

## Four Days In October 1978

October 16, 1978

With Russ gone, I was left on my own once more to deal with my visions and my life. My interior existence had taken on a life of it's own and I was, effectively, split into two people, now without that crucial disinterested third party (in legal parlance) who could observe objectively from the outside and provide wise counsel. I would greatly miss my sessions with Russ, bouncing ideas off another's consciousness and receiving useful feedback in response.

My fellow epileptic, the Apostle Paul, told the Romans that all things work together for good, so looking back on those days I can see that the time had come in my life for me to explore my inner regions on my own, thus events were arranged to force me seek, find, evaluate, and actually do something with the truth of my own existence. This began in earnest during four very special days in October, 1978, when the forces of my own energy undertook the process of demolishing my psychic ivory tower and initiating a lengthy series of encounters with my unconsciousness whose eventual goal was the complete transformation of the self. I freely admit that I was extremely slow to grasp the essential message of these experiences, the point of which required years to work its way through to my ego and bring about the necessary changes.

I had arisen early to seek inspiration at the mountain. I trudged through the early morning chill toward the top of the trail where it begins its decline into the rocky space surrounding the three large sandstone "faces" that keep silent watch over the entrance to the higher reaches of the mountain.

Standing atop Stony Point, I saw a strange glow originating behind an old oak tree growing close to the top of the three fossilized faces. I had noticed this tree before and had been intrigued by the unreal nature of its rather scaly appearance; at least, it seemed unreal to me, but so did most things in the "real" world. Trees were as friends to me, often I felt closer to them than to most sentient beings I had known. As a loner, I have learned to draw real satisfaction from solitude and this certainly affected my relationship with the various allegedly lower kingdoms of nature and their denizens. Hence, an anthropomorphic consciousness is a normal state of mind for me rather than an aberration.

The blue sky somehow seemed much further away from Earth that day as opposed to the sheets of green fog that tightly hugged the mountain and out of whose wraithlike curlicues Charon emerged.

"What is the essence of your nature is that one and one seldom equals two," Charon said without preamble or follow-up, his phraseology vaguely reminiscent of one of the Winston Smith-O'Brien conversations in *1984*.

Understandably nonplussed, I asked what he meant by that statement.

“It means,” he said, “that you have the ability to focus your attention on the other side of reality and see it as though you were at home and it was real.”

“Is it real?” I enquired, concerned as usual for the stability of my sanity.

“It is real if the effect of that world changes your consciousness then reaches your inner being,” Charon replied. “Change is one of the measuring sticks by which the evolution of consciousness is evaluated. First, there is the experience, then the result. If no result occurs, then nothing is gained and no end is served.”

I didn't really know why I was moving, but I obviously was as I found myself tripping over a dead tree branch and hurting my foot.

“Shit that hurts!” I blurted out without thinking.

Charon merely laughed and proceeded with his teaching. Pointing to a small hill, he asked me what I saw.

I saw nothing but a small hill, and informed him of that fact, rather curtly. My injured flesh was throbbing and more than likely developing a colorful bruise and, quite frankly, I was in no mood for being on the receiving end of metaphysical philosophizing.

At that moment the world seemed to split open, a flash of brilliant light painlessly seared my eyes and, as I had been so often before, I was set upon by fear.

“Relax,” I heard Charon say softly. “Just allow the energy to come to you and for God's sake, focus on that point in the distance I referred to a moment ago.” I noted the words “For God's sake.” Surely one such as Charon does not use such a phrase lightly.

I could feel tears spring out of their ducts, probably from shame that I couldn't vault over the wall of my fear and get down to this undeniably serious business. It was all so strange, all I wanted to do at that moment was to run away, aching foot and all.

“Stop it!” Charon yelled. “Don't give in to your fear!”

As the gleam of the light began to lessen I discerned a male human shape standing in the distance, regarding me with some interest. He glided his way toward me, neither really walking nor really flying, skimming above the cramped sea of small stones then over the ever-present larger rocks of Stony Point.

The by-now standard set of red eyeballs shined brightly in the morning light. The momentum of his approach made me think for a moment that he intended in some way to merge with me, but thankfully he halted within a few feet of me and when he did his presence began to diminish,

fading away like the Good Witch of the North. The overwhelming feeling was that the light of the world was being extinguished and myself along with it. I was helpless to do anything but stand rooted to the spot, crying.

I must have lost consciousness at some point as the next thing I remember was coming to sometime in the late afternoon. The sunlight was striking the mountain at a low angle and the heat of the day had noticeably lessened. I was never able to determine definitively if my experiences on the mountain were seizure-induced dreams, psychologically-based hallucinations, the influence of the old Indian spiritual forces, genuine journeys through inner worlds, or what. There was always an element to these episodes that never quite added up to a completely understandable picture, the actual, final source of my visions being as elusive as the dreamscapes themselves.

Now that I was awake, the next step was to see if I was in control of my actions. I made several attempts at coordinating the dictates of my will with the movement of flesh, bone, and muscle, but I wasn't even close. As always, my body's penchant for doing its own thing without so much as an engraved invitation to do so was disconcerting. With all of these out of the ordinary physical and psychological manifestations, I had tried many a door to find my way out and into a normal life. Pills, liquor, meditation, anything I could think of that was short of lethal and not illegal to the point its possession would lock me away forever or take my mind to a place from whence it would never return, but nothing had helped, nothing would alleviate the nervous shaking nor curb the hallucinatory episodes.

Time after time I had tried to pin down what it was about my personal energy that caused it, or allowed it, to act of its own accord, above and beyond my conscious volition. My condition and I seemed wedded together, far more intimately and permanently than I had ever been with Dean or Paula.

I hoped it would not be till death do us part.

October 17, 1978

The evening approached with a rare sense of satisfaction; the day had been a good one for me and I was appropriately grateful. But then, as the child who is brave enough the afternoon of seeing the frightening movie, the onset of night began to tease me with its nerve wracking fingers, brushing up against me with the first suggestion of vague, unreasonable dread that leads to certainty that the monster is, indeed, hiding in the closet ready to pounce and devour.

I have never exhibited marked bravery during these dark times. Actually, I was frequently on the edge of derangement. But fear or no fear, I began my walk up to Stony Point, tramping through

wave after wave of oppressive foreboding. I would be damned, however, if the emotion would be an obstacle to my determination to reach my destination, physical or otherwise.

The wind was making itself felt that evening, sweeping thick carpets of leaves ahead of it. Something much larger than a leaf was moving in the deep shadows to my right. I passed it by without so much as a glance, hopeful it would choose some other night-wandering soul to conduct business with. I already had enough on my plate just being me.

During these days my headache was as a visiting relative that refuses to leave, always there, always bothersome, and absolutely unwelcome. As to the overall state of my health, I believe the scientific medical term for it is “fucked.”

As I made my way up the soft dirt path that winds serpent-like through the mountain, I began to take on that edgy, sandpaper-on-the-nerve feeling that I was being watched, watched and followed. Hopefully my system was just having a normal reaction to the fear and physical pain. All I knew was I wanted off that mountain and to be on my way home to closet myself in my study.

Arriving right on a cue whose perfect precision would have done justice to the first violin of any major symphony orchestra, the dizziness began its cyclonic motion around my head. This faintness coincided with my spying a large, silhouetted something or other posed behind the old oak tree near one of the brown sandstone formations.

My first thought was to turn and take flight when unconsciousness overtook me and I fell as though pushed by spectral hands. Strong spectral hands.

Coming to an indeterminable number of minutes or hours later, I was aware that the yellow moon was rising. I felt sluggish as though awakening from a deep and lengthy sleep. Alone in the night, I tried standing upright and was pleased I was able to make it. My legs felt quite weak, but one good thing about a mountain, it provides many natural crutches. Half stumbling, half hopping from tree to rock, branch to shrub, I was able to get back to Topanga Canyon and tumble into my car.

October 19, 1978

I love early morning when I can pretend I am alone in experiencing the thrill of a new day. It is such a peaceful time when I savor the stillness that hovers on the very rim of reality. One such morning, when I arose and went to my study, I seemed to have left my mind in the stillness, because I obviously hadn't taken it with me down the hall.

I was literally unable to recall if I had ever been in this house before. I paced up and down the hallway between bedroom and study, trying to remember the carpet, the floor plan, what lay behind the closed doors and so on. I simply could not mentally locate myself in this environment at any point in the past.

It was cold in the house, my constantly cold hands feeling even more frigid than usual. Through the window I saw crows mischievously and expertly careening through the trees. I returned to the study, recovering enough memory to be able to reach for my current journal to make an entry while listening to the complaining squawks of the surly black birds.

The entire early morning scenario gave ground in the face of the rush of coldness up my spine and into my neck, the signal that an episode was beginning. I continued to reach for my journal, determined to tough my way through this one. To my surprise, not only did the journal disappear, but I couldn't help noticing that the study itself had vanished.

The placid morning was gone, the crotchety but somehow loveable crows were gone, and the room I had been seated in was gone.

At least the chair was still there. I got up from it and walked in the general direction of the door. My way was barred by the wall then by what felt like the doorframe, but I could see neither one. My tactile sense was functioning while my sight seemed impaired, as did my aural sense as there was naught but silence, at least until the appearance of very faint music playing far away.

The music was really the only thing I could focus on. I left it seep into me, affecting a most peculiar feeling all around me, which I was unable to subject to analysis as I found myself awakening in my study, slouched in the red leather armchair and soaked with perspiration.

October 21, 1978

Have you ever felt that the world is engaged in a mammoth conspiracy against you, employing every possible person, place, and thing in its mad effort to annihilate you and swat your remaining ashes out of existence?

You've never felt that?

Then let me bypass you and speak to the truthful ones because the fact is, we all share that kind of persecution complex to one extent or another.

That is how I had been feeling throughout this entire week. But this day would break the mold, it would be wonderful and all would wind up working out in a much better way than I could have expected.

I have only been addicted to two things in my life, Valium and coffee. The former I was able to give up, the latter I will never turn loose of. A morning is not a morning without coffee and that nectar of the gods had been with me on many a significant event on my mountain. Tracing the old paths of the Indians through the brush while reveling in the coolness of the early morning or late afternoon or early evening while indulging my taste for the small brown bean was as close to nirvana as one is likely to get in Chatsworth.

But, dare I say it, there were times when even coffee lost its magic. Excruciating days and nights when coffee was unable to elicit a rise from Myron Dyal! Whatever next? During those periods my depression and fear seemed to increase as I was without what is not only a source of genuine enjoyment for me but, chemically, is also a liquid crutch, as it is for countless millions of other people. Unless they drink decaf.

It was during one of those periods when caffeine had lost its spark that I treaded the old trails, visually luxuriating in the beautiful colors the rocks reflected in that early morning light. The limestone was red, brown, and green and the atmosphere was beautifully peaceful.

My approaches to the mountain had become somewhat routine as though I were some lesser species roaming its territory day in and day out throughout the months and years.

Predictability notwithstanding, animals were not subject to my visions and the chance I would have an episode was always the wild card, the random X element that added excitement to my trips to Stony Point. No matter how familiar the sights and sounds, smells and textures, the roar of traffic on Topanga Canyon, the cloud formations over the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valleys, or anything else that entered into the picture, it was in no way out of the ordinary for me to slip into another world and experience the kind of journey in consciousness that, like Joseph Smith, I, too would tend to disbelieve if they did not happen to me.

This day was no exception; I could already feel the oncoming of the vibration of another world, another plane of reality.

The trees looked to be dissolving and flowing away, the rocks were pulsating and scurrying off to the furthest reaches of the day. And I was alone to go where I would go and find my way back. So be it.

The mountain disappeared!

I can deal with a journal, a room, a house vanishing, but a mountain? I think I will be excused for the flood of fear that rushed in and possessed mind and heart alike. Trying to regain my composure, I began to do a breathing exercise with which I was familiar. Charon himself, years before this, had taught me the technique of breath control to overcome anxiety and fear. And today I would need all the help I could muster.

I then caught sight of the man who had been appearing and disappearing at various times throughout the week. A blue light glowed beneath him and expanded to surround his form and then reached out toward me, moving very slowly. The light seemed to be a living thing.

My head began to swim with dizziness. I could not move and I did not continue to try, determined to stand my ground and pass through whatever was coming.

As my fear reached its peak, I began to quiver as I felt my flesh being torn from my skeleton and sucked into the field of blue light. I was being skinned alive, left with nothing but my bony frame. The bones gleamed with an unearthly fluorescence that made them transparent. I found myself walking in the direction of the edge of a valley that was materializing off in the distance.

It was an indescribable sight, my self-luminescent skeleton walking through the etheric landscape. My head (or skull) began to clear as the distant valley metamorphosed into something that was making an entrance into my consciousness.

The valley was now rocking back and forth and uniting itself with the blue light that surrounded me. Oddly, even though my head felt clear there was still a touch of faintness. And then I literally felt great amounts of information being downloaded into me with the speed of thought. Everything was suddenly clarified, seen in such perfect order that misunderstanding or puzzlement was impossible. I felt I was in the Garden of Eden at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of all things positive and negative, all manifestations of the universal yin and yang.

Then with a clap of thunder it was all gone.

The gentle breeze awakened me in the late afternoon from what seemed like a deep sleep. I believe I had experienced a seizure. It required over an hour to get home and I passed by in silence both Paula and her concerned inquiry as to my whereabouts that day.

She reached out to take my arm and demand an answer. I turned and looked deeply into her eyes, apparently conveying the message that at that moment I was not to be angered or played with. She released me and I continued on to my study.

I sat down in my good friend, the red leather armchair.

I was very upset with Russ. Where was he when I needed him?

I would have to have a cup of coffee and think this through by myself.

One thing I did know, was that all of the data that had been infused into me would, each bit in its proper time, emerge into awareness and help me on my way to wholeness.