



the shell

An Adventure in Recollection

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“Now let me show you the passage in Father’s notes that casts light on our subject, if you’ll pardon the pun. These notes were made following his second session and discussion with Peterson; they’re a reconstruction of what happened initially.”

Anna Lisa opened the notebook to a page that had become dog-eared and I read the following, written in the same eccentric hand I’d known since childhood—difficult for others, perhaps, but to me it was like looking at a secret code that I knew by heart.

. . . I was taken aback and immediately moved to bring E.P. out of the hypnotic state in which I’d placed him. Upon awakening he had absolutely no memory of the occurrence. After he left I replayed the event in my mind over and over, until suddenly I realized it was I who had brought about the action—through my choice of words. I had been regressing him through his lifetime in an attempt to uncover conditions or circumstances which may have led to inordinate eating habits and consequent severe overweight condition. These efforts were not producing satisfactory results, so I set about to do a process that would remove him entirely from the experience of being heavy, that would enable him to feel “weightless” in order to take him away from the familiarity of his heavy physical state. I told him that I was going to have him go back in time to the first instance in which he could remember having any awareness of or mental energy regarding his personal weight, and that in setting out to do so his body was going to become absolutely light. Immediately, E.P. experienced himself becoming “as light”—that is, illumination without form. His consciousness entered what he later described as The Shell, in which there were windows or boxes framed in black and set one after another like an endless strip of movie film. Each of these boxes contained an

individual life potentiality, which he could choose to enter and experience. Because I had suggested that he would recollect his earliest memory of being aware of his own weight, he entered the life experience of an adult male he took to be a native of some very cold part of the world, who was smoke-drying a batch of ocean fish he'd caught from a large open boat he thought was called an "oomiak." He was attempting to speak to me in his native language, since I had made no provision for him to converse with me in English. None of this was made evident to me until after our second session in which I specifically set out to determine what had happened before proceeding further.

"And from that point on," I said, returning the notebook to Anna Lisa, "we pretty much know the rest of the story."

"Yes," she replied. "It is the concept of *becoming as light* that I intend to expand upon, beginning with Aunt Mari."



MW: Ready when you are, dear.

AIW: Good. The first thing I want you to be aware of is safety. During the hypnosis process, your safety will be of utmost concern. Although you will be asleep—deeply asleep—in a very deep hypnotic state, you will also be paying close attention to every suggestion I give you, and acting entirely under my command. Other than my voice, all sounds and other distractions will become meaningless to you. Your entire concentration will be on my voice alone, and you will want to do your utmost to follow exactly and immediately the various commands I give you. I realize that this requires an incredible amount of surrender and trust on your part, and I promise to do everything in my power to honor your trust in me. Now, even though you

will be in a deep sleep, and under my direction and command at all times, you will still retain your own natural ability to react quickly and properly should there be an actual emergency. This means that should something happen that you would in your normal waking state consider to be a threat, such as an earthquake, or a smoke or fire alarm sounding in the building, or an airplane crashing through the ceiling—or anything else you would think of as a situation of genuine emergency, whether life-threatening or not, and no matter where we might be within the hypnosis process, you will immediately become fully awake, fully aware of your surroundings, completely alert, and totally capable of taking whatever proper action is necessary in order to handle the emergency. Under no circumstances will you be incapacitated in any way due to the hypnosis process, should there be a genuine emergency or something that you would ordinarily consider to be a genuine emergency. Is there anything about this that you don't understand or that you want to have clarified?

MW: No.

ALW: Good. What I have just told you is very important to our hypnosis process. I need to have you become so relaxed within the process that no outside noises or other occurrences distract you. During the process, if a telephone should ring somewhere, or the ceiling fan should brush air across your face, or the air conditioner should kick on and begin humming, or there is any other sound or action that is not a specific part of this process as I have instructed you, you will ignore it entirely. It will be absolutely meaningless to you. And should something of the sort happen it will act as a signal to reinforce your concentration on my voice and on what I am telling you. Okay?

MW: Yes.

ALW: Good. Should something happen to me that would prevent me from communicating with you—should a hunk of plaster fall off the ceiling

and knock me unconscious, should I happen to drop over dead, or should anything else transpire to prevent me from being able to maintain communication with you, this will be a signal that the process is immediately ended, and you will automatically wake up, feeling good, alert, refreshed, and capable of doing whatever may be necessary to handle the situation. Do you understand?

MW: Yes.

AIW: Is there anything about what I have just told you or about anything I have told you so far that you need to ask about or have clarified?

MW: No. Not at all.

AIW: Excellent. One other thing. Under normal circumstances I will bring you out of the hypnotic state slowly, giving you time to stretch, and open your eyes, and become accustomed to the surroundings. However, should the need arise, for any reason that I determine, whether in an emergency or not, if I find that you should be brought out of the hypnotic state without delay—no matter how deep within the trance or sleep state you may be—I will clap my hands sharply together three times, like this: [Clap! Clap! Clap!] Should you hear the sound of my clapping my hands three times as I have just demonstrated, you will immediately return to your normal waking state, feeling very good, very comfortable, thoroughly capable, and able to respond properly to whatever conditions are at hand. Do you understand this?

MW: Yes.

AIW: Fine. These are the safeguards you and I are together building into this process in order to insure your safety should something unforeseen occur. Okay?

MW: Yes.

AIW: Good. What I want you to do now is take all that information I have just given you and put it completely out of your conscious mind. Just

let it go. It will remain in your subconscious mind, but does not need to be in your immediate consciousness. I assure you that should the need arise for you to act according to the safeguards we've discussed, your subconscious mind or subconscious memory will take over and you will be able to act instantaneously. So just let all that information leave your consciousness now and remain in your subconscious. Can you do that for me?

MW: Yes. It's done.

[Everything Anna Lisa had been saying, and would say throughout the entire session, was delivered in a soft, pleasing, gentle and friendly, unhurried melodious voice which, although certainly commanding in the traditional hypnotic sense, had a quality of inviting the subject's participation rather than forcing it. While not in a trance myself, I was certainly entranced with her delivery and her capability. I also felt relaxed, comfortable and secure—eager to experience the process that was about to take place.]



I TURNED TO LUCKY. He simply shrugged his shoulders, stood up, motioned to Lyudmilla and they left the room, drawing the curtain closed at the kitchen doorway.

ALW: Okay, they've gone. Now explain. Where's Pavel, and where did *you* come from?

PS: Pavel? I am Pavel. Or was. Now I'm Mike. And will be until I'm no longer Mike. Then I'll be someone else.

ALW: You mean you're some future life experience of Pavel's?

PS: Pavel is just one of the many life experiences of who I am. Who we are, if you want to get technical.

ALW: Who we are? We who?

PS: We who? You really are green, aren't you Sis? We us. All of us. All-one. Each of us is a separate facet of the same magnificent jewel. One Creation. One jewel, an infinite number of facets. Each with our own unique reflection. Who I am is one of the facets. Who you are is one of the facets. Hasn't someone already explained this to you?

ALW: Essentially. Perhaps not quite so succinctly.

PS: Maybe this time it'll take.

ALW: Possibly.

PS: You wanted to know what happened to Pavel in the ten days he was in a coma. I assume you mean, what happened to the nonphysical Pavel, as opposed to the corporeal Pavel?

ALW: Yes.

PS: Pavel went shopping.

ALW: You've lost me.

PS: Pavel, Mike, me. I went shopping. My awareness entered the Gateway—*The Shell*. Exploring alternative life potentialities. Looking for something that would fit my temperament.

ALW: You spent the ten days looking for a new life?

PS: It was only ten days from the perspective of Pavel. Within *The Shell* there is no time. But, yes. As you put it, looking for a new life.

ALW: And you found it?

PS: I found it. Me. Michael R. Miller. Senator Mike Miller. A fine life potentiality for a fine new century. For the New Millennium. Do you know what the dictionary definition of millennium is? Other than a thousand-year anniversary?

ALW: What?

PS: A hoped-for period of joy, serenity, prosperity, and justice. What hope do you think there was for Pavel? That poor kid going

nowhere in the sticks of Buryat. When those quack medicos stuck me—stuck Pavel—with that second needle, whatever was in the injection is what brought on the coma. I was already—Pavel was—having out-of-body experiences. Might as well have been dead then and there. Maybe that injection brought Pavel's body back to life. But his—my—awareness figured that was as good a time as any to get back to the Gateway and look for a new game piece.

AIW: How did Pavel—how did you—know about this Gateway? *The Shell?*

PS: Everyone knows. We just don't know we know. Otherwise, when the chips are down, away we'd go. If we were always conscious of the fact that it's all just a game, it wouldn't be much of a game, would it? Life is a suspension of disbelief. On the other side of life, we know it's an ingenious adventure. Within the adventure, we forget. That injection they gave Pavel opened the Gateway to his—my—ultimate knowledge, and I used the opportunity to wriggle back to *The Shell*.

AIW: *The Shell*. Why is it called that?

PS: Why not? It's as good a term as any. It's been called many things throughout eternity. Many things. Some refer to it as an ovum. It's a place of knowledge. A place of comfort, peace, tranquility. A place of beginning, of departure, and, ultimately, a place of ending. It's a place to be nurtured and to nurture. A place for healing. But, when all is said and done, it's also quite boring. Life—life is the adventure! The physical world—the magnificent illusion—that's the game. *The Shell* is where the dice are rolled. Where the wheel is spun. Where the cards are shuffled and dealt. Life is where the hand is played. You can see why it's so important that we forget it's all an illusion. If we remembered, every time we held a hand that didn't suit our fancy, we'd fold and request a new deal. What would that do to the game, to the other players? Every hand can't be a winner, right? Sometimes we draw

garbage, sometimes we get a pair. Maybe someone else has a higher pair. Somebody gets three-of-a-kind. A straight. A full house. Once in a while someone draws a royal flush. Get it? Once in a while. Not every player. Not every hand. That's how the game works. Life is about playing the hand you're dealt, to the best of your ability. If you're a really good player, maybe you can win the pot without holding so much as a pair. Sometimes starting out with that royal flush can be a disadvantage. Think of the royals throughout history who inherited their kingdoms. Never had to work for them. Never had to learn, develop muscles, grow strong. One day they discover they're not up to the new challenges, and they wind up leaving their heads on the block. And the guy sharpening the guillotine is the one who began life with low numbers and no face cards.

AIW: You're quite the gambler, aren't you?

PS: Life is a gamble. Each life experience is a new gamble, a new rush of epinephrine.

AIW: Granted that, why have you decided to trade in your Pavel experience?

PS: Ah-hah! Good question. You're paying attention, after all. Pavel—my former game token—was unwittingly released from the physical illusion by the ineptness of those doctors, following his accident. They brought about a condition in which Pavel was essentially brain dead. Death—which is actually a return to reality—automatically draws the player out of the illusion, through the Gateway, and into *The Shell*. What happened to Pavel—to me—was an unusual occurrence.

AIW: Like drawing a royal flush?

PS: Good girl! I'm beginning to understand how you're able to develop such a massive courtiery of adherents.

AIW: How what?

PS: Uh—perhaps we'd better save that topic to discuss at another

time. When I returned to *The Shell* from my Pavel experience, I set about to find a new life potentiality more suited to my present tastes.

ALW: Wait. Back up there, Senator. Wasn't it *you* who chose the Pavel life potentiality in the first place?

PS: Right again. Well—win some, lose some. Remember, these experiences aren't carved in stone.



Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

—William Wordsworth
Intimations of Immortality

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