

November 1987

It had been a long, hard day working out in the world and I was glad finally to home. The warm bath had felt good, especially soothing to the joints in my hands where the arthritis was acting up. It felt as though I soaked for hours, letting the steamy water penetrate deeply and work its healing effect. Finally, I had to get out of the tub, dry myself, and shrug on a bathrobe.

The next stop was my study. I shut myself in and lit my candles, their bouncing flames creating wildly gyrating ghostly shadows in the room. I sat down at the desk and started a new drawing in my journal, interrupted by a creaking sound that didn't seem to be coming from any of the usual spots, such as floorboards or ceiling.

Whether the two were related or not I did not know, but following closely on the heels of that noise the walls suddenly sprouted thousands of vines, followed by the ceiling, the windows and walls, filling the room, the snaking green arms quickly filling the entire study.

As the growth expanded, it pushed the door shut, trapping me in there with the wriggling tentacles which were studded with thorns that embedded themselves in my skin and then tore through the flesh as the vines continued their uncontrolled motion.

The pain of these thorns was beyond comprehension and as they pounded themselves into my brain, my entrails, everywhere, I screamed bloody murder.

The room had become so thick with the vines I could no longer breathe. Death would have been preferable to what I was experiencing in my own private day of the triffids.

Then, as the pain reached the point of no return, I was made one with this writhing mass of foliage, the vines were me, the thorns me. As the symbiosis reached completion, all went black.

I came to lying on the floor, coated with perspiration. The windows and my robe were both open, allowing the cold night air to hit me full force. The episode had left me even more tired than before.

I looked around for any remaining trace of the vines; no leaves, no thorns, nothing was left behind. I wasn't ripped into shred, all was intact.

This had been no intensely symbolic vision, no inner journey pregnant with deep meanings that would take years to mine for all the treasure they held. It was nothing more than a horribly painful interlude where my normal waking consciousness had crossed path with a wandering vibration from elsewhere.

What remained unspoken was who or what had lifted me out of that awful psychic maelstrom and put me back together.