobby told her that Mikey was the friend who came to his room and even danced with him. Lois had no trouble believing him. Bobby didn't know what a lie was and didn't make up stories. Archangel Michael was a presence in their home.

One Sunday afternoon, while reading the Sunday paper, Lois started to get up from her chair at the dining room table and slipped on a section of the newspaper that was on the floor next to her. Having just recovered from a fall resulting in a broken wrist, another fall might have proved disastrous. The fall was prevented as she felt strong hands grab her upper arms. Her husband John watched in awe from the living room as his wife

with arms extended high, was miraculously lifted straight up and then draped forward over the top of the dining room table. When Lois told Bobby what had happened, he responded casually, "That was Mikey."

Bobby needed a healthy mother during the last couple of years of life when his own health problems necessitated considerable care and monitoring. Michael had prevented an accident and made sure Lois would be available for Bobby. When Lois told me about the incident, she mentioned that she even had big bruises on her upper arms.

Knowing that I would be writing about angels and dreams, I wondered how you, while reading this article, might benefit from knowing about angels. I've had only one dream that included angels: one in which *tiny angels of light came out of the ground*. I really needed more information about angels. So, as usual, I requested information through my dreams...

... and I dreamt:

My visual field is filled with very small squares, each with the same cartoon-like face. All of them are repeatedly saying a word, as if synchronized. It isn't quite clear what the word is although it might be "yes." The effect is positively delightful. Although it seems that the dream is in color, it also seems to be monochromatic. The same morning, I heard inner music while waking up. The words to the music were, "Ho, ho, ho, the wind blows free."

These results were certainly not the overly ambitious, all inclusive statement that would have meaning for all. Possibly the point of the dream of many faces was that angels must be very personal for each individual. A "one size fits all" statement might have very little meaning at all. Another possibility, however, might be that the word "yes" was simply an abbreviation for a statement that might mean, "Yes, angels exist."

The “Ho, ho, ho...” embedded in music was delightful and a reminder of my belief that musical dream messages come from a higher source, possibly angels. Still searching for more from my dreams, another night culminated with what might be considered dream music in the form of a song entitled “Cecilia.” For many, Cecilia is the patron saint of music. The dream was still another reminder that dream music can come from a higher source.

The day that I recalled the dream about Cecilia, I had brought out my metal detector and headed over to a nearby playing field to find what I lightheartedly call “buried treasure.” While listening to the intermittent buzz tones through the headphones of my metal detector and enjoying the vibrant colors of a clear spring day, Michael and the angels were far from my mind. To my surprise, as I bent down to check a buzzing that might have signaled a lost coin, I was rewarded by finding a very large feather. Doreen Virtue, in her writings about the Archangel Michael, has stated that feathers are Michael’s calling card. In the past, calling on help from Michael has often resulted in feathers showing up in my life in a most unexpected and synchronous way. Once again, a feather had shown up—this time the largest feather I’ve ever found.



Messages from angels are not always the more focused and direct communications that individuals like Lois have experienced multiple times. Most likely the appearance of angels is based on one’s known or unknown need to accomplish a positive life mission.

Returning to thoughts of Santa and the Easter Bunny, they are with us too, although in quite different ways. Whatever the case, the large feather was an important reminder that angels are in fact with us—and not simply imaginary, like Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. ∞

You may contact Arthur at arthurstrock@comcast.net

“Because angels are such high frequency beings, very few people ever see or hear them. So they make their presence known in other ways. Little white feathers are their symbols, so if an angel wants to draw your attention to the fact that it is there, it will leave a little white feather in an unexpected place.”

“Acknowledge the angels when you see a little white feather. If you see a cluster of them or several in a line, take special notice. The angels are around you in force.”

~ Diana Cooper

COMMUNING with the GODS

CHARLES D. LAUGHLIN, PH.D.

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ISBN: 978-0-9807111-6-5

Shade-stone

My dream
encircles
the deep
thought
of trees.
I unclothe
the fragrant
shade-damp
loam,
gather leaf-
rot
to stitch
a cloak
for hiding
beneath,
bearing
its weight
like stone.

Touch Drawing by Deborah Koff Chapin



Touch Drawing ©Deborah Koff-Chapin



A Path to Soul

by Sandy Steckling

INITIALY, I STARTED TO JOURNAL THIS DREAM in order to bring the love and joy the dream contained closer, down to earth, to imprint upon myself how vivid and uplifting it was. As I look back, I see the experience of the dream was an illustration of qualities of the soul, but I didn't have the message of the dream until I wrote it down and opened to the dream, in my waking state.

Some months before the dream, close loved ones had died, I had to have several surgeries and I found myself faced with financial challenges. When the dream came, I had just turned the corner and I was gaining relatively stable emotional and financial stability... but I was feeling worn out.

An added context for understanding the dream's meaning is an event that occurred some time prior to the dream.

Months earlier, I met with a man to whom a close friend, and spiritual teacher, had referred me. In this man's life perspective, we evolve through lifetimes, progressively achieving degrees of union with the soul until we have complete union (viewed as not the final destination, but an important event). He felt, in terms of this full union, that I was half way there. This man had been so accurate and insightful about many aspects of my life that I remained open to his perception.

I had two extremes of response to this; first, if I—with all my limitations and deficits—was halfway there, it didn't say much for *being there*. My second response was; if all I am, or have ever been—now, or in any life, here or anywhere, in all my potentials and possibilities—if all this, the whole universe within me, is only halfway there, how much is required to be all the way there? And how would I ever even do it?

So, it was in the context of being very worn out and pondering this soul union, that I had this dream.

I am outdoors. I am in Spokane, WA., the town where I grew up. I have just turned the corner and I am walking down the street. I notice that any feeling I might have had of worry, guilt, fear or stress falls away and I am free of them. I feel good that I feel good. It is here that the dream begins to change. A feeling of being uplifted comes over me. At first subtle, then becoming more

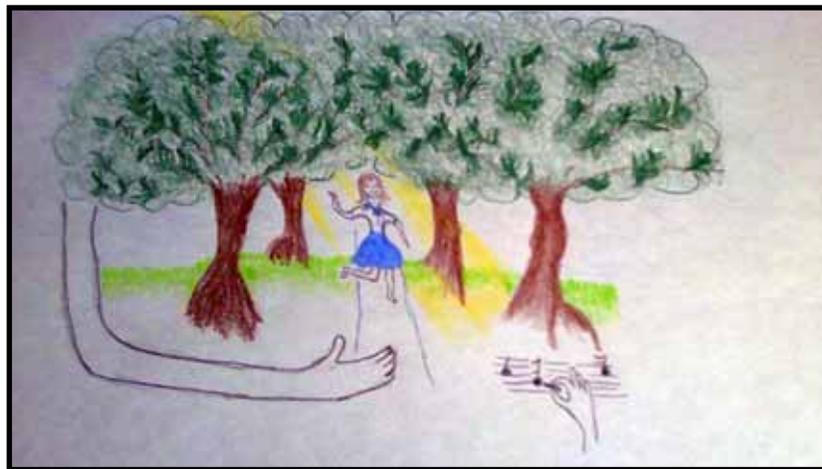
pronounced as I walk, I know something intimate and familiar is happening but I don't know what it is, except that joy has entered me and is lifting me up. I am happy. Very happy.

I notice I am walking down a sidewalk. There are big old trees on each side of the sidewalk. Their big leafy branches form an arch over my head. I am walking under the arch of the

branches. Sunlight is coming through the branches in places, so I know the sun is out, but I am in the cool shade of the trees. The air feels warm with a hint of crispness. It feels wonderful. The trees are big and caressing and encompassing. The leaves on the trees are continuously moving as a breeze rustles through them. I feel this same breeze moving through my hair.

What I would call the presence of the sacred begins to inform the dream. The energy within all the forms in the dream is either waking up with a vividness, vitality, and immediacy, or I am waking up to it. I experience what is outside of me is also inside of me. The energy expressing from and through everything, is the same one presence. Experiencing this presence makes me triumphantly joyful and I know this is a wonderful gift.

I begin to skip. I am accentuating the skips, making each skip as



big as I can, the way I used to do. I am so pleased with everything! I couldn't be happier. I even notice/see inside my right knee, the metal piece that is there from my knee replacement (actually did have one and I am happy that it works alright for me to skip).

Simultaneously, in the background, there is a melody I am hearing. Very soft, I scarcely notice it at first because it resonates so well with everything I am experiencing. I am humming the melody, or it is humming me. I begin to differentiate the words to the melody. The song is "Somewhere."

And the words come, "somewhere a place for us, peace and quiet and open air, wait for us, somewhere." And the humming continues, in myself and in the dream. I am humming. The dream is humming. More words come, "someday a time for us, time together, time to share."

This wonderful melody softly carries and lifts me up while I am skipping. I am so happy and contented. I am fulfilled with everything my heart desires. Then, I awaken.

The full thrust of the dream—and I believe the message too—came only after I had awakened and was journaling the dream. I was in my practice, after the dream, of entering the dream, opening to it and I realized that not all of the words to the song had been experienced in the dream. I had a sense that I was missing something and that it was important to write down *all* the words to the song.

For some reason, I believe I had to be both completely awake, and simultaneously opened to the dream, for those final words to come through, as if the dream didn't want me to miss the words, and was holding them until it got my full conscious attention. When the last words came through they had a tremendous weight and gravity to them that was not present anywhere else in the dream. Each word felt like it weighed as much as the world, as I birthed each word into consciousness one by one.

The rest of the words that came were, "Hold my hand and we're halfway there," "hold my hand and I will take you there." I knew this was the message of the dream. I mentioned earlier, in the context of my life, I had been pondering complete union with the soul and being half way there. I was told this was the case for me and I remained open to the possibility of it being true.

And here it was, "*Hold my hand and we're halfway there.*" This message was coming from the source behind the dream, the same sacred presence that infused the dream with joy and brought it to life. In my view, this source, this sacred presence, is the soul.

I wonder if the soul longs for us, as we do for it. In the words "*hold my hand,*" I feel the soul is reaching for me, too. I am not alone. There is a partnership we have. It is not just me striving to go forward, to reach a destination. And the words "and I will take you there," speaks to what I believe is true, that the soul has and should have the final word. "There" refers to the future. "I will

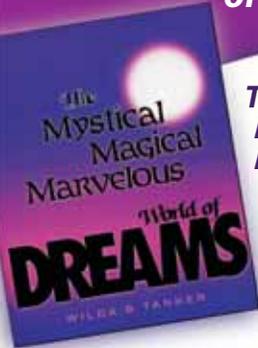
take you there." I am understanding these words literally. Only the soul can get me to the future in some respects. The soul must lead the way; I must become more as soul, and not the other way around.

As I think about it, in this partnership I can take the soul, not there, but here. I can connect to soul here, right in the here and now. The soul is both here, now, and there... in my future. In the esoteric tradition, points along the way are called initiations and mark the path toward the soul. A mountain often symbolizes initiation; the disciple must ascend the mountain of initiation, often on his or her knees, with humility. I see the mountain and I see the divine coming through too, that part of us most connected to soul. Only the soul can "take me there." Indeed, it indicates the way I will get there, with the help of the soul.

My life includes the soul, but certainly not all of the soul. Although, I believe the soul includes all of me. What is here of soul brings joy, well-being, meaning, and compassion. How lucky I am that the soul comes to me and reveals itself to me, as it did in this dream. What will the hand of the soul be like to hold? What will the hand of the soul impart on this journey? It thrills me to imagine. And it humbles me in gratitude, for the blessings bestowed on all of us dream lovers, who are lucky enough to be visited by Soul. ∞



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The Way of the Green Troubadour

by David Sparenberg

(2011, 127pp. Only \$6)

Ordering information
from David's email address
earthartsturtleisland@yahoo.com)

Reviewed by Rene Wadlow

As David Sparenberg notes in his introduction to these poems on nature themes, "True poets are troubadours, that is, makers of love songs. True poems are love songs. If they are not, they are protests against the denials and abuses of love which is, after all, only the negative way of indicating the primary and primordial scandal: deficit, and the need to increase love in this hard-edged world."

His poems and short prose texts are dedicated to the development of a green culture and a sustainable civilization by a new awareness of our relations to Nature, as in

"The Texture of Dirt:"

*If a man handles
soil, wood or stone
he may consider
the nature of the human hand
construction of creation
and possibilities
to survive
and even flourish...*

*then contemplate
please,
the feeling of stone
nesting in your palm
the dexterity necessary
to mend a fractured branch
the texture
of dirt between your fingers.*

In "Each Miracle Tremulant," he writes:

*Teach me the emotions of
Thunderstorms.
Instead of greed
Instruct me in the industries
Of butterflies and bees.*

This need for a new awareness of Nature comes at a time when we must make critical choices with a sense of urgency "of mountains and rivers, of forests and coastlines, of lands and waters. Of gulls blown inland on high winds and of the feeling sense of coming rain and coming changes."

Humans have responsibilities. "We are eyes looking at creation's wonders and at ourselves. We are ears listening to the diversity of life forms and to one another... We are Earth's communication network... What happens with belonging and to peace of mind when I am one with wild wind talking through lofty trees or scented with the pulse beat of the ocean?"

The Green Troubadour is related to the shaman. "The shaman did face to face combat with the spirits of disease and choreographed dances of ecstasy with the spirits of healing."

The shaman is a watcher of the patterns of birds, one who touches the Earth and feels the Sky and prays for the seasons, the grandfather redwoods, the glaciers and the spirit of life.

David Sparenberg weaves selections of his poems into a one-man performance — an In House Theatre event, "Dreamtime on the Ecozoic Threshold." The Ecozoic Era (or Ecological Age), a term coined by the eco-theologian Thomas Berry, is the present Earth time in which the human species is challenged to become a human community, attain species maturity and live according to an ecosophic responsibility for planetary diversity, integrity, sanity and survival, engaged in long term healing behaviors through green culture, sustainable civilization, voluntary simplicity and spontaneous acts of beauty.

Some of David Sparenberg's poems are published in the Transnational Perspectives section of "Another Life Force." He is frequently published in the *Dream Network Journal* and serves as one of DNJ's book review editor. ∞

Dreaming
The Soul Back Home:
Shamanic Dreaming for Healing
and Becoming Whole
by Robert Moss

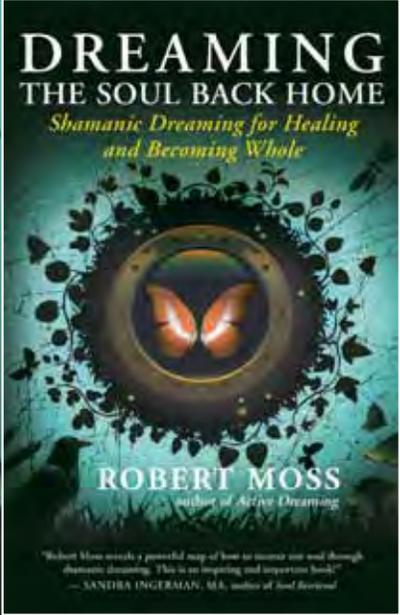
New World Library, June 2012
Reviewed by Bambi Corso

We suffer pain or trauma or abuse. We are compelled to make a painful life choice, such as leaving a partner or a job or a home, and part of us resists that choice and still clings to the old relationship or the old place. Sometimes the choice is not even ours and we experience a deep sense of loss. We fall into depression or addiction or make compromises with the world as we understand it, thus giving up on our big dreams of life and leaving a piece of us behind.

We all know the pain of needing to let go, while continuing to hold on for dear life. We ebb and we flow, we gain and we lose, we love and we long for. Meanwhile our dreams remind us that we have left something behind, a part of our self, a part of our soul.

Bestselling author and world-renowned dream explorer, Robert Moss, addresses this subject in his newest book, *Dreaming The Soul Back Home: Shamanic Dreaming for Healing and Becoming Whole*. Moss understands that these challenging situations often create a loss of our vital life energy and identity, and he adroitly speaks to the healing affects that dreams have on recovering the lost aspects of our souls.

Dreaming the Soul Back Home, my favorite of Moss' books, is a practical tool and experiential guide in soul recovery. "Dreams not only show us what the soul wants, they also show us where it has gone," writes Moss. He teaches us about soul loss, what it is, how it happens, and how dreams come to us to assist in the healing process. He shares presentations of dream imagery that we can all relate to when some aspect of soul loss has affected



BECOME THE SHAMAN OF YOUR SOUL

"Robert Moss reveals a powerful map of how to recover our soul through shamanic dreaming. This is an inspiring and important book!"
— Sandra Ingerman, MA, author of *Soul Retrieval*

"Since reading Robert Moss's powerhouse of a book, my dreams have been speaking to me in completely new and startling ways. I have no idea how he imbues each page with shamanic truth that actually changes you as you read it, but he does. If you have any interest in your dream life, you will be enthralled and forever changed by this work."
— Jennifer Loudon, author of *The Life Organizer* and *The Woman's Comfort Book*

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us. "We dream again and again of the old place, or Grandma's house, or high school, or the house we shared with a former partner. These dreams may be telling us that we left part of our vital energy and identity in that phase of our lives. Or, we may dream of a younger same-sex companion and find we are dreaming of a younger aspect of ourselves that went missing at her age because of bad things that were happening... Again and again in dreams, our higher or Greater Self comes stalking us, giving us the chance to forge a connection that may bring more of soul or spirit into the body than was with us before."

Infused with an indigenous quality in approach, this is a breakthrough book on a subject that deserves deep attention and care because we all experience this type of soul loss at some point in our lives.

Dreaming the Soul Back Home consists

of 15 chapters, including *Dreamers as Shamans*, *Understanding Soul Loss*, *Dream Roads to Wholeness*, *The Royal Road to Soul Recovery*, *House of Healing and Ancestral Healing* and *Spiritual Release*. Numerous exercises are given throughout the book allowing the reader to work with various techniques first-hand. In addition, Moss shares many examples of the ways in which soul speaks to us through dreams.

I found myself fascinated by every chapter and experienced epiphanies throughout the entire reading. Moss shared new ways of working with dreams that I had not considered and I embraced the idea of becoming my own shaman so that I could help promote my own healing and wholeness. This book is an exquisite addition to the dreaming community and I recommend it to everyone who enjoys working with dreams for personal growth, development and healing. ∞

Who Are the Strangers in the Night?

by Mary Patricia Scanlon

MY DREAMS HAVE ENTERTAINED AND INTERESTED ME EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER. They have also frightened me, repulsed me and confused me. I have interacted and run away from a number of strangers, ugly and beautiful, kind and menacing, who tell me things that sound sometimes profound, more often downright odd. Jungian psychology has altered my whole idea of the dreams that are given to me each night while I sleep. In his book, *Dreams and Healing*, John Sanford wrote, “dreams originate from the center of the personality, as if there is a ‘Casting Director’ within us who plans the drama, selects the actors, and directs the story. Furthermore, every detail in the dream is there for a purpose, and there is always a reason why the ‘Casting Director’ chooses a particular figure rather than another.”

When I read that passage, I immediately recalled a dream that my sister had told me 45 years ago. As she relayed the dream, I felt a twist of fear in my gut for no apparent reason. Thinking about it always gave me an uneasy feeling that there was something afoot in my dreams that I had no control over.

In her dream, my sister had a conversation with a man who “looked familiar.” She mentioned this to him and he responded, “I am one of the dream figures that live inside you. My purpose is to play different roles in your dreams, but you aren’t supposed to recognize us so we wear different disguises and play different parts. I was a policeman in your dream last week and I shouldn’t have appeared so soon again, but I am substituting for someone who is sick.” My sister noted that he seemed embarrassed by this situation and she also remembered him appearing as a policeman in the dream he mentioned. Interestingly enough, this dream conversation took place underwater in a swimming pool after the man bumped his head.

Author John Sanford describes the human personality as being like a village of people. He describes the ego as an important person in this

village, but by no means dominant, so that the figures of our dreams are, so to speak, the villagers who make up the community of the Self. What a revelation it was to me to learn that every person in my dream is an aspect of myself! Among this cast of characters in our dreams where

we are involved in the action is the dreamer herself, called the dream ego. Often we can find a similarity between our waking life and the dream, but just as often, we act in ways that seem beyond our understanding. Not only are our dreams filled with strange people, they are full of animals and objects that are also partial aspects of our total personality. According to author Jeremy Taylor, “dream figures are living entities in various guises, animated and alive, to be recognized, related to, and honored. The strangers who meet us in dreams do not like to be analyzed or treated like an object of scrutiny, dissected or pulled apart like a laboratory animal.” I have personally discovered that the strangers I meet in my dreams do not want to do the work for me. One aspect of my personality that I have come to see clearly is my wanting to find the “quick and easy”



way of doing things. When I first gathered up the courage to speak to one of the strangers in my dream, I was under the impression that he would be more than happy to supply me with insights about my true self, a fast track toward transformation. Fortunately, with his irritated retort that “this dream isn’t just about you,” I was quickly put in my place and reminded that dreamwork is slow, hard work without short cuts. I have a growing respect for all of the strangers I meet in my dreams; toward many of them I also feel protective and affectionate. I am trying to train myself to ask them the two questions recommended by Jeremy Taylor: “Who are you? For what purpose have you come to me?”

Taylor states that the stranger the dream image, the greater the potential for our continuing transformation, because images that come from the deep layers of the archetypal consciousness will likely be more “ego-alien.” At a time of my life when I was finding the courage to claim my

gifts as a lay pastoral minister, I met a series of weirdly strange dream figures. The very first time I faced down a nightmare figure (rather than screaming to wake myself up), it was a little alien baby that I had given birth to. I watched from my prone position on a hospital gurney as he walked and talked, thinking to myself that I didn't remember having sexual relations with an alien, but this is not a human baby. This alien creature hopped onto my chest saying he could kill me, and I circled my hands around his neck and responded, "Yes, and I can kill you, too." When I remember this dream, I can still get in touch with the powerful energy I felt on awakening and know that I was in the process of gaining courage to do the things I felt called to do.

The dream theory of the Senoi Indians closely resembles many of the ideas of Jungian psychology. For instance, the idea that a person should make peace with the figures of her dreams and come to terms with them parallels the Jungian idea that the unconscious reflects the face we turn toward it. Like the Senoi, Jung also sees the dream as a guide for the soul and a way to preserve and maintain health. The Senoi morning ritual reminded me of breakfast in my own house when my sister and I shared our dreams each morning. I can still remember the energy and emotional connection I felt on those days when my mother or my aunt shared dreams with us. Unfortunately, our family didn't carry this ritual any further than the telling of a dream, unlike the Senoi, who believed that dreams were the natural way in which their inner spiritual forces contacted them. They knew that dreams were meant to be recognized, discussed and understood. In Sanford's book *Dreams and Healing* he writes, "to the Senoi, dream characters were 'bad' only as long as one refused to come to grips with them. The dream figures represented real spiritual forces that came for a purpose and to which a person could relate. In their culture it was always possible for a person to change her dream environment by properly relating to her dream figures. Unless the hostile dream figures were related to, the negative dream environment would be reproduced in outer society and life, or a person would become separate from her own Self."

The most distinctive feature of Jungian psychology in dream work is the idea of the collective unconscious. It is in this dimension, deeper than the personal unconscious, where the strangest dream figures, the archetypes, live and the place where all of us are connected. The collective unconscious is the inherited experience of the entire human race, the realm that contains patterns for life. Research has shown that the dreams of disabled people are no different than the dreams of those without a handicap! Even a person who has never walked, does so in his dreams. There are archetypal images that are part of our basic given psychic nature and do not come from personal experience. The human psyche is the same all over the world; it is the inner experience of the human body, which is essentially the same in all human beings, with the same organs, instincts, impulses, conflicts and fears. Etched into our soul is the memory of all life and the whole realm of human experience, even that which existed before humans became conscious.

As a student nurse, I stood in amazement and wonder the first time I witnessed a beating heart during surgery. This same feeling of awe came to me with learning about the inner, invisible world of archetypes and the collective unconscious. Dreams are above all an invitation from the

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I am trying to train myself to ask them the two questions suggested by Jeremy Taylor:

"Who are you?

For what purpose

have you come to me?"

archetypal self for relationship. I had such an invitation from a dream 46 years ago when I met the most frightening dream figure out of all the cast of characters I have ever met. In the dream *I am searching for the perfect room, going through rooms in a house, opening and closing doors; none of the rooms are what I am searching for. As I open the attic door, I see before me, a room of perfection and beauty, with gauzy curtains blowing in a soft breeze. I am filled with delight as I look around. Finally I have found the perfect room. It is a bedroom and ahead I see the back of a beautiful woman dressed in a gown of flowing pastel colors. She is looking in a mirror and brushing her long hair. As I approach her, she turns and says, "Where have you been, I have been waiting for you." I scream in terror... she looks exactly like me... and I awaken with a pounding heart, afraid and trembling.*

As I continue to study and work with my personal dreams, I hope that "one enchanted evening" I will, for a second time, meet this "stranger who looks like me" and I will engage her in conversation, regardless of any fear. Indeed, I desire to embrace all of these inner strangers. The invisible world of dreams is becoming as real to me as the visible outer world. I am taking the advice of Rumi, "to work in the invisible world at least as hard as in the visible." My belief is that God within, who reaches out to me in my dreams and invites me to see myself in a truer way, is what motivates me for this work.

. Each morning as I revisit my dreams, I know that bowing to the dream is as important as understanding it, for as Jung said, "it is not understanding the dream that brings about transformation, but it is the intensity with which we engage the images." As we learn to embrace the stranger within, as we come to a fuller realization of who we really are, we will embrace the outer world at the same time. Someday there will be no strangers among us. ∞

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Close to my Personal Angels

by Noreen Wessling in collaboration with Jim Fitzpatrick

MUM IS MY FIRST ANGEL!

I remember as a wee tot that she would say this little prayer with me, “Father, Mother, God and the ANGELS, bless us as we sleep tonight and bless us that we may sleep tight.”

I was born in 1937 in Edinburgh, Scotland during the time surrounding the Second World War. My Dad was drafted into the Army and sent off to Egypt and North Africa. There, he fared much better than Mum and I – having only to deal with being chased about the Sahara by Field Marshall Rommel.

We in Scotland suffered in claustrophobic air-raid shelters amid citywide blackouts, gagging in gas masks while bombs exploded not too far away. Then, there was the food rationing amid all the various other unpleasant, unexpected happenings. Certainly Dad *ate* better than we did during those years!

None-the-less, even in this time of war, ANGEL blessings thrived. I felt a strength begin growing in me—the courage, persistence and a passion to live an artistic life, in all the meanings of the word ‘artistic.’

A powerful ANGEL experience happened to me at around age 7. We lived in Montrose, a lovely seaside town in Scotland. One day, I ambled quietly by myself along the dunes by the ocean. I liked to perch on rocks and find just the one perfect rock for the moment and so I plopped down on one facing the sea. Gazing over the ocean as in a trance, I experienced the whole Universe as a complete, timeless Oneness. At that moment, I felt an amazing sensation of being surrounded by ANGELIC Beings.

But being only 7 and not knowing what or how to express this experience, I told *no* one about it. Not, that is, until decades later when on a visit to my favorite Uncle Willie in Scotland, I decided to share the whole story with him. He expressed astonishment and then told me of a similar experience happening to him. Amazing! We became even closer on this auspicious day. Very fortunate for me, as he died about 2 months later. Some things are simply meant to be.



My Mum saved many drawings and paintings that I created in school from as early as age 6. I call these my “Wee Kid Art” and have put them into an Image Book for posterity.

On the front cover of this book is my favorite colored chalk drawing of two ANGELS beside a 6-fingered smiling witch and her cauldron.

Further in the same book is my illustrated “Life of Moira Shearer,” which I drew at 9 years old. I had seen *The Red Shoes* and had a strong desire to be a ballerina like Moira when I grew up. My drawings picture Moira dancing from the age of three all the way till she died.

Each picture in this little masterpiece had a commentary. My comment on the last picture: “Moira Shearer is DEAD... what a shame.” In my drawing she is cross-legged on a blue cloud, smiling, with her clearly defined (and well earned) ANGEL wings extending from her back!

In 1952, my parents and I immigrated to America via one of the first Pan Am air flights. We were immensely excited to come to a place of sunshine instead of living in a place where the weather is gauged mostly in shades of grey on a scale from 1 to 10; Edinburgh wasn’t called Ole Reeky for nothing....

Our immigration to America was made possible by a ‘mean old aunt’ of my Mother’s, who had dropped dead and left all her monetary riches to us! She wasn’t so mean after all.



We sent then, and I continue to send now, blessings to her! Even Mean Old Mrs. M acted as an ANGEL.

The years pass and I continue to feel the ANGELS hither and thither about me. Now I sometimes call them fairies or elves. I live in the pine woods just outside a village in Ohio. Sometimes at night, especially on a clear, crisp winter night, I can hear a deep rhythmic pulsation interspersed with an echoing warble that drifts up from the valley, which spreads out below where I live and, yes, I know this is a train, but is it not *also* an ANGELIC song? And what of the sound we call the wind? Or the sparkle of light reflecting through a crystal on a sunny afternoon? And the time on my birthday when the train *did not* hit my car when I became caught *inside* the gates of a train crossing? And when, on my way to the chiropractor, a fellow zipped out of a drive and whacked my car, spinning me 180 degrees and yet caused me no more than a bit of whiplash – which my chiropractor put to rights within an hour? All of these have solid explanations that any scientist would appreciate....

But why wouldn’t we expect our ANGELIC helpers to aid us in other than the simplest ways possible? Do we not find the greatest miracles within the commonplace events of our lives? – so ubiquitous and yet so ignored.

Today I don’t draw angels so much as when I was a child, but I sense their possibility and presence now more than ever. ∞

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The Dream of the Black Skull

by Greg Bogart, Ph.D.



DREAMS OFTEN ARISE SYNCHRONISTICALLY AT THE TIME OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS. The day after I learned that my father was gravely ill in the hospital, ten weeks before he passed away, I dreamed:

I'm with my wife, Diana, digging next to our house. I unearthed a black skull, with prominent jaw and teeth. It could have been the skull of a wolf or wolverine.

The skull of death emerged within my unconscious. The skull reminded me of a mask, like the carved and painted masks that filled my father's study, and heightened my awareness that he would soon be joining the world of the beloved ancestors.

The skull's prominent jaw and teeth alluded to biting aggression and anger, fierce oral craving, and the way Diana and I, like many couples, sometimes argue. It was unclear in the dream whether this was a fossilized skull, or whether it was carved in stone, a carved stone skull mask. It occurred to me that the skull was a philosopher's stone, comprising the union of opposites of love and hate. This dream image evoked the insight that a loving relationship with Diana also sometimes awakens fiery aggression.

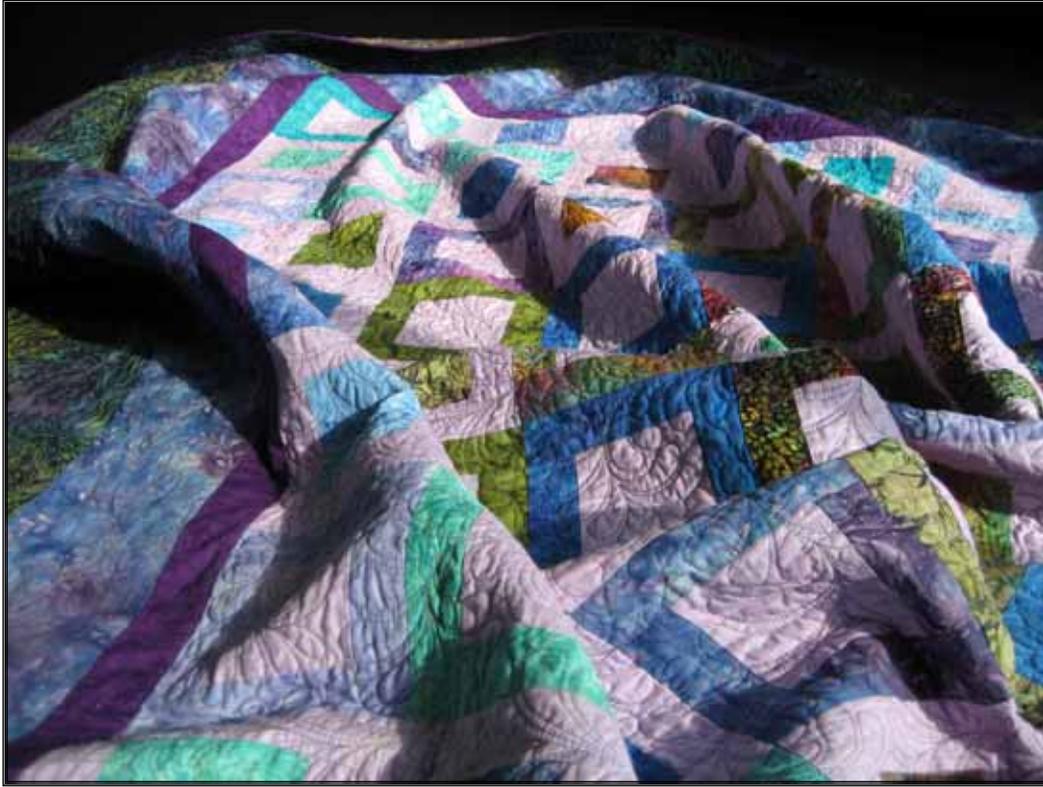
The prominent teeth also reminded me of going to see B. B. King at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem when I was thirteen years old. I went with Ruth McGhee, my beloved black nanny. Ruth was the person who first suggested I learn to play the guitar. That night I was the only white kid in the audience, which mainly consisted of African Americans, and I remember how warmly welcomed I felt. I recall that while he played his solos, B. B.'s face lit up in a beautiful smile with the bright spotlight reflecting off his sparkling white teeth. Because Ruth was an old friend of B. B. King (she was the sister of Brownie McGhee, another great Blues musician), we got to go backstage where I saw Big Mama Thornton (author of "Ball and Chain" and other Blues hits) stumbling around backstage with her bottle of whiskey. Frisky-looking women in tight dresses were fussing

over their makeup. One of B. B.'s managers walked into the room and opened up an enormous briefcase stuffed with pornographic magazines. He made a point of showing them to me. The whole scene was dreamlike and surreal. Then I met the warm and gracious B. B. in the flesh, shook his hand, and he let me hold his guitar, Lucille. This actually happened! I'm not blowing steam here.

I also remember that while I held B. B. King's guitar backstage at the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, I was wearing a cast on my arm, because I had broken a finger playing basketball. It was a Thursday night in February 1971, and my mother took me to the Emergency Room of Roosevelt Hospital. I had been in the hospital before, but that was the first time I saw people with serious injuries and illnesses, gunshots and stab wounds. I saw the cuts and bruises of a man who'd been beaten up in a barroom brawl, as I sat waiting for the doctor to wind a plaster cast onto my hand. It was the night of a New Moon in Pisces, astrological sign of hospitals, disabilities, and the universality of suffering. My feeling of compassion for humanity was awakened. I felt the same concern when I walked around in Harlem among people who were visibly poorer than people in my neighborhood. The memory of these interconnected events is resonant with emotional meaning and depth for me. And memories of the hospital and suffering humanity were united with awareness of my father lying poised between life and death in a hospital bed at that moment. All of this was contained in the condensed symbolism of the black skull. All of this varied emotional content was joined, sealed, and unified in an ecstatic moment, brought together by my black skull dream as a "uniting fact," a symbol of wholeness. ∞



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work at www.gregbogart.net and www.dawnmountain.com



Spontaneous Resting Reverie

by Victoria A. Vlach

DRAPED OVER A BOLSTER IN A SUPPORTED, SIDE-BENDING RESTORATIVE YOGA POSITION, 105° outside, cooler inside, resting between soft doze and light sleep, I feel the sheet and floor beneath me. My thoughts, a languid stream of consciousness, pause at a familiar, well-worn spot – ‘where is the core of me, the source, the missing something that is my life my purpose the ‘why’ of what am I doing here?’ The thought, untied from worry and stress, evokes an image – a parchment-colored surface, like a pair of double-doors. I see a finger scratch at it and can hear the stiff ‘scritch scritch’ of the nail on the taut, dry texture of paper pulled tight over an opening. A few more scratches and a hole tears in the paper. I see hands, and feel them as mine, coming from a place inside just below my sternum. The hands reach in and tear the paper. I see, and hear, the paper tear. I tear the paper within the door-like framework to reveal what lies behind its thin surface.

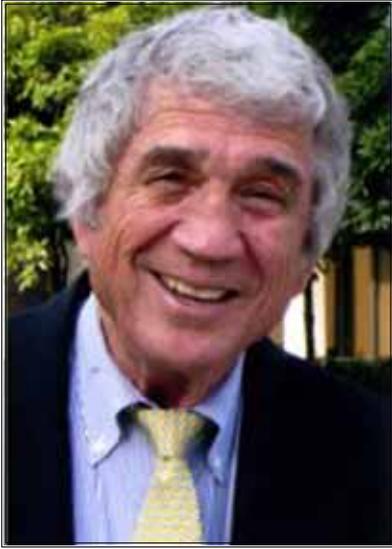
There is nothing behind the paper – the nothing of a hole, unknown distance deep and wide. A hole I’ve been to many times, plumbing its depths, seeking the bottom the core the source. I feel the image in my solar plexus, my stomach. I’ve long been looking for something that I know should be there, something I seem to have lost, something I can’t find no matter how deep I look.

My thought/awareness, in familiar territory, but untied from worry and stress, moves closer. The empty hole unfolds and unfolds in images of multi-petal flowers opening and opening and opening unfolding layers deeper and deeper layers. The movement is soothing and hypnotic in its unfolding. Curved dirt/earth walls slide by – is it me, or the hole, that moves so? I feel the sensation of movement as well as the cotton sheet on the floor beneath my hand. Untied from worry and stress, I observe the thought the image the body-sensation that is the image.

The ‘I’ of my awareness travels along the interior of the hole. Something changes and the ‘I’ of my awareness rises ‘up’ as well, passing through what would be the interior wall of the hole.

My perspective has changed and I am elsewhere -- dark, vast and open, stars and whirls of stars scattered points of light nearer and farther in this, outer, space.

A long tube, the shape of the hole seen from outside, extends behind and before me, a small human figure, the ‘me’ I usually know, travels alongside the tube some distance behind the leading edge. From here (seeing both the tube and the human me), I can see the rounded end of the tube, which is also the bottom of the hole inside. In my gut, and the



What Do Dreams Say About the Nature of God?

Part IV

by Arthur Bernard, Ph.D.

Our Fundamental Nature— Big and Little Messiahs

DISCOVERING OUR FUNDAMENTAL NATURE seems to be the cardinal point in grasping who and what we are in this world. Human beings are all consecrated, and the list of anointed ones is long. Some messiahs among us are better known than others. Oprah Winfrey is a savior to thousands of children in her Angel Network, which is dedicated to inspiring people to make a difference in the lives of others. The network has funded over sixty schools in thirteen countries. Bill and Melinda Gates are messiahs. Their foundation has announced the funding of forty-three research projects that will receive \$436 million to implement radical proposals for confronting world health problems. Perhaps Oprah, Bill, and Melinda have started an epidemic of charitable giving among billionaires. In June 2007, Peter Peterson, cofounder of the Blackstone group, became an instant billionaire when his company went public. He has chosen to put the billion dollars and much of his remaining estate into trying to help the US government maintain fiscal responsibility.

Countless other messiahs are offering portions of their wealth to treat cancer, preserve African wildlife, create jobs, care for the environment, support human rights, assist natural-disaster victims, found children's charities, and so on. When a Doctor Without Borders (DWB) ophthalmologist restores sight to a blind child in some remote village, that doctor has been elevated to messianic stature.

Messiahs come in all sizes, shapes, ethnicity, sexes, and ages. If we think necessary changes in the world will come from politics we should think again. Nicholas D. Kristof, a New York Times columnist, wrote a stimulating article that examines the upsurge in numbers of young people willing to do the job themselves. Nicholas calls them "social engineers," the twenty-first-century counterparts to the student protestors of the 1960s. During a visit to Thailand, Andrew Klaber, a twenty-six-year-old

Harvard Business and Law School student, was appalled at the number of teenage girls forced into prostitution because their parents had died of AIDS. So he founded Orphans Against AIDS, an organization that provides funding for academic scholarships. Every cent raised goes to the children, because he and his friends pay administrative costs from their own money. Soraya Salti, a young Jordanian woman, is attempting to revitalize the Arab world by teaching entrepreneurship. Her organization, Injaz, is currently training 100,000 Arab students in twelve Arab countries to initiate businesses and sustain them.⁽¹⁾

And then there are the Messiahs whose good deeds are never celebrated but who nevertheless uplift the lives of others. The nurse who saves lives in the emergency operating room; the neighbor you can count on to take you shopping; soldiers who risk their lives to save their friends; people who collect food and feed the homeless; teachers who bring light to the mentally and physically challenged. Messiahs are everywhere all around the globe, and more committed souls are adding their names to the list each day. The human community doesn't have to wait thousands of years to be saved by some obscure Savior. Spiritual growth is not measured by how individuals look in a holy robe or by the number of days spent fasting or sitting in a meditative position. Spiritual progress and "Messiahship" are granted to those who consider problems of others equally as important as their own. And, apparently, spiritual growth may not be the only benefit bestowed upon practicing Messiahs. In *The Healing Power of Doing Good*, Allan Luks describes a study he conducted regarding the positive effects of helping strangers. He observed that dramatic improvements in health began with a rush of good feeling and continued into a sharp stress reduction and release of painkilling endorphins. This, in turn, resulted in long-lasting feelings of emotional well-being. Messiahs, it seems, stay healthier.⁽²⁾

The Second Coming of the Messiah

The Jews believe their Messiah's reign lies far in the future and Jesus was not the true Messiah because he did not usher in world peace. The Jewish Messiah will be a human being without overtones of divinity and will bring about certain changes in the world; but he must fulfill many criteria before he is acknowledged. Muslims believe in Jesus, but their Messiah, the Mahdi, will supplant him and transform the world into a perfect Islamic Society. Many Christians believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ to fulfill prophecies that God made in the Bible. He will not come as he did the first time—as the suffering servant of humble origin, but rather on the clouds of the sky with power and glory. The armies of heaven will be under his command, and he will rule for a thousand years.

Of course no one knows when this will happen, “not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father” (Matt. 24:36). Is there any other event in history that is more anticipated than the Second Coming? But I don't think we can risk waiting around for this grand rescue to happen when events that could lead to global annihilation are occurring at an alarming rate. Not to mention, that although it would be heartening to see Jesus come thundering down on a white horse, nonetheless, the First Coming ended up in a crucifixion and a few thousand years of continuous religious wars.

The Second Coming Is Here

Is there another possible meaning for the Second Coming? Before responding to this question, I will offer two short dreams that were shared by participants of my seminars. They will shed light on my dream of the Great Fish and further reinforce the idea that dreams are a powerful source of religious experience and higher intelligence.

The following is the dream of a nine-year-old as retold by her mother:

You look like God



I am in church and ask the minister the following question: Reverend, what does God look like? And she looks right at me and replies: Why, God looks just like you.

Sometimes it's unfortunate that adults can't see with the same simplicity and freshness as children! This dream comes from a young woman who was a psychotherapist.

We Are All God



I am standing outside a room that has a sign at the door entry. It says, “God lives here!” I open the door, and in the middle of this large, bare room is an empty chair. I surmise that God is not in yet, so I leave and return later. Again I open the door and see a similar scene and think God has still not arrived. When I return for a third time and open the door, I see a written note lying on the seat. I enter, walk to the chair, and pick up the note, which reads, “We were waiting for you to sit in the chair.”

The following quote of St. Francis expresses the same idea more succinctly: “What you are looking for is what is looking!” People are looking for their true selves. The unconscious of the young female dreamer refreshes her memory with a reminder to be conscious of her divine status. I see many people who have dreams similar to this. The unconscious mind is trying to bring about a collective awakening, a sweeping shift in consciousness. Again, this unseen life is dreaming the individual, not the other way around.

Even the great C. G. Jung claimed that a new religion is being built but will take hundreds of

years to be complete. (He and his clients had dreams about a gigantic building that was being constructed brick by brick.) Meanwhile, just as the Greek and Roman Gods finally left the arena, current religions are slowly dissolving around us. The Biblical image of religion will simply not attract young people in the world today—nor maintain a hold on older people either. (3)

A spiritual crisis and awakening can touch someone of any age. The following dream comes from a woman in her forties who was disenchanted with the spiritual content of her church. The pastor was controlling and opposed to new ideas and philosophies, as was the church board, consisting of people who had been members for decades, who only paid lip service to change; this in turn resulted in a dwindling fellowship. The woman was also in a book club studying Tao Buddhism, which she felt contributed to her Christian spiritual growth, rather than stifling it.

Her dream illuminates an issue that many church-going people face—how church leaders can neglect an individual's real spiritual needs and be unaware they're doing it.

My Church is Falling Apart



I am in the lobby of an unfamiliar Church building. An older couple is also there, and they seem familiar to me although their faces are not clear. They appear to be very responsible people, the kind the church can always count on. As I talk with them, we notice a soft spot on the outer wall. Going closer to inspect it, we realize the wall is soft and flaky. The scene changes, and I am in the same church in a room adjacent to the lobby talking with Reverend Beatrice. I ask her if she has seen the soft spot on the lobby wall; she responds that she has not been aware of it. I take her into

the lobby to show her, and now there are several soft spots. As we continue to look, they grow larger and larger. The wall starts to bulge, and I realize it is going to fall on us. Horrified, we run toward the sanctuary where several faceless people are also panicked. There is a radiant, colored stained-glass skylight in the chapel, and bright sunlight is shining through it. The chapel is large and spacious with no pews. I feel the inevitability of being killed by these walls smashing in on us, but still the light is there. I am just beginning to scream when I wake up.

This dream brings to the dreamer's attention several points she hadn't clearly recognized. Her church had become unfamiliar. The type of members she met were old timers who, though could be counted on to assume responsible roles, merely accepted what they were taught; they were not deep-thinking people who would challenge what the church was presenting to its congregation. For them, taking an individual path would be out of the question. The reverend was unaware that her church was collapsing. Walls, which supported the structure, were getting soft, and the whole building was in danger of collapsing. Even the sanctuary wasn't safe. But the one saving grace was the bright sun, the source of light, which was outside this church. The dreamer was in danger of a spiritual death if she continued her membership. In the wake of her revelation, she left and joined another church she hoped would satisfy her spiritual needs.

The dream may be a manifestation of what is happening on a much larger scale. Perhaps the reverends, ministers, rabbis, priests and imams really don't know how the spiritual needs of a more conscious population can be satisfied.

Humanity has broken free of the earth. Now it's time to break free of organized religions that persist in claiming that God is Out There and is going to rescue us from ourselves. The lunar astronauts traversed 240,000 miles of space, planetary probes and the SETI project continue to reach out millions of miles further, and The Supreme Being is nowhere to be found. If divinity is discovered anywhere, it will be *right here*, among the common folk. So, the next time you take a look at a stranger—*take a good look*,

because each and every person you see is God--- is endowed with the divine force—and like you, is instrumental in dreaming humanity's path.

Perhaps the current chaos in the world could be the herald of a new Age. Our way of life has come to a crossroads that suggests radical change. Revered symbols of traditional religions, valid for generations, have lost their meaning. Established practices that have been respected and have withstood change for centuries are no longer useful in guiding us and are signs that the old way of life is no longer in tune with the emerging new.

For many people and especially the young, the church has few answers. The thou shalt and shalt nots have lost their authority over people. With complicated psychological and social problems, the church has a traditional response, little or no help when people are in serious need of it. We must discover our own new world by having faith in the psyche to guide us in our confusion. Our task will be to look within for answers to repair our broken world. Our dreams have indicated that redemption is the collective effort of all generations. Spiritual growth is an experience of discovering new depths within yourself. As dreams have stressed over and over there is no divine intervention in the world, but only human faces that are a reflection of God's face. ∞

Question for Readers to respond to:

1. What are your spiritual or religious beliefs and how have these dreams impacted them?



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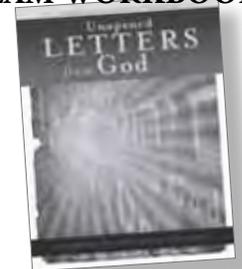
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- **Pittman McGehee**
- The Paradox of Love
- **Pittman McGehee**
- Myth and Holy Scripture
- **Bishop Larry Maze**
- Working Life Relationships in Dreams
- **Jeremy Taylor**
- God's Grandeur: Through the Eyes and Pen of Gerald Manley Hopkins
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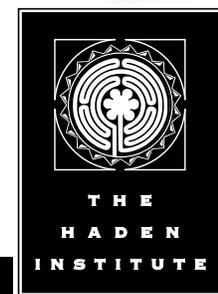
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Spontaneous Reverie—V Vlach, Cont'd from p. 32

gut of the body that is the physical me, I feel a solid mass at that leading edge, a comet hurling through space in the curved end of the tube/hole. The comet both moves through space and is separated from space by the fabric of the tunnel/tube/hole. The hole grows 'deeper'/the tube 'longer', as the comet hurls through space.

I, once again the familiar 'me', knows of/feels the comet hurling through space. I'm on the 'outside' of the hole, traveling beside it in an outer space of dark and stars and I feel/know that the tube is the outside of the hole and the 'bottom' of the hole is the head end of the tube. The tube continues to lengthen as the comet hurls through space. I need to reach the comet, so I extend my left arm in a 'superman' gesture, pulling my right arm close in, elbow bent, the fingers of my closed fist beside my breast.

I reach the leading edge of the tube now the tail of a comet. I grab hold of the comet, holding on upright, holding on belly pressed against it.

The comet hurls through space and is my life.

My life.

My life.

Hurling through space.

My life.

My life.

I hold on to it, straddling it.

I hold it to my belly.

My life.

My life.

Perplexed. Confused. Uncertain. What do I do with my life?

Someone says: 'You ride it'. They say: 'You hold on and ride it.'

I don't understand. But what do I do with it? What do I do with this comet my life? I don't know what to *do* with it!

"Look around you," the voice says, with humor and surprise at the question. "Look around. You have a whole universe and you're asking 'What do I do with my life?'"



I look around. Some star or color or system catches my eye and I turn my head to look, to see more. In that moment, the comet that is my life, the comet I am holding on to and riding as it hurls through space, changes course and sails toward the focus of my attention.

Where I look – where my attention is drawn – that is where the comet goes. I begin to understand who/what 'I' am, in relation to this comet that is my life.

I don't want to make a mistake. I don't know how to choose. What if I make a mistake?

I see a quilt with an elaborate pattern and stitching. The quilt is so big that I see only a portion of it. Loops and curves and lines of stitching and patterns extend beyond the frame of my vision. The voice says 'The pattern is larger than you can see.'

Then my question/concern about 'making a mistake' is answered.

A line of stitches is being sewn on the quilt and I have the impression of a presser foot and needle as on a sewing machine, but free to move in any fashion. The invisible presser foot moves along the quilt fabric and the invisible needle sews visible thread into a pattern on the quilt. At first the stitches flow gracefully and easily. But at one point, the stitching begins to falter, becomes erratic, random, chaotic, as if the needle is lost or confused. The stitching no longer flows, and the pattern becomes more and more chaotic, angular, tangled and overlapping as it crosses and re-crosses itself in a smaller and smaller area. I feel the needle's frustration, increasing despair, and sense of failure as it tries to find a way out, until it just seems to 'give up' and stop.



For a time, nothing happens, as though it had died. I sense that something was going on (or would go on), 'behind the scenes'. A feeling/sense of voices just out of earshot. After the needle stopped, in the time of nothing happening, I had the impression that (whoever was making the stitches) would have access to something like a 'help desk', as for a technical problem, or to advising, as one would have when weighing whether or not to re-take a particular class before going on to the next one, for a more complete grasp of the material. From my perspective, 'behind the scenes' was located on the other side of the quilt ('under cover').

After some ‘behind the scenes’ conversations and decisions, I knew that other invisible needles were moving toward the tangled area. To the needle (or to the one who was stitching that line of thread), that area looked like a ‘failure’, a ‘mistake’. The other needles came into my frame of view from several directions, and began to stitch around the chaotic, tangled section. Their stitches created a flowing, looping design as a kind of border for part of it, integrating the mistake/failure section into the whole design. The tangled and erratic stitches were themselves used in the pattern being stitched. When they were done, the invisible needles continued on their way, still stitching their visible threads into the quilt while moving out of the frame of what I could see. Their task was finished and I couldn’t tell that the chaotic tangled area was a ‘mistake’ --- it looked like it was (an intentional, or perhaps serendipitous) part of the design -- a (unique) flourish or embellishment that added to the whole of the design.



I had the sense that the thread of each stitching was a life – each life a spool of thread -- and each of the stitchings coming in to help were other lives. The thread was longer than the portion I saw, beginning outside of my current frame and, except for the one which seemed to ‘give up’ and stop, ending outside of my current frame. And all of these needles and threads were connected to the first one (the one that ‘stopped’) by virtue of being the needles and threads of the same person, each in a different time and place and incarnation. Each invisible needle/visible thread represented a different life (within a single life, and across incarnations).

I could not see the whole of the quilt or the whole of the pattern, but I saw the pattern being made in the piece I could see, and I knew that what the voice said was true: the pattern is bigger than I could see. And what I saw was that even mistakes were not failures – they could become part of the design as well.

I rode the comet that is my life.

“What do I do with my life?” is not the question to ask – it is misleading. ‘What do I do with my life?’ is a question that comes from thinking/ believing that I should/can control what happens and that I have to know it all so I know what to do. The question implies that my life is a ‘thing’, an object, something to be used to do something to something else.

The better question is ‘What interests me?’

-- The comet goes where I look – and when I look at what interests me, what I’m curious about and want to see more of, my life (the comet) automatically turns in that direction. I do not need to make it turn, or push it or prod it or compel it or steer it with efforting. I do not have to force it to go a certain way or ‘make it’ ‘do’ some specific action.

If I do nothing, the comet continues in the direction it is going. As small as I am, I see what part I play in relation to the comet my life. My role is to point in a direction, to turn my gaze, my attention/intention, this way or that, and the comet moves in that direction. When I am ‘trying’ to find the ‘right’ way to go, desperately looking around for a goal a purpose a destination, the comet flails wildly this way and that, crossing and re-crossing its own path, leaving me disorientated and trying to find a way out of the tangled chaos. I do not have to know it all in order to know what to do. I do not have to do anything specific. My curiosity, my interest, my attention, will ‘do’ the work, the steering. I only need to hold on and ride this comet my life.

The voice said, ‘Take (the comet)(your life) into yourself. Become (the comet)(your life).’

I take it in. I swallow the comet, absorb it into me. I become the comet, and I [illegible], flying through space, a being with a universe to explore.

This is what to ‘do’.

I generate my own action by my interest and curiosity. And as I explore, the spool of thread that is my life is stitched into the quilt.

I do not see the whole pattern, only a few stitches, or a small portion of the whole.

And I can go far. I have a whole universe to explore. ∞



You may contact Victoria @ rememberdreams@yahoo.com

Chaos
Chaos
Chaos
Chaos

“To release old fears and trust the universe is the greatest gift we are able to give ourselves and others at this time.”

Tracey Taylor from the video Expressions of ET Contact: a visual blueprint?

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