CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Becoming

After getting to bed so late, I was hoping to be able to sleep in, but was awakened by Elizabeth shaking my shoulder.

“My legs! I can't move my legs at all!”

“Maybe they're just asleep,” I said, half asleep myself.

“No. No. It's worse than it was before. I can barely move them at all now. Help me!”

I hated feeling so powerless, but helped her up into her wheelchair.

“Look! “ she cried “My legs are now totally useless. Even at their worst they had some strength, but now it's worse than ever. Did you bring that handkerchief back?”

“Honey, John said I couldn't...”

“What kind of man is this guy? He gives me a gift and takes it away. Now I'm worse than I was. I wish I had never even seen John.” Elizabeth sobbed bitterly.

I knelt in front of her and took her hand firmly. “Don't say that, sweetie. Because of John you now know for sure it is possible to be healed. He said if I solved the first three keys, you would be healed. We must look forward to that time.”

She gathered her composure for a moment and asked, “So, did you get the first one yet?”

“Not yet, but I'm getting closer.”

“Maybe you are and just maybe this is some cosmic joke and there is no answer. Maybe we are nothing and going nowhere,” she said, starting to cry again.

I hugged her for a moment and then lifted her chin and looked deeply into her eyes. “I know there is an answer. I will find it.”

Elizabeth turned her head away. “So consciousness is not the answer?”

“No.”

“So try *nothing* next time. That will be as good as anything. You've guessed everything else we could be.”

I was startled with her coldness. “I've never seen you so negative.”

“Negative? You don't know negative,” she said bitterly. “Call Doctor Kevorkian and I'll show you negative!”

I felt a terrible feeling in the pit of my stomach as she said that. I felt like running out of her presence as far as I could. It was as if it was not her who was talking, but some hateful being. Nevertheless, I knew I had to override that feeling and show her all the love I could.

“You'll get your legs back. This is just a temporary thing,” I tried to assure her. “We'll take you to the doctor. Maybe he can give you something.”

“The doctor never helps. I'm staying right here.”

“I'll call your mom and she can come over while I show some homes.”

“I'm not helpless. Just go and I'll take care of myself.” Elizabeth wheeled herself out of the bedroom toward the kitchen.

I called her mother anyway to keep an eye on her when I had to be out. There was a certain amount of work I had to do to survive financially, and I spent all the time I could with Elizabeth, but nothing I could do or say seemed to help. She was in the darkest spirits I had ever seen her in. It was almost as if she were turning into another person. Realizing she may not have much time left, I thought every spare moment about the newest hints and the first key. I came up with a few ideas and thought I would share them with Wayne during our next breakfast.

When Sunday came, Elizabeth was still in a negative state and didn't even want me to have breakfast with Wayne. I assured her I needed someone to bounce ideas off of and of the

importance of solving the keys, but she seemed to act as if I were wasting my time. She was generally very supportive and this resistance did not seem like her. I went to see Wayne despite her comments.

"I see we're back to our regular eating place," said Wayne. "How was your week?"

"It was the best of times and the worst of times," I said with a forced smile.

"I've had a few weeks like that," he said. "So have you decided that we are consciousness or have you come up with some even heavier thought?"

"I've concluded that the core of our being is not consciousness, but uses consciousness. Consciousness is like a camera and our true self is like the one who takes the pictures."

"So who or what is the one who takes the pictures?" Wayne asked.

"I'm not sure yet. You know the philosopher Descartes tried to discover what there was in man that he could call real and he came up with the phrase *I think, therefore, I am.*"

"Yes," Wayne agreed. "If I remember right, the famous Latin phrase was *cogito ergo sum.* Descartes, using the process of elimination, concluded that the only thing he knew for sure was that he was thinking, therefore he had to exist. That was one of the few things I learned in college. I think it's interesting that both Descartes and God reduced our essence to the phrase I AM. Maybe we just are and it's a great mystery we will never know or understand."

"Funny you should say that. I've been studying the words of God to Moses and the phrase *I AM that I AM*
is a mistranslation. The literal translation according to scholars is
I am becoming that I am becoming. Go tell the children of Israel that He who is becoming has sent you

. Taking this into consideration, it seems that the essence of God which may be our own essence also has something to do with the process of becoming."

"So maybe Descartes should have said *I think, therefore I am becoming."*

"That probably would have been more accurate," I said, "but I think there is some mystery behind all this that we just haven't seen yet. We have an essence that is becoming, changing or evolving, but I don't think I've found it yet."

"I doubt if we ever will," said Wayne. "We just are. Any more than that would be just about impossible for us to find out."

"It can't be impossible!" I said with greater volume and emotion than I had anticipated.

Wayne looked startled. "Whatever you say, buddy. You feel pretty strong about this quest of yours, don't you?"

"I suppose. I didn't mean to startle you. I kind of feel under a lot of pressure. Elizabeth is quite a bit worse again, my finances for helping her are limited and my emotions are on edge."

"I feel for you and her. Want me to drop by some evening this week and see if I can cheer her up?"

"It might not hurt, but call first. She's been kind of withdrawn lately. She acts like she doesn't want to see anyone."

"Sometimes it's good to have company, even when you're not in the mood."

“I agree. Now getting back to our main line of thought.” I said, leaning forward. “What do you think it is that is in us that is becoming? It can't just be called I AM. There's got to be a name for it.”

“If I didn't know you better, I would say you're becoming obsessed here with this idea. Here we're talking about a crisis with your wife and you switch the topic back to philosophy. It seems kind of strange.”

“You're right, it does seem strange, but I have a good reason for it.” I paused for a moment to think of a good reason that would not be a lie. “Elizabeth is very interested in my finding the answer. I think it will lift her spirits if I can come up with something good.”

Wayne didn't looked convinced. “That's an odd way to lift someone's spirits.”

I paused. I really hated holding out on Wayne. “We've been friends a long time,” I finally said. “Could you just trust me on this? It would mean a lot to me and possibly to Elizabeth.”

Wayne looked me in the eye. “I've known you a long time. I think there's something you're not telling me here, but if it's important, I'll just play along.”

“There is something I can't tell you. All I can tell you right now is that it is important that I find the answer to this question.”

“Now you've really got me curious.” Wayne leaned forward and lowered his voice. “Come on. You can tell me. You tell me everything.”

“I'll tell you as soon as I can, but just not now.”

Wayne leaned back. “OK. I'll let you off the hook for now, but I'll expect the juicy details soon. Why do I keep getting the feeling that you think you've had some vision or something?”

I tried to smile nonchalantly. “Who knows? Now I want you to wrack that brain of yours and tell me if you have any deeper thoughts on this subject.”

“Answer me this then. Do you really think we are capable of getting the right answer?”

“You know I've never lied to you. I will tell you this. I happen to know that we are capable of getting the answer.”

“You think so,” Wayne said looking at me squarely.

“I told you I know so,” I said with emphasis.

“OK,” said Wayne. “We'll proceed on the assumption you are correct here and that we can really go where no man has gone before. Perhaps a key here is God really said to Moses he is becoming rather than he just is. Becoming implies action, movement, evolution, whereas I AM implies a static, unchangeable state. Now all religions that I know of think that God is perfect and does not change, but I AM BECOMING implies a God who is changing and moving toward a higher state. That means He isn't perfect, because if He were, He wouldn't have to evolve any further. Maybe humans are gods, as some teach, for the very reason that we are imperfect and that we are also in a constant state of change and evolution. Maybe the perfection of God is just some hocus pocus passed down through the ages and is completely false. Maybe God is trapped in this universe and is just trying to find his way home like the song says.”

A light went off in my head. “Good Wayne! I don't know if you're right, but at least you're leading us into new territory. Now let's assume that you're on the right track about what God is. If we are truly gods, then who or what would we be?”

“That's a hard one. Maybe we're movement or action,” said Wayne.

“You know, that could be it. Everything else that people think we are is just a vehicle or instrument that we use, but action or movement is not a vehicle. You know, as scientists investigate the atomic world they find only motion, but have not found anything they consider solid. When you think of it, everything is made of wavelengths in motion, therefore the answer may be motion.”

“That's true. Without motion on the atomic level there would be no life, or form, as we know it.”

I reached in my pocket for money to pay for my breakfast. “I think we're on the right track. I feel it in my gut. Thanks for your help Wayne. Sorry to cut our breakfast short, but I've got to go.” I stood up, ready to leave.

“Why do I get the feeling we'll be talking about this again?” Wayne mused as we walked toward the cashier..

“You're probably right, my friend. You're probably right.”

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Attack Of Darkness

I had a feeling I should not leave Elizabeth alone for long and I should return as soon as possible. I found that my hunch was right when I returned home and found her wheelchair was empty.

“Elizabeth!” I shouted

There was no answer.

I started searching all the rooms in the house. Finally I heard a whimpering coming from the bathroom. I ran inside and found Elizabeth in a corner with a look of terror on her face with tears drying on her cheeks.

“Sweetheart, what happened? How did you even get in here with no wheelchair.”

“I needed you and you were gone. I told you that I didn't want you to go.”

“Here, let me help you back into your wheelchair and we'll talk.” I lifted her up and carried her back to her chair. She was clinging to me very tightly, softly crying. “There. Now I'll make you a cup of tea and we'll talk.”

I made us both some herb tea and sat down facing her across the table. “OK. Now tell me what happened.”

She looked at me and suddenly a look of terror took over her face like I had never seen before. She screamed “It's him!” and started wheeling away from me as fast as she could.

I ran after her and caught her and forced her to look at me again. “Look at me! It's me. No one else.”

“I saw his face. Your face became his face!”

“Whose face?” I asked with no small amount of frustration.

“When you left I felt tired and fell asleep in my chair. I dreamed I was at this flea market where there were all kinds of people hacking their wares. I was in my wheelchair, but managed to wheel my way around from booth to booth until I came to one that seemed to me manned by John. I thought it odd that he was wearing dark sunglasses and I wheeled my way closer and saw that he was selling all kinds of scarves and fine handkerchiefs. As soon as he noticed me he said: *I know what you want.* He picked up an old wooden box and opened it up and pulled out the old red handkerchief.

“*Can I have it?*' I pleaded.

“*Of course you can have it my dear. Here, grab hold.*'

“He dangled the handkerchief in front of me and I grabbed an end and immediately I felt my strength returning, but was puzzled by the fact that John held on to the other end. *Are you going to let me have it?"*
I asked?

"*On just one condition*', John said.

"*And that would be?*'

"*Look into my eyes for six seconds*.

"It seemed like an odd request to me and something about him seemed unlike John. His voice, the sunglasses, the request - it seemed really strange. Nevertheless, I wanted the handkerchief and his request seemed harmless so I agreed.

"Then he said, *After you have looked into my eyes for six seconds you can have the handkerchief.* He took off his sunglasses and to my horror I saw that his eyes had no pupils or iris. They were entirely white. I was surprised, but I really wanted the handkerchief so I looked back at him. Suddenly, I felt the most evil feeling anyone can imagine. Then I felt myself paralyzed as I felt my very life force being sucked from my body. I wanted to turn away, but couldn't. I somehow sensed when the six seconds were up, I would be doomed to death, extinction, Hell...who knows what."

"So, did you look at him for the six seconds?" I asked, anxious to hear her answer.

"In a way the few seconds I did look seemed like an eternity, but somehow internally I seemed to sense the true passing of seconds. During the first three seconds the man's face changed and I saw that this person was not John. He was an older effeminate-looking man with white hair. Right around the fifth second he smiled. It was a smile I never want to see again. It made an evil shiver go all the way through me. The smile seemed as if it belonged to serial killer who is watching his victim die and enjoying the moment of death. At that instant I cried out to God in my heart to give me strength, and just before the sixth second I received power to turn away and instantly woke up."

I gave her a hug and said, "My poor sweetheart. What a terrible experience."

“That's not all,” Elizabeth continued. “After I woke up I realized it seemed real but consoled myself in the fact that it was just a dream. But then to my side I sensed that same awful presence, similar to what happened to you. I tried to wheel myself away from it but it felt like the brake was on. Somehow I fell out of my chair and found myself crawling away. I turned and looked toward the presence again and saw a faint outline of the white-haired man and heard his words in a whisper. *You are dead anyway, why not give your life to me.*”

“I shouted, *NO!"*

“Then he said something very strange. *Tell your husband I know who I AM. I AM THAT I AM. I AM SELF. I, the self, is all that matters.* Then he disappeared, but I still felt his presence and crawled into the bathroom where you found me.”

“Is his presence still here?” I asked.

“I felt it again when I saw his face instead of yours, but it seems to be gone now.”

“It's funny that I felt his presence before, but not now,” I said. “Maybe evil must be revealed as well as good.”

“I'm just glad you're here,” Elizabeth said with a weak smile. “I never want you to leave me again.”

I hugged her again. “You would think going through this disease would be plenty for your share of pain in life without having to go through something like this.”

“I'll tell you this.” she said with a deep sigh. “I thought I knew what fear was when I found out that I had an incurable disease, but that was nothing compared to the shear terror I felt today. It was as if my soul was at stake, in addition to my life.” Elizabeth was still shaking, and I continued to hold her close.

“I know,” I nodded. “I felt that presence. You really do have to experience it to understand the feelings it can generate.” I took a deep breath and let Elizabeth go. “I think it's time we finished that cup of tea.”

We seated ourselves around the table again after micro waving the tea so it was hot again and resumed our conversation. I asked, “This entity made an interesting statement about who he thinks we are. Now how did he word that?”

“He said to tell you *I AM.* *I AM THAT I AM.* *I AM SELF.* *I, the self, is all that matters.*”

I replied, “What I find interesting here is that John said that *I AM THAT I AM* is a mistranslation. It's interesting to compare the two translations.
I am
implies a static condition and is another way of saying self.
I AM BECOMING
implies an evolving condition that involves looking outside of self. In a weird way this makes a lot of sense to me. To the good guys out there, self is not the ultimate, but what the self evolves into in connection with all other selves is the thing. But to the bad guys all there is self, so every goal they have is to only benefit the self as they see it.”

“Why do you suppose his eyes had only whites?” Elizabeth asked, calmer now, but I could tell the memory of the event was still horrifying to her.

“I'm not sure. Maybe it's a symbol of their blindness.”

“So do you think the New Agers are wrong when they tell us to look to the self for everything?”

“Maybe they just don't have the whole truth. On the other hand, the Christians could be equally as wrong for stressing the translation I AM instead of I AM BECOMING. It seems that both the New Agers and the Christians may have inadvertently put undue attention on the self.”

“The funny thing is that this evil entity may have helped us rather than hindered,” said Elizabeth, stirring her tea. “Is it possible that when all is said and done we are just individual selves?”

“In some way we are individual selves and for the Dark Brothers that's where it ends. Thus, all they do is for selfish ends. But the keynote of the Brothers of Light is unselfishness. Therefore, they see something beyond self or greater than self. Somehow, I feel that the word *BECOMING* is a key one here. Perhaps self is meaningless to those in the light because they are in a state of evolution. Therefore the self tomorrow would be a different self than the self today.”

“And, by contrast, the unevolving self would be the same tomorrow as it is today,” Elizabeth added.

“And the fascinating thing to me is that this is one of the main perceptions that people have of God - that He is the same yesterday, today and forever. When you think of it, this concept would make for a very boring God, wouldn't it?” I mused.

“Maybe that's one of the reasons I turned off religion so much. I always relished new experiences and everything about religion seems to be centered around keeping things the way they are now and not rocking the boat with any changes.” She paused and finished her tea, then asked, “So what did you and Wayne come up with about the first key?”

“It seems that everything we've come up with that we could possibly be so far is a vehicle of some kind. Even consciousness itself is like a camera our real self uses. So we finally came up with something that John can't say is a vehicle.”

“And what would that be?”

“Everything is created by vibration, action or motion, so that has to be what we are.”

"Sounds like a strange answer to me."

"But think about it. If everything was still, there would be no interplay; and if even the vibrations that make the atom were stilled, there would be nothing to exist. We must be composed of some type of vibration in motion; and if it ceased to exist, then we would cease to exist. Therefore, we must be composed of movement itself. That would explain why we are becoming."

"Maybe, and it is a good thought, but it doesn't feel right to me," Elizabeth said frowning.

"It may not be right, but it's the best I can come up with at the moment. I have a feeling that we're getting close. I think the next hint will tell the tale."

"I hope so," Elizabeth sighed. "I don't know how much longer my strength can hold out."

I took Elizabeth's hand. "You'll make it, Sweetie. When we solve the third key John is committed to healing you."

"If you could solve even the first one I would be encouraged," she said. "It appears that you're trying to find an answer that has eluded the best philosophers in history. What makes you think that you can go beyond anything that has ever been done?"

"No one else had the apostle John to help them, " I said softly.

"But John's been wandering the earth for two thousand years. Maybe they have had his help. Maybe this will be harder than you think."

Good point I thought to myself as I tried to assure her that we will solve the keys.