

October 1955

My head throbbed with pain as I left the house to walk to school. Being late, I was moving at a pretty brisk pace. Tardiness was unusual for me as I was habitually punctual.

Even though the light was red, I began to cross the street. My headway was cut short by someone loudly barking, "Stop!" and seizing my shoulder. Startled, I unthinkingly halted and jumped back on to the curb just as a car sped around the corner and shot passed the very spot I would have been standing if I'd not retreated.

I turned round to thank my unexpected savior but no one was there. Puzzled, I thought about the commanding authority of the disembodied voice that had commanded me to stop. I thanked God for the mysterious intervention then continued on to school, upon my arrival drawing a reprimand for the cardinal sin of being ten minutes late to that edifice of learning.

While listening to my math teacher discussing some problems I neither understood nor cared about, I noticed a man standing in front of the class, right next to the teacher. I immediately recognized him as the one I had conversed with in the vision of my grandfather's house, though at the time I was unaware I would later encounter him at church. I would see him quite often, in crowds, at school in a restaurant.

This time was in math class, always a welcome setting for a distraction from the events at hand. I liked his behavior, he seemed to be fooling around, a nice contrast to the teacher's seriousness. He was laughing and making fun of her, acting out what most of the students would like to have done.

I had been unable to concentrate on arithmetic from the beginning of the class and this comical show was not conducive to reversing that. As part of the act he held up his hand, gesturing wildly with his thin white hand, making the room disappear and taking me into an evening stroll towards the local mountains, drenched in the fiery red glow of a beautiful sunset. The location was an endless desert plane situated somewhere in the middle of my mind.

The heat of the desert was increasing even as the sun dropped into the west, and I removed my green jacket, tying it around my waist. The perspiration ran without restraint, and I turned to my friend to complain about the heat but I suppose he hadn't wanted to hear it, as I found myself alone, except for the old companions that suddenly appeared: fear, dizziness, blurriness of vision.

In the distance I saw what appeared to be dots, black, and moving towards me. I stumbled, blinked rapidly, and was enveloped in blackness. A soft wind began to blow and I could feel the smothering presence of something huge, covering the landscape and producing a closeness of atmosphere. Brushing against me and nearly sending me to the ground, it just as suddenly veered away from me, taking the darkness with it and molding it into a more coherent form, that

of a giant wing. The wing floated on the balmy air, expanding into a beautiful crow gliding smoothly through the inner skies of my mind.

The crow moved with serene grace, assuaging my fear as I drank in its magnificent appearance. It was an awe-inspiring picture, and made me feel peaceful and confident, centered and very much aware.

I was moved to feel the surface upon which I was standing, find it covered with countless small dark stones, smooth to the touch and warm with the entrapped heat of the late afternoon. So fixated was I upon the stones that it took a few moments to sink in that I was quite lost, having not the slightest idea where I was or how to get back. Nor did it seem to matter. I wanted nothing to disrupt the wonderful timeless now of my surroundings.

From the distant horizon came a whisper, rolling as a wave across the desert, up and over and down the mountains, making its way to where I stood, lifting me up into its vibration. It rumbled, the ground beneath me began to shake. The sound bullied its way into me, attached itself to my consciousness, then arranged itself into words.

“Are you alright?” I heard, the question pulling me roughly out of my pleasing vision and back into the harshness of reality. “Wake up! Wake up!”

I was dimly cognizant of my math teacher. So, she was the one brutally tearing me away from where I wished to be and grounding me where I did not want to be, the classroom.

When I fully came to, was drenched in sweat and very dizzy. My visit to the nurse’s office and the nurse’s conversation with my mother yielded permission to spend the rest of the day at home.

Another strange day. I had no idea what had sent me into that mystical desert, but I did know clearly and surely that if I had not been pulled back from the certain encounter with the car, I would not now be writing these words.

Scientific explanations aside, and rationalization be damned, it was my spirit guide who saved my life that day.