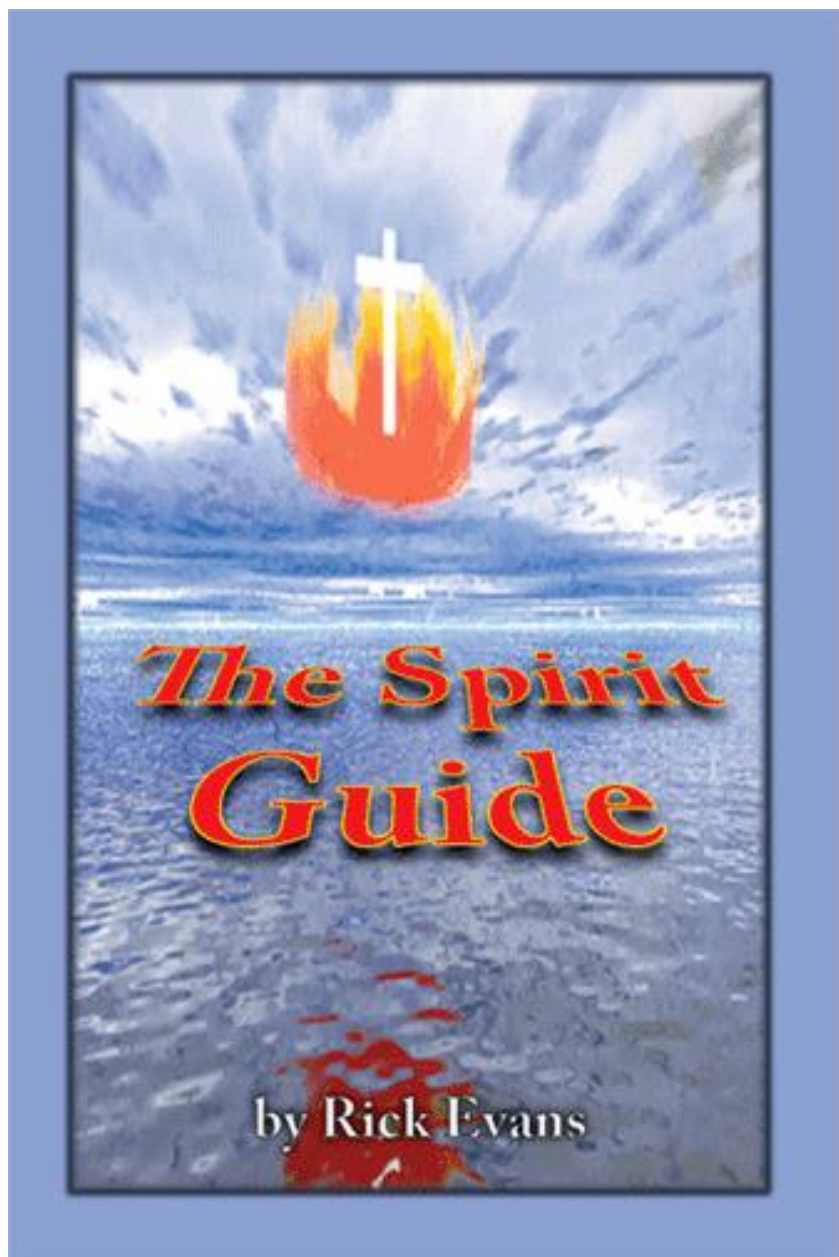


THE SPIRIT GUIDE



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Freely, freely, you have received,
Freely, freely give,
Go in my name [Jesus Christ],
And because you believe,
Others will know that I live.

To my precious brothers and sisters in [Christ Jesus,
He who is the Lord over all]
For each of you who know how to give and receive
freely, not counting the cost, in love, please accept
this book as a gift of love, and pass it on too.

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to request permission to make copies. Only requests
to copy the whole book in its entirety will be
entertained, as the whole book must be read to
ensure correct thinking remains.

Your little brother in the family of [God Almighty,
Father of Jesus Christ],
Rick Evans

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THE SPIRIT GUIDE

Prologue

Over the last three years, since the completion of the study book explaining the spiritual world, a way to explore this unseen world from a safe vantage point has been growing inside me.

This novel is based on a conglomeration of true stories. Some are my own experiences and the rest are from others I have known and helped. Names, places and events have been altered, but the spiritual events, their triggers, and consequences have not. The things that happen in this book are very, very real.

The fact overlooked by almost every modern day spiritualist, is that the spiritual world is as dangerous as this physical world, with one exception. The safe places are one hundred percent safe, no evil gets in there, but the unsafe places are deadly, and accessible from everywhere.

In these unsafe places, there is no mercy. If I wander into these places, my spirit can easily be ripped and ravaged, slammed into a dark and dingy place, and this, while my body remains alive. I keep functioning, existing, talking, working, playing, socialising and studying, but when I am quiet and on my own, I feel empty inside.

The impact on our own, and our children's, current, or future family, is just as devastating. Because these

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things can't die, they simply get passed on down the generations, through our blood lines.

If you are curious about the spirit world then please read this book. I wish it had been around in my day for when I went searching for the truth I unfortunately asked the wrong people, and walked into the wrong places; my scars are deep, and thirty years later, still tender. At least ninety five percent of the people on our planet are wandering in these spiritually unsafe places, and they do not even know it.

Only when you finish this story will you have most of your questions answered. One thing is certain, no matter how old or young you are this story will change you forever.

Enjoy the book and understand the world of the spirit.

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Chapter 1 – The beginning of changes

I looked intently at the crack under the door. I thought there had been some movement outside my bedroom door. Had I imagined it?

The faint glow of the moon, which shone through the skylight in the passage, lit up its length with a gentle, pale blue glow. I knew the passage well. In my mind, I could see how the moon shine would be cascading over the half, by one and a half metre landscape. It had been painted by some unknown painter in nineteen eighty two, and was a painting of my grandmother's farm. In the foreground was a lush green valley, with a river running through it. The river was the southern border of her farm. An old Victorian style house nestled amongst the trees at the base of a mountain. This mountain was the northern border of the farm. I loved to climb that mountain when visiting there during the holidays.

The moon shine outside my door would also be caressing the old oak dresser with its regal back set against the passage wall. The dresser took up its position, just outside, and to the left of my bedroom door. It was about a meter wide, by two metres long, and almost a metre high. It had no drawers, and was more of a trunk than a dresser.

Many times, the old dresser had been a prime hiding place, during the games of 'hide and seek' we played, when my cousins and friends came over. It had now been promoted to a more stately vocation. It stood as a "ghostly" sentry, covered with a white tablecloth, which reached right down to the floor on all

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sides. It held the family photos, which stood as testimonials to a happy past.

As I lay on my bed though, these were not what bothered me. I was watching the glow which crept in under the door. The dim light formed a small rectangle of pale blue on the floor, just inside my closed door. Although the crack under the door was only a centimetre in height, the glow stretched for nearly fifteen centimetres into my room. It was formed by the moonshine reflecting off the angled white skirting, at the base of the passage wall, opposite my door.

The gentle pale glow, invisible during the day, was comforting at night. It bore witness to the truth that beyond this door were the ones closest to me.

There it was again! A faint movement, as though someone had slowly moved past my door. The light faded from left to right, from the direction of mom's bedroom, towards the small study at the end of the passage. Such fading was not uncommon though. I had seen it often when my mom or sister was awake, and walked past my closed door. But it was now two o'clock in the morning, and I could not hear any sound from anywhere.

Two things were worrying me. The wooden floorboards of the passage were old and creaky in this big old double story house, in which my mom, my sister and I lived. It was hopelessly oversized for our small family, but it had been cheap. We had worked hard to fix it up, my dad, mom, and us two kids. Hammers, nails, sore thumbs, paint scraping, varnishing, paint under the finger nails and the like.

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Dad was not really a handy man, but he had done his best. As a result, the house was not aesthetically beautiful, but we called it home and it felt like home. "That's what matters", mom would say: "A house must be a home, or it's not worth living in."

I lay there in my bed, my eyes and ears straining, for any clue that could guide me to determine what I had glimpsed. My mind was racing. I should have heard something...

If it was our dog, 'Sasha' - our big bristling tawny coloured three year old German Shepherd, then there would be the tell tale scratching of her claws on the floor, as she walked by. But there was no sound.

It could not be my cat 'Tas', short for 'Tasmanian Devil' - a name dad had given her, when we first introduced her to Sasha. Most cats would have turned and headed for the closest high place, normally up the stairs or a curtain. Not Tas. Tas tackled Sasha with such ferocity that Sasha headed out the back door with a yelp. From the telling pressure at my feet, Tas was at her post, at the bottom of my bed curled up like a sofa scatter cushion.

Tas was white all over, except for her nose, and a stripe down her face over her eye, which was a scar from some previous encounter, probably with an intruding feline. Unlike Sasha, whom we bought from the pet shop, and who is as mild mannered as a teddy bear, Tas is a well inducted alley cat. Tas had come with the house, and as far as she was concerned, was its rightful owner. She granted us permission to stay for as long as we fed her, scratched her ears, paid attention to her, never locked her in, and stayed out of her way when she was in a bad mood.

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We felt like her guests, especially when she sat up on top of the tall cupboard in the kitchen, and watched mom cooking, and us walking in and out of “her domain” below. Tas’s eyes were disconcerting to most visitors, and not without reason. One got the impression you were being sized up as an opponent, the way she looked at you with her left blue eye, and her right green eye.

I am not sure why she had chosen to adopt me as her personal pet. But I was grateful. We are best friends, Tas and I, even though we do not appear to seem right for one another. Tas is as tough as nails, and I am quite the ‘conflict avoider’. My black hair and slender features tell of a young teenager going through a growth spurt. My legs and arms are longer than my trunk and my feet are boats. In contrast with Tas’s perfect balance and control, I am often falling over my feet, knocking things over and pretty much being a ‘clumsy oaf’ as mom puts it. My eyes are dark brown, almost black, and I weigh in at forty eight kilograms, against my one metre seventy five centimetres. I am not too short or too tall for my school class mates, but judging by the size eight shoes, I am already outgrowing, that will soon be changing too. I am not pimply like some of those in my grade. I watch and secretly dread the possibility that I might soon be afflicted with what is common to most teenagers. Being a young fifteen leaves me a bit between the ‘safe world’ I knew as a child, and the world of the adults I so want the freedom to explore, and be accepted into.

But at this moment, lying in my bed, in the dark, I feel as though I am in neither of these worlds.

The only light in my room was coming in from under my door, where it was reflecting up off the

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polished wooden floor, and throwing shadows of my toys and furniture against the walls. I took a little comfort from the fact that I was not alone in my room, but my companion lay purring, oblivious to my concerns. She was in her own dreamland. A dreamland I wished that right now, I could be sharing. But I could not sleep. Something was going on in my house.

Again the tell-tale grey shadow moved across the rectangular strip of moonshine painted on my floor, but this time it moved from right to left. As I watched it, it disappeared off my rectangular radar.

I waited... and then realised I had forgotten to breathe and so inhaled deeply, cringing at the explosive sound in my head as I exhaled sharply and inhaled again.

I calmed my breathing down and tried to think clearly.

The thing that was bothering me most was that I had woken up with a start, aware of something intangible... something unseen ... Something, which made the hair on my neck stand on end. Strangely, I did not feel afraid when I awoke and sensed this presence. I was simply curious as to what was here and why, paradoxically, a gentle soft peaceful feeling was washing over me. How, I wondered, could such feelings be coupled with the hair on my neck rising and my heart beating faster? I could not make sense of it. But it was real.

There the movement was again. From right to left ... Again... whatever was causing the shadowy movements outside my room, there were two of them.

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I lay there, hearing my heart beating, watching. Should I go and wrench open the door and challenge whoever or whatever it was. There was a lot of dark space between me and the door. It was not the dark that was now making me afraid, it was the unknown. In my mind I began imagining all sorts of different creatures, some known from TV programs and movies I had watched, but many unknown masterpieces from my own imagination too. I was beginning to feel more and more afraid. Although there was peace in my room, it was not within me. My fear continued to rise.

I chose to lie there under the covers; my head was buried, with just a peep hole between the crisp linen sheet, and my soft duvet. Through this hole I could survey the whole length of the crack beneath the door, and its rectangle of pale blue moonshine.

There I lay, every muscle tense with fear.

The sense of peace I had felt brief moments ago was now completely gone. I tried to conjure it up, but failed dismally. I now felt desperately alone, as though there was no one left in the world. It seemed impossible, that just beyond my door, my sister and mom lay sleeping. Should I call mom? I knew that if my sister heard me, and there was nothing wrong, she would never stop teasing me about it. No! I was now the 'Man of the House', their 'protector', as my father had said when he left the last time.

That was another pain I did not need to be reminded of right now. I had been nine, and my sister Candy, short for Candice-Lee, was then six. I remember it was a Saturday morning. My father had walked up to the front door and rung the door bell,

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quite out of character from the usual “unlock and open”. I saw him standing at the front door waiting for it to open.

Mom had told us that our daddy had been away on a business trip, so I was expecting him to come waltzing in with presents in his hands, smiles, hugs and kisses for everyone. Perhaps even promises of a trip to McKee’s, for my favourite lime milkshake, maybe even a boat ride on the lake down near the zoo. If we were really good, we might even get a chance to go to the zoo.

But dad just stood there. I was puzzled for a moment, but only a moment. I was a nine year old boy, who loved his dad. I squealed with delight, “Dad’s here Candy! Dad’s here!”

We all rushed to the door. Mom ran too, but for a different reason. She knew what we did not, and she had hoped our dad would arrive at a time when we might have been elsewhere, in the back yard, upstairs asleep, or next door at David’s house.

David Riley was a long time friend of mine and Candy. He had been our neighbour for the past two years, ever since we moved into the little town called Bagleystone. We lived at number eight Sharon Road, and the Rileys lived at number ten, even numbers being on one side of the road, and odd numbers on the other. David was eight years old and the three of us were inseparable. David was a grade below me, so we did not spend time together at school. At home though, he was usually at our house, or we were at his.

That day, we were at home, without David. Mom tried to open the door and keep us behind her, but

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there were two little fireballs on their way out, and she was not stopping them.

Dad had scooped us both up into his arms, me in the crook of his right, and Candy in his left. It took a moment to register that things were horribly wrong. There were tears running down dad's cheeks. I was shocked. What was happening? I looked quickly at mom and saw then that she was sobbing too. I remember feeling terribly sorry for them, for reasons I could not identify. I also remember feeling frightened for what this might mean for Candy and me.

Whatever was wrong was very wrong. "What's wrong daddy?" I asked through my own tears of fear. "What's wrong mommy?" I pleaded, wanting to hold out my arms to her, but having Candy beat me to it. Mom took Candy in her arms, and sobbed in a heart-wrenching way, as though her life was being ripped away from her, and the tips of her fingers were slipping off the edge. There was nothing she could do anymore, but let go and fall.

My dad stood me up in front of him, and then got down on both knees, so that he was slightly shorter than me. He looked into my eyes and said, "Do you remember when you broke the beautiful vase mommy got from Granny?"

"Yes" I replied slowly, at first thinking that maybe I had broken something else, but was not really sure what.

"Do you remember that when it broke, we didn't know how to fix it, and so we had to throw it away?"

"Yes" I said hesitantly, not understanding at all where he was going with this.

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"Well", he continued, "Your daddy has made a terrible mistake. Daddy..." he took a deep breath, the tears now running in rivers down his cheeks. I reached up and used my sleeve to try and dry them away, but they just kept coming. He cuddled me close, so that my head lay on his shoulder. "Daddy has broken mommy and daddy's marriage, and mommy and I don't know how to fix it. So now we have to go away from each other. I have to go to another job far away, and I don't know when I will see you, Candy and mommy again. That makes you the 'Man of the house'. Take care of everyone for me." With a great big final squeeze he stood. He gave Candy a kiss and a hug. He hugged my mom one last time, and handed her an envelope. That was the last I saw of him for quite a while.

Although it seemed like it was years ago, the pain of it still burnt me deep inside. I lay there for about the next twenty minutes, the memories and the pain still burning inside. When I was sure that the light and presence had gone, everything shattered into insignificance, as the overwhelming desperation of my mom's and dad's divorce finally engulfed and drowned me. I have relived that day, and the pain, again, and again, since they parted, a raw wound that never healed. Although I had done nothing, I blamed myself for all sorts of things I thought I should have done to stop it from happening. Much later I would grow up to understand that everyone must reap what they sow, and it was not my fault my mom and dad had to reap what had been sown in their marriage. But at this point, I blamed myself.

I punched my pillow repeatedly with clenched teeth, grunting, suppressing a guttural, cry in a sort of controlled anger. I forgot all about the movements I had seen, the presence, and all that had just

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happened. I collapsed into my pillow. I cried, and cried, and cried, drenching it, until I had to turn it over. I just lay there, and sobbed for what seemed an eternity. Finally I fell asleep.

The next morning I awoke with bloodshot puffy eyes, and washed up three times. I tried soaking my face in a basin of cold water, holding my breath and closing my nose. It didn't help much. Mom still noticed and asked, "Are you alright Honey?" I could see that she must have heard me last night, for she did not pry any further when I said "I'm OK". I had to be, life goes on. I composed myself, put on my "I'm in control" face, and forced the memory, and the pain, back into its box, and back on one of the shelves in my heart.

Later at school, I searched for Brian Dundy, whom I called Brin. Brin is a red headed freckle faced 'shorty', with a fiery sense of humour, and a temper to match. He is fourteen years old and a year younger than I. He had skipped a grade because he was "too intelligent", so he always said. Sometimes Josh and I were not quite so sure about the 'intelligence' bit.

Josh was the other person I was in search of. Josh, whose real name was Joshua Harry Commington, was tall and skinny, taller than me by about half a head. Josh has dark brown hair and green eyes. He always seems to be embroiled in a battle of the zits, which play across his face, each an airplane in the Battle of Britain. No sooner is one dealt a deadly blow, than another appears out of nowhere to join the battle.

As for me and my clumsy self, I am just, I suppose, plain different from everyone else. I have no real

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interest in chasing a ball, a girl, or joining in the discussions that normally tended to one of these two topics. The discussions most of the boys entered into, seemed to me to be a type of competition, to pip the other at the post, with more of the words adults wouldn't even use, or with subject matter that would take the listener to the extremes of either throwing up, or choking back tears. It was all about who could get the greatest reaction from the group. I am sure none of them saw enough of themselves to see this, but as the outsider, I would watch them. They were like a group of grade one soccer players, knowing nothing of playing in their own positions, surrounding the ball wherever it went. In this case that ball was 'peer recognition', and it attracted them all like moths to the flame. A very successful society control mechanism.

Brin, Josh, and I, were the misfits of the playground. We mostly kept to ourselves. We avoided contact with the others, unless it was Physical Education or other compulsory events. I played soccer, baseball and rugby. I enjoyed these sports, even though I didn't get the ball much. When I did, I often found the ball moving directly from me to my opponents, much to the opposing team's satisfaction and my team's disgust.

Brin usually came to school just before the bell rang for school to start. So I was surprised to find them both outside our home room class, and then not so surprised, when I saw Brin furiously copying out homework from Josh's English book.

I spoke to them about what had happened the previous night, but found, that neither was really sympathetic, nor understanding. They blamed the clouds moving overhead for the shadows under my

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door the night before. This did not really explain the different directions of movement I had seen, but then I was not going to argue further. I could see that this discussion just was not going to grip them.

Later that morning, as we were leaving our English class, Miss Grinter, our teacher for that subject, called Josh and Brin aside. I waited at the door as the rest of the class were filing out. Miss Grinter had discovered that Brin had copied Josh's work, and she proceeded to punish him with one hundred lines that he would have to write out by the next morning. The lines should say, "I will do my homework at home", and another hundred lines saying, "I will not copy Josh's homework". Josh also got a hundred lines saying, "I will not let Brin copy my homework". Unfortunately, Brin being the fiery little guy he is, piped up sarcastically that he would have to copy from me next time. Miss Grinter was so displeased with this remark, that she gave him another hundred lines saying, "I will not copy Benjamin's homework or anyone else's".

Somehow, I got "nailed" with a hundred lines too. I had to write out, "I will not let Brin or Josh copy my homework either". I was about to protest, when I saw that Miss Grinter was so mad, she probably would have doubled my lines. She turned on Josh again, and with a very red face, told him he had better change his hundred lines to "I will not let Brin or Benjamin copy my homework". Had I not received any lines myself, I would probably have found the whole episode quite funny, but as it was, I was not impressed. We were silent as we walked out of English class and down the crowded corridor, towards the lockers, no one daring to look at each other.

The passage was a sea of seething bodies headed in every direction, babbling to one another. The

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passage was wide, being able to accommodate eight students abreast. It needed to be that wide, as our school catered for the whole town, and had in excess of a thousand six hundred children, from grade eight to twelve. We bumped, jostled and crab walked through the criss-cross currents of bodies, as students kept seeing their friends across the passage, and regardless of impact on traffic flow, plunged across with the continuous "excuse me" or "pardon me" and the occasional gruff voice of a grade eleven or twelve boy "coming through" or simply "move pip squeak". I was convinced the social structure of adulthood could never be this complex. "If I could survive here", I told myself, "I could make it anywhere".

I made it to my locker with my bag still intact, and on my shoulder. I hesitated, and then swung it down reaching for my locker key, which I always kept in my right blazer pocket.

As if the key were a panic button, upon touching it, I immediately became aware of the presence I had experienced the night before. My neck hairs rose and a shudder ran all the way down my spine.

I froze.

I whispered to Josh, whose locker was just below mine.

He was shovelling the books he needed into his bag, which sat on the floor. Josh was not the most organised of people. He looked up and said "speak up, I can't hear you".

I motioned to him to stand up. He did. Without moving, I said, "Do you feel it? It's here!"

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“It?”

“Yes, ‘It’! That thing I told you about that was at my house last night. Do you feel ‘it’?”

“You’re losing it Benjy”, he replied, “I feel nothing, I feel the vibrations of a lot of noisy people, but no ‘it’”.

Josh bent down, finished his shovelling, locked his locker, and stood up on my right side. He looked at me, as I stood frozen; facing my closed locker, hand in pocket. “See you at Religious Education”, he said, “Then I’ve got Accountancy”. Josh had taken Accountancy when I had taken History, we split twice a week, but otherwise we had the same subjects, Math, Science, Geography, English and a choice of second language which we shared. Brin shared Josh’s timetable. He turned, and without looking back, walked off down the corridor.

I thought of letting go of the key to see if the presence would disappear. I tried it. No luck, it was still there around me. I was not afraid as there was a clear sense of peace which accompanied this presence. But I did not like what I did not understand. I thought maybe I had someone looking over my shoulder, but I was afraid to look behind me.

Suddenly a thought just popped into my head. I “heard” the thought in my mind “Its OK to turn around”. So slowly I turned. The river of students had reduced to a stream of about three wide, dispersed evenly across the width of the passage. Everyone was moving, except for one person at the lockers on the other side of the passage. A girl, slender, with the same proof of growth I suffered from, namely long thin limbs. I estimated her age to be about my own, but then with girls, you never could tell.

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I knew her from the times I had seen her receiving awards for her drama and ballet at assembly. Her name was Shirley Johnston. She had walked across the stage with such confidence. I remember envying this friendly, smiling person, wishing I could also get awards for what I did, but not willing to put in the effort she probably did. I liked something about her, but could not put my finger on it. I was not in love with her or anything like that. It was just that, she was just, sort of a mystery to me. Anyway, I was not her type. Rumour had it she was rejecting all guys making approaches, so even if I was interested, I was not going to add my name, to those going down in smoke and flames.

Shirley just stood there, her back to her locker, facing me. We locked eyes. For some reason, neither of us turned or looked away. Shirley held my gaze. She just kept right on looking at me. Her lips were moving as though she was whispering something. Then as though we had finished some silent conversation she smiled, turned, shrugged her school bag, loaded with knowledge, into place onto her shoulder. Twisting her back ever so slightly under the weight of the bag to centre it, she walked away. The presence was gone.

I just stared after her. She never did look back though. I followed her until she rounded the corner. "What was that all about?" I thought to myself. The passage was almost deserted when I came to my senses. I realised I was late for class, very late. I quickly unlocked my locker, grabbed the books I needed, and locked up again. Sliding the books into my bag, while holding it in front of me, and running at the same time, was not the best plan. I soon found this out as my feet became my enemy again. I tripped myself and flew through the air like a soccer goal

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keeper, saving a goal, by diving forward to save my bag. I hit the polished floor on my stomach, arms outstretched holding it. I skidded along the corridor floor, colliding with the corner I was planning to turn right at. The only consolation was that the corridors were deserted of laughing eyes.

I picked myself up, gathered the few things which had scattered out of my open bag, and repeated the running-packing exercise. I skidded to a halt outside the third door on the right with the name plate '*Mrs W. Hally*'.

I hesitated, slowed my breath, knowing all eyes were going to be focused on me as I entered. I knocked, hoping to diffuse "Old Hally" with good manners.

Mrs Hally was an old lady, in her late fifties, and very short, I only just looked up at her. She wore stylish spectacles and usually a tweed skirt and blouse. She was a kind-hearted soul, but dynamite if riled.

"Come in" she called from inside.

I opened the door, and looked very apologetically in her direction. "Sorry I'm late Mrs Hally", I said, "I had a bit of an accident at my locker." Those who knew my clumsiness sniggered at the pictures these words conjured up in each of their minds.

"It's Ok. Come in and sit down Benjamin", she said, and then asked, "Are you alright?"

"Yes I'm fine" I replied, choosing not to include my bruised ego as a result of the class laughter.

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Mrs Hally took us for Religious Education, where we had already studied the Muslim and Hindu religions and were now focussing on Christianity. I had no interest in this "bumf" at all. What some people would believe was quite ridiculous. Some spoke of spirits in the trees, and all around us, some of which would come and live inside people. Some religions taught that these spirits could treat people as if they were vehicles that could be driven, hitching rides within them and taking over control of people's lives. Absolute rubbish!

Nevertheless it had to be studied for the purposes of 'understanding, tolerance and acceptance'. I had no intention of becoming some religious nut. There were in my view far too many Bible bashing Christians around. You ran into them, if you were any where in the vicinity of the venues they used on their Tuesday and Thursday get-togethers. What was it about Christians that they kept hounding people to join them anyway? I wrote it off to insecurities. In my opinion, they needed many people around them feeling the same thing or else what they chose as their reality, could not be true. Well I gave them plenty distance.

So it was not unnatural then, that I should 'whittle' away my time in this class, thinking on other things. I sat in the fourth row from the front, closest to the window. The window sill was on my left about thirty centimetres wide, and shoulder height. From this vantage point, I could see the open fields, and the houses, on the other side of the high fence. The fence belonged to the tennis courts, which ran along the border of our school grounds. My mind wandered back to the incident at the lockers, and how I had stood frozen, too afraid to move. I questioned my mind, "What were the words I had heard in my head? And

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where had they come from? I certainly had not tried to think them up. What had I heard? ...”

“What did the angel say?” Mrs Hally’s voice cut through my thoughts. I looked at her absentmindedly. To my shock and horror, she was looking at me, and so was the rest of the class. “I’ll repeat the question again Benjamin. What did the angel say?” I panicked! I had heard nothing. I opened my mouth and the only thing that popped out, was what I had heard earlier “Its OK to turn around.”

Well the class roared with laughter. As I turned redder, they laughed even more. Mrs Hally, was unsure of who the class was laughing at. Was there something behind her that was causing the laughter? She looked behind her, which simply made matters worse. The rest of my fellow ‘knowledge eaters’ did not miss her action and the words I had used. The roaring laughter came now in fits and gasps, as the normally quiet group of students, tried almost unsuccessfully, to remain in their seats and upright. Mrs Hally went bright red too. She was far from amused.

“Benjamin Turner! First you show contempt for this class by arriving late, then you do not pay attention, and worst of all you mock me by making a comment to ridicule me! Get out of my class room! Stay out until the end of the period! I will deal with you later.”

I packed away my book under Mrs Hally’s frozen stare. The class was now dead silent. It was a good thing Brin did not have a pin. With his sense of humour, he would have dropped it and claimed he was testing the theory. That would have set off the storm trooper in “Old Hally”. The way I was the focus now, I would have been even worse off. I stood there

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in the silence, packing up. I finished, shouldered my bag, and stepped out from between my chair and desk.

As I opened the door and walked out the room to sit in the corridor, I vaguely heard Mrs Hally's words "The angel said 'fear not for I bring glad tidings of great joy..." The only thing which stuck was the "fear not". After the lesson, "Old Hally" had surprised me, by simply forgiving me. I found no way to rebuff or rebel against that, and so just said that I was sorry, and that I had not meant any harm by it. But her earlier words echoed through my mind throughout the last two periods of the day. "Fear not Fear not Fear not".

When I got home, I realised how little sleep I had had the night before. I went up the stairs to my bedroom, bending over double, using my hands to push my knees down. I bumped my bedroom door open with my bag, walked in, and dropped it on the floor by dropping my shoulder. Using my heel, I tapped the door closed, and collapsed onto my bed, lying at an angle across it, with my feet extending into empty space. I heard the door click closed. I turned my head, laying it on my pillow. I looked at the crack under the door. The rectangle lit by moonshine last night was now invisible. Someone was zipping my eyes closed. I tried to keep them open, but it was impossible. My last thought, as I drifted over the threshold of the physical reality into the darkness, was "Fear not Fear not Fear not".

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Chapter 2 – Confirmed

I awoke to mom shaking my shoulder gently, "Ben? ... Ben, wake up. ... Its supper time Ben."

I stirred and mumbled "Mmmm, What time is it? How long have I been asleep?"

"A good few hours Ben, come on, get up. Wash your face and hands, then come on down to eat." She turned and walked out leaving the door open. I just caught her words, "We're eating spaghetti bolognaise". The last word I had to put together myself, as her voice trailed away down the stairs. I rolled over and stretched. Spaghetti was one of my favourite meals. I could not very well pass this up. Sitting up, I stretched and yawned. I stood and made for the bathroom. The day's happenings flooded back into my blank mind. I washed up and headed down the stairs. I said nothing while we ate.

Deep in thought, I tried to figure everything out. I was failing dismally. My forehead must have furrowed a bit too much, because mom had stopped with her fork in her hand, empty, while she sat watching me. Gently, she asked, "What's up Ben?"

"Nothing mom," I replied, "Just had a busy day. I feel really tired."

I hated hiding things from her, but I couldn't very well tell her there had been someone in our house last night, and I was too chicken to defend my family, now could I. Then there was that incident with Shirley at

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the lockers. I couldn't tell her about that either. She would think I liked Shirley or something. "Nope, not mom. Maybe dad?" I thought. "No, he is not close enough to me emotionally." I knew I had to find someone I could speak to.

Nothing seemed to ever escape mom though, she seemed to have her own thoughts on the matter, but chose not to pry any further. She just said "Don't forget I am here. You do not have to go through everything alone Ben."

"Thanks mom." I replied, "I'll remember that." If I had known where I was heading, had I included her in my spiritual searching, my spiritual wounds might have not been so deep and painful. But I had already decided this was something I had to do on my own.

After a brief silence mom dropped a bomb that took me a few seconds to recover from. After almost swallowing my fork, as well as my mouthful, and then trying to cough them both out. I sputtered twice, gave a final cough, and said, "What did you say?" not believing the implications of what her simple words implied.

She repeated, "I said the Riley's house was burgled last night".

I went cold.

"How did they get in?" I asked slowly.

Mom's voice took on a concerned note, "Ben, are you OK? You've gone very pale."

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"I'm OK mom." I recovered my composure quickly by putting another mouthful of spaghetti into my mouth. I spoke again, getting the words around my food in such a way as to sound as normal as is possible, with a full mouth. "How did they get in?"

"Don't eat and talk at the same time, I can't hear what you are saying." she said. "Repeat the question once you've finished the food in your mouth."

"Good!" I thought, "By her chiding response, mom's been successfully sidetracked. No need to alarm her with my surprised reaction". I finished my mouthful.

"How did they get in?" I asked in a less interested tone.

"The Riley's left a window open. They think they got in that way. That reminds me, we normally leave some of our windows open. We had better close them at night."

"I agree mom, we don't want them coming back to our house." I said, secretly hoping she did not pick up on the slip up of "back to" I put into that sentence. If she had, she did not show any sign of it.

"What did they take?" I asked around another mouthful.

I received a stony silence, which meant "I'm not talking to someone who speaks with their mouth full". I finished chewing and washed it down with a gulp of juice. "What did they take?" I asked again.

"Their entertainment centre, a few paintings, and Cheryl's jewellery", said mom.

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Cheryl is David's mom, a plump fun-loving person, always full of smiles and happiness. She has the privilege of not having to work, and so takes it upon herself to have kids over regularly, which assists the mom's of David's and Gertie's friends. Gertie is six years older than David, and five older than me. We do not really spend time together, as the age and maturity gap sets us in different realities.

"Paintings?" I asked, "Were they worth much?"

"Apparently they were quite expensive. They only took the valuable ones. The police think they are professionals, and probably art thieves, who took the entertainment centre to make it look as if they were normal everyday crooks."

"If that is true, then they must have known what paintings they had in their house" I concluded, and then asked, "Do we have valuable paintings?"

"Only one", she replied, "The picture of your grandmother's house in the passage upstairs."

"Oh!" I said surprised. She continued, "Yes, we had it valued when your dad and I were divorcing and the evaluator said it was worth quite a lot".

Candy piped up at this point. She had been silently listening in to the conversation, completely unnoticed, as is the custom of children who are trying to make sense of the adult world around them. "Can I have the painting in my room mom?"

"No mom!" I interjected before mom could reply, "I want it in my room. I am the one who climbs grandma's mountain in the painting. I should have it."

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Mom had long ago adopted a strategy of 'unkept promises' to diffuse sibling rivalry. "I'll think about it. Mean time it stays where it is." Candy and I looked at each other, and the darts of anger flew between our eyes. But we both knew mom had no intention of even thinking about moving the painting to either of our rooms.

We ate our spaghetti in silence.

Silence is a void which demands filling, if not with words then with thoughts. I found myself drawn back into the previous night's incident. I thought to myself, "The burglars must have been in our house, and they must have walked down our passage. Why had they not taken our painting? What was it with that feeling I got, that presence I felt." *I built many imaginary possibilities as I chewed; each failed the scrutiny test though.*

After supper, Candy cleared the table. This was one of her chores. Her others included, washing, drying and packing away the dishes, helping with cooking and cleaning. My chores were: taking the garbage out, sweeping the house, mowing the lawn, tending the garden, and being available for physically demanding tasks, when these arose.

I took a tour of the windows. I was in my mind, a night watchman, inspecting the battlements of a castle. I ensured each window and door was locked shut. I also searched to find out if everything was still in its place.

Satisfied that everything was intact, I returned upstairs to do my homework. It didn't take too long,

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as I had not received much that day. I checked my study schedule – Religious Education was my next exam, well it was more a test than an exam actually, and was of no real consequence as it was not a failing subject. “No studying required”, I thought. I packed my school books and got my clothes ready for the morning, laying them over my chair to keep the creases out.

Then I remembered my punishment lines. I moved my clothes, sat down and took out my writing pad. Resigned to my task, I began. I figured the length of my sentence and calculated the size of handwriting required. Then I began writing “I”, “I”, “I”, “I”, “I”,... once on each line, all the way down three and a bit pages, making up the hundred lines. Returning to the first page I wrote the next word “will”, “will”, “will”,... and so I continued until I had written “I will not let Brin or Josh copy my homework either” a hundred times. I was not sure if Miss Grinter really required the word “either” but she had said it so I put it in. I stuffed the papers into my English book, and laid out my clothes again.

“Where was Tas?” I thought. Then I remembered that I had locked all the windows. “This is going to be a challenge for Tas”, I murmured. She hated being locked in or out of anywhere. I searched the house. She was nowhere. “She’s probably outside” I said to myself. I heard a thump at the kitchen window. It was a chest high window, so this noise made me jump. I was afraid to open the curtain. What if the burglars had come back? The light was on in the kitchen, a single, long fluorescent tube. I switched the light off intending to go to the curtain and take a peek through the side. Hopefully I would not be silhouetted. As I did so, I was startled at the dark shadow against the curtain, outlined by the lights of the house behind

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ours. Then I relaxed, and let out my breath with a deep sigh, as I made out the shape of a cat, "arms" outstretched spread-eagled. She was holding on to the wooden cottage pain window bars with her claws.

I moved the curtain aside and opened the window. Tas came in, arched her back, stretched, and sat down perching right at the point where the window would have to be, if I was to be able to close it. She gave me a wilting glare as if to say "What do you think you are doing to my house! Locking me out! Huh!!" I explained about the burglars as though she might understand. I picked her up off the window sill and moved her to the kitchen counter. I leaned over and closed the window and the curtain. I finished off, turning and calling after me "You'd better get used to it. The windows stay closed at night from now on." I could feel the daggers in my back as I walked out of the kitchen.

I lay on my bed reading a book I had taken out of the school library titled, "Unexplained happenings". I read this while waiting for Tas to come up to my room. Once she was in, I switched off my light, closed my door and crept into bed. From the safety of my covers I watched the single piece of rectangular light as it spread into my room. I was afraid. Whatever, or whoever, had been outside my room the night before, might come back again. Tas comforted me by curling up between my feet. I watched this "window" to what happens outside the door for a long time, but saw nothing. Without intending to, I fell asleep. My dreams were full of strange thoughts, and things from the book I had been reading.

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Suddenly I awoke with a jolt. Slowly, I opened my eyes, not daring to move. I had the same sensation as the night before. I could feel that something or someone was in the room. I could not see anything from the angle in which I lay. Every nerve ending in my body was tingling. The hair on my neck stood to attention. I searched for movement in the glow beneath my door but there was nothing. My bed was against the wall, so nothing could be behind me. I thought that "If there is something here, that wily alley-cat of mine should be aware of it". I slowly manoeuvred the duvet peep-hole around, so that I could see Tas sleeping at my feet.

A deep sense of peace wafted over me, and I was no longer afraid. I lay there wondering what was going on. I watched Tas roll over onto her back and noticed how the breeze gently ruffled the fur under her neck. Tas purred more appreciatively. I watched this for a second, and then my blood ran ice cold.

There was no breeze to ruffle Tas's fur. I had closed all the windows myself. I hunkered down deeper into the safety of my duvet and watched. Eventually I could not take it anymore and whispered "who or what are you and what do you want in my bedroom?"

All I got in return was "Fear not... Fear not ... Fear not", from the previous day, echoing in my mind. I felt sure this 'thing' was not there to hurt me, but nonetheless, I am not comfortable with the unknown, and so whispered in a resolute manner "Go away! Leave me alone!"

The presence disappeared immediately, and for a moment, I missed the feeling of peace and tranquillity it brought with it. But I was glad to have my room to myself and Tas again. I lay there testing my

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environment, not knowing what to make of all this. My heart was a set of drums in the hands of an excited three year old. Eventually it slowed down. Much later, I drifted back into sleep, and slept soundly.

I awoke the next morning remembering the burglary the neighbours had had the night before last, and also the visitation of last night.

I "suited up", ready for school, bolted downstairs taking them three at a time, nearly colliding with the wall halfway down. Here the landing allowed a u-turn, for me to double back on myself, and descend to ground level. I wolfed down my breakfast, a bowl of cereal and a slice of toast, both washed down with a glass of milk. I was really keen to get to school, and tell Brin and Josh, that I thought the burglars had been in our house too the night before last. I also wanted to try to tell them about the thing that came to me last night. I really wanted to have someone to confide in, and they were my only friends. Mom was curious as to my excitement. Besides asking me not to eat so fast, sit still, and be patient, because there were three of us that had to be ready before we could leave, she pried no further.

When we did eventually get to school, I said my quick goodbyes at the car door, and shot off in search of Brin and Josh. I found them standing around outside our classroom. "Done your lines?" I asked. Josh nodded, and Brin grimaced and nodded.

"Did you?" Josh asked.

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"Yes I did". Turning to Brin I continued, "But next time leave me out of your comments." Brin nodded again. And we left it at that.

When I told them what I had discovered, I was not pleased that they did not share my excitement or suspicions. They could not get around the question, "If a burglar had already made it into the house, why had they not stolen anything". If they had been chased away, then by whom? None of my family had chased them away.

I tried to tell them that there was some sort of unseen thing in my house and that it could have chased them away. Even though they were my best friends, this sent them into sniggering, and they rejected it as a possibility right there. From that point onwards I did not share my experiences with them. Oh we played and chatted and had fun, but I never went that personal again with them.

I began to realise that this was an isolated path I had to walk, and that no one else was going to understand. But I still yearned to find someone with whom I could share my experiences. Someone who understood me, and accepted what I was saying. If it was possible, I also wanted someone to tell me what was going on.

Later that day, while sitting on the toilet with my elbows on my knees and my hands under my chin, fingers on my cheeks, I quietly, and under my breath, said "Who are you?" Secretly, I hoped the unseen thing was not around, and yet I hoped somehow "someone" was listening. I got no answer.

Four days later we heard that the Burglars had been caught at a painting studio in the main street.

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They prided themselves on restoring paintings. They stole the valuable ones, and then shipped them off to well-to-do art collectors around the world.

In their confession, which was printed in the paper, they admitted to stealing from number ten Sharon road, the Riley's house. They also confessed to having entered number eight Sharon Road. They had told of how, just after entering through our downstairs window, they had seen someone walking around in the house upstairs. They had felt afraid, and so, escaping detection, they had left through the same downstairs window, and gone onto number ten. I contemplated taking the article to Josh and Brin, but chose not to expose myself to any further ridicule. Mom was shocked that they had been in the house. Candy went to check all her toys were still where they should be. I had done that exercise the previous night, so I was not about to jump up and run around. I just sat there. Mom asked if I had been walking around, I said I hadn't, and she put on her puzzled look. I did not say anything more as my mind was somewhere else.

I was trying to figure out how I could have felt peace at the presence, while they felt fear, and how could they have seen someone upstairs. They never came upstairs, so who had been walking up and down outside my bedroom. If it had not been them, then who was it? How come two? I just sat there perplexed. Of this one thing I was certain, the presence I had felt the night of the burglary, and the next night, was real, and not a figment of my imagination.

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Chapter 3 – McKee's

A month went by with no further incidents and no presences. Everything that had happened was fading into history. I began to think it was all a bit unreal.

I was sitting at my computer in my bedroom, playing one of those war games where you fight alien creatures, and blast them into fragments, with a high powered rifle and grenade launcher, combo weapon.

"Mom's pay is through Ben" I heard Candy calling from downstairs. Mom had just arrived home from Candy's netball practise. Unlike so many horror stories one hears about, my dad was still paying our mom maintenance money. This covered most of our bills. We hear about the minority of cases, where dads don't pay, but these stories get good gossip-time, so these skew the perceptions many people have of divorced parents.

"Mom's Pay", meant an envelope with a cheque for mom and a letter each for Candy and me. My dad, not being computer literate, wrote his letters, one to Candy, and one to me. There is something truly personal and bonding about a handwritten letter. I stored them safely in a locked box in my cupboard.

Candy and I spent part of our longest holiday with our dad, once a year. We always met at Grandma's house, the Victorian house in the painting in the passage. There my dad and I would go climbing.

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With the maintenance money, mom paid a few of the regular bills and the rest was for food, just the necessary clothes, shoes – its amazing how fast my feet had grown last and this year. We had all this, only as a result of my dad's faithfulness to us kids.

So mom could afford to work half day on Candy's netball practise days, these being Tuesday's and Thursdays. I normally caught the bus home and let myself in with my own key. Candy would travel with me three times a week, and the other two days mom collected her from school and brought her home.

At the sound of Candy's voice I turned, knocking over the book I had been reading the night before. A book on how to build time bomb's for kids. I was engrossed on how to build the water time bomb, a cardboard box that could be filled with water. Although tightly sealed to hold the water, the cardboard would saturate through, and eventually, burst at the seams, letting all the water out, in the designated area. I picked the book up and striding out the door, tossed it onto my bed.

On the night's mom got her pay cheque, we would go out to McKee's for a burger and chips. It was one of the rare luxuries we could enjoy.

At six o'clock we started to get ready. McKee's was only about five minutes away.

It was starting to become a little chilly. Autumn was on its way out, and winter was baring its teeth threateningly. It was getting dark earlier now. Dusk was setting in by the time we popped jerseys over our heads, and headed out to the car. It was not a fancy car, but it went nicely. It was an old box shape; lime green, four-door, with a large boot. It had character,

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and came complete with crayon drawings on the upholstery, which just could not be washed out. Then there were the scratch marks, where Sasha had clawed the doors trying to get in during a thunderstorm. She was terrified of lightening and thunder. We had made the mistake of locking her in the garage during a really bad thunderstorm. We paid in paint scratches.

Candy and I had opposing jerseys on. Hers was pink and white, while mine was the same design, but blue and white. Any person looking closely would have noticed that the stitching was not quite even, which is the tell-tale sign that the jerseys were hand-knitted. This accentuated the fact that they were both off the same pattern. Mom was never a knitting person, but she had done her best last winter. She was actually a sales person for a photocopy machine supplies and repairs company. Mom had on her beige three quarter skirt and matching jacket, with a white blouse, open at the neck, beige stockings and black ankle high boots. The matching black belt completed her outfit.

I looked at mom, and noticed for the first time that she really did look lovely. "One day someone is going to want to marry her" I thought, forgetting, that long before marriage, would come courtship, which would bring with it, the stresses associated with changing the family dynamics. But this was all something my inexperienced life did not allow me to contemplate.

We bundled into the car, me in the passenger seat, as usual, and Candy, in the middle at the back. The drive was uneventful, except that my mouth was watering with anticipation. We pulled in through the slipway and found a parking place. Candy and I got out the car quickly. Mom took her time, savouring this entire precious experience with her children. We

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hustled her along until we were standing in the entrance.

Mom approached the proprietor and said, "Table for three please Jamie".

Jamie Witsha, a big Polish family man, had bought the restaurant, two years earlier, from Mr McKee, the original owner.

"Same place as usual?" Jamie asked.

At the same time mom nodded "yes", I knew something was wrong. I could not tell what had started it. I sensed danger, and began to feel quite afraid. My hands were becoming sweaty. I knew I could not say anything to mom or Candy. What would they think? I had nothing provable to base my sensations on.

I scanned the restaurant. It was a simple rectangular restaurant, with square and rectangular tables, scattered unevenly around the large stone built room. A fire was going in the hearth, giving off its warm glow. Each table was complemented by an even number of chairs. The kitchen door was off to the right, and the window facing the road was on the left. At the entrance there was a little counter at which people could pull up a bar stool and have a drink. If the restaurant was really busy they could even eat there.

I searched for some clue that would guide me to see what was wrong. I sifted through the people at the restaurant, identifying each, The Robinson's and their children. A few couples I did not know, and then there was... Shirley Johnston ... She was sitting against the wall opposite the window. Two empty tables

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separating her table from the large restaurant window. She was sitting on her own. The table was set for three, probably herself, her mom and her dad. Her mom worked at the local bank, as a teller. Her dad was the garage owner, a big man with big strong hands that were hardened by the work with grease, oil and engines.

I felt safer at the counter, but we were following the waitress to the square table at the window. As I walked I watched Shirley. She held me locked into her gaze. Again I saw that she was whispering something.

As I was thinking, "What's with this girl?" the same sense of peace came over me, that delightful presence engulfed me once again. The hair on my neck had now bristled all the way down my back and I shuddered. I was taking my seat and still watching Shirley. Her mom joined her. Our eye contact broke as she turned to answer a question her mom was asking.

Shirley was on my right, furthest away from the window. Candy and mom sat opposite me, and I sat with my left side a metre from the window.

I could not shake the sensation that we were not alone at our table. Mom and Candy had not detected anything; they were simply sitting quietly, looking out the window, and sipping the cool drinks that we had ordered. We waited for the burgers to arrive. My hands were no longer sweaty, but I knew something was going on in this room. Something I could not explain nor understand. "Why did no one else feel this?" I thought. "Perhaps I should ask mom or Candy if they could feel it". That was pointless though, as I could already see they were both relaxed as they stared out the window.

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A few minutes later our burgers came. My nerves were on edge as I sensed an ever increasing awareness of the danger. I shook myself thinking that I was imagining things, when without warning a huge crashing sound exploded outside the little restaurant. A car had swerved for some reason and hit a stop sign outside. The pole on which the sign was fixed was flipped over and flattened by the force of the car hitting it. The circular disk on which were written the letters "STOP", was wrenched loose from the pole, and hurled in the direction of the restaurant window. A ten kilogram deadly steel frisbee, a metre across and five millimetres thick, came flying towards the restaurant window, just above our heads. I never saw it though. This all happened so fast that I was still turning my head and body, in the direction of the crashing car, when the steel disk came through.

The huge glass window was old, and had never been replaced with shatterproof glass. It bore the original "McKee's" signage across it in fancy red lettering, with a black outline. The huge window shattered into glass shards of various lengths and thicknesses, from the size of little nails to half a metre long slivers of death. The chairs, tables, food and walls around us were peppered with flying glass.

I had my burger in my right hand as I turned towards the shattering window. In that split second of identifying the danger, I shut my eyes, and spun my head away from the onslaught of sparkling destruction. One of the slivers, about a centimetre thick, and just as wide, about thirty centimetres in length, and as sharp as a needle, pinned my burger to my hand. The glass shard went right through the centre of my palm, between the bones of my index and third fingers. It lodged there with about two thirds of its length, jutting out of the back of my hand. It

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was red on that side, with a drop of scarlet starting to form on the sharp tip.

I looked at mom and Candy. Both were white as a sheet. It seemed as though no harm had come to them. Their eyes were fixed on the glass in my hand. I glanced around the room. Many were in shock, but none were harmed. The Steel disk had embedded itself in the wooden door of the kitchen through which, a moment earlier, a waitress had been entering. From this door poured all the kitchen staff to see what had happened.

My mom transformed from someone shocked and immobile, to someone, frantic, bordering on hysterical. She shrieked at the sight of her son hurt in such a manner. Candy did not move. She just dissolved into tears, and clung to mom. Mom hugged her close, and at the same time eased her slightly to the side, so she could reach over and grab a hold of the offending 'attacker', and wrench it out of my hand. She had to see her son freed.

I saw her intentions, and remembered that I had heard somewhere, that if you are impaled by something, that "something", is most likely blocking potential bleeding, and you should keep it exactly where it is. Keep still, relax, and under no circumstances pull it out. Then get yourself to a hospital, where its removal could be done, with the proper tools and knowledge to minimise the damage.

It seemed that one of the kitchen staff, a big mama of a lady, who must have weighed in at a good hundred and twenty kilograms, knew the same rule. Not much taller than I, she was an intimidating and formidable opponent. The kind you wanted on your side. She used her body as a divider between my

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mom and me. Taking my hand out of my mom's reach, she reassured us both, that she had at one stage been a nursing sister in a crèche. She commanded us to be calm, and not to touch the glass.

The fact is I could not have been calmer, even if I had tried. I was surrounded by that gentle presence, and I could feel no sense of alarm. It was almost as though I saw someone else's hand, with the blood stained glass thrust through it. The ambulance had apparently been despatched, as soon as the call had been made, by the quick thinking Jamie. My mom obediently stood back, but could not take her eyes off the solid red icicle.

For the first time I looked around me properly. Our table, the floor, right through to where Shirley had been sitting was covered in broken glass. The red plastic upholstery, which covered the yellow sponge of the chairs, was ripped in places. McKee's was a wreck.

Only then did it occur to me that Shirley was no longer in her chair, in fact her whole family was nowhere to be seen. I craned my neck around the 'sergeant' lady, who now held my hand very still. She had removed the burger, cleaned around the glass spike, and was now wrapping a torn piece of table cloth around my hand, in such a way as to lock the dagger in place. I winced as she did so, as each time she went around the glass it moved inside my hand, ever so slightly, but enough to get my nerves sending electric messages, right up to my elbow, and on into my shoulder. I could not see where Shirley and her family might be. The place was pretty much deserted of patrons now, although a crowd was gathering outside. I could only assume that she and her family had left. I wondered if she had escaped unhurt.

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Candy's reaction, initially of shock and tears, now seemed quite strange to me. I had expected that, under such circumstances, she would be screaming and terrified. Initially she was, but now she was helping the cook to gently wrap my hand up. She was so gentle and caring I scarcely believed that this was my sister.

I found myself blushing at how I regularly kicked her out of my room. She was the one whose friends irritated me. She and her friends would do things. I had decided these things were for me and me alone to do. They were 'my turf' and she was not welcome. I would say things to make her disappear into the garden. I knew mom hated these outbursts and a regular "Ben, was that really necessary, she is only trying to be like you." Invariably, she would tack on some other words of explanation like, "That's a compliment you know". I would shoot back, loud enough for the fleeing Candy to hear, "Well let her copy someone else then. I don't need a sister who copies me and takes my stuff."

Candy would come back much later, and I would be able to see by her eyes and cheeks, that she had been crying. I never really felt bad about it. She just had to learn to stay out of my room. So Candy's soothing words of "you'll be OK Ben." and "I'm here for you." were doing things to me that I found were heaping coals of fire on my head, for every time I had hurt her. Here was an "angel" right before me, taking care of me, and even though she was much younger than me, I somehow felt sure she was suddenly much older, and much wiser. I relaxed into her care. The presence, which had been there just before, was now gone. Shock was beginning to set in.

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I began to shiver. Mom was chasing around trying to find out where the ambulance was. Why they thought I needed an ambulance I will never know, but perhaps because of the shock, it was a good thing.

About fifteen minutes after the incident, the white ambulance, with its red flashing lights, pulled up outside McKee's. I was sitting on a chair at the entrance, my hand in Candy's. I was treated for shock by the paramedics who arrived, dressed in their orange and white uniforms, very friendly man and woman team. They sat me on the stretcher in the back of the ambulance, and drove me to the hospital, while mom and Candy followed behind. If I sat up really straight, and peered out the back window, I could see the top of mom's car and a bit of the top of her head, but I could not see Candy. Strangely, not seeing her bothered me.

The doctor at the hospital gave me a local anaesthetic in my hand. After it had taken effect, he slid the glass shard out of my hand, the way it had gone in. Pushing it forwards would have meant running the risk that further cutting could take place. He pulled it out of the palm of my hand gently, slowly and straight. It was a strange sensation watching and feeling the tugging, but not the pain. The blood began to pour out both sides of the hole in my hand. I watched the blood running into the little bowl that had been put there for the purpose. The bleeding slowed to a steady drip.

After the doctor had cleaned it, and stitched it up on both sides, he said "You are very fortunate young

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man. The glass has not severed the main nerves. You will have poor feeling in the middle of your hand, but other than that, your hand should work just fine. I will see you in two weeks time. In the meantime you will not be able to write for a while. Here's a note for your school, telling them, that you are to be excused from writing, to rest your hand." He passed the note to my mom. Candy had turned her back when the doctor began working on my hand, but she had not wanted to be far from me. She turned back. From her position behind mom, out of mom's sight, she mouthed the words "Lucky Fish! No school work!"

I missed the next day at school, but was back the following day. Everyone wanted to know what had happened at McKee's. Was I alright, and was I going to be able to use my hand again. That first day back at school, after the incident, I was the celebrity. But by lunch time someone else had become the topic of discussion, and no one paid me any mind, no one excepting Josh and Brin.

David came over every other lunch break, to find out how I was doing, occasionally bringing me some of his lunch. His mom really knew how to make a good peanut butter sandwich. Being a growing boy, food was never enough. So I ate everything I could get my hands on.

My hand took four weeks to heal. The first two I found myself not able to write at all. I was allowed to photocopy Brin's school work and stick it in my book. A surprising turn of events, since I had had to write out lines forbidding me to do this. I chose Brin's work, simply because Josh's handwriting was illegible, sometimes even to himself. We often joked that if we

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were stranded on a desert island together, he had better not write the note that went in the bottle. There was a good chance; everyone would be looking in the wrong place, and for the wrong people.

By the end of the third week, I could write for a short time each day, and had to choose what I was going to write in each lesson. I was still allowed to photocopy work, but I was so bored, that I really wanted to do the written work. I was pretty much back to normal after the fourth week, and unless it was cold, or the weather was changing, I felt no pain at all.

The rest of the year passed without any further events. I caught up my school work, for as it turned out, I had to write out the notes I had photocopied from Brin, after all. My greatest set back, had nothing to do with school though. The climbing I loved so much, and did every weekend at the local climbing gym, had all but come to a stop. I was still exercising my hand, and was putting quite a lot of weight on it now. But I couldn't climb that December holiday at grandma's with dad. Dad and I hiked most of the time. Candy joined us on these hikes. I didn't mind her being there at all. This was a massive change to the sibling rivalry, of our previous December holiday. It was ironic how the event which had started this change, in our brother-sister friendship, had started with a "stop" sign. I stopped responding to the bad I saw in her, and purposefully chose to notice, and comment, on the good she did and said.

The presence I had experienced only a few times was a mystery that I had now packed safely into my subconscious, and left there.

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Chapter 4 – Shirley

As I climbed out of the car on that first day back at school I felt for the familiar rectangular box in my jacket. It was still there. I had taken up playing chess after my climbing had had to stop, and found I quite enjoyed it. I carried a little magnetic pocket chessboard around in my jacket; this was the rectangular box I had checked for. At lunch break last year, Josh, Brin and I, had taken turns playing each other. Josh wasn't bad, but Brin admitted that he was not very good. This created a problem for the three of us. We eventually found a way to play three games at once; Josh and I played chess, while Brin had two games of checkers going, one with each of us. More often than not, we ran out of time to finish all three, and the winner was usually the one who won the first game, on whichever board.

Arriving back at school after the holidays was refreshing. A new year, some new class mates, some old ones moving on. But my world seemed to have remained intact. My subjects remained the same and Josh, Brin and I were still in the same home room class. But we had a new entrant into our science class, Shirley Johnston. She was not in our home room class, but in this subject, she sat at the laboratory table in front of me, with two of her friends. We were courteous to one another, as I tried to be with everyone, but most of the time, we paid little attention to each other.

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It was late in March, at the start of one of our science lessons, that my life took an unexpected turn. Our science teacher, Mister Stenneson, handed out class experiments. I joined Brin and Josh on the other side of the class, near the front, where they had already booked an experiment table. Mister Stenneson reached the last student, at the back of the class, and handed out the last of the experiment instructions. He turned around and saw the three of us at the lab table. He boomed across the jabber of students, "This experiment is to be done in groups of two", I tried to blend in to our group. "Benjamin, that includes you. Find yourself a partner."

I looked around to find only one laboratory table, with a single experimentalist. She stood there, highlighted by a stream of light filtering in through the window. She looked up as the teacher's voice commanded me to find another table. I headed in her direction. Shirley was standing at the lab table, which is taller than the normal school tables. To sit at these tables required stools. Chairs were simply not tall enough. I got behind the table facing the front, bent down and opened my bag. I took out my science book, and set it down on the table, to the left of the experiment. Shirley had already annexed the right side of the experiment, so the left was my lot, which was a pain because I was right handed, and so had to move right to the end of the long thin table, to be able to write.

The experiment apparatus lay on the table partly assembled. Shirley was assembling it, I took out my book. Now that I was ready, I also started to assist by checking the instructions, and scrutinising what she had already done, to see if she had done it correctly. I grunted my approval, and then reached across for the Bunsen Burner, a small glass jar, which resembles a

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pumpkin. The wick runs down the centre of the neck of the jar, and into the liquid within. This liquid is a flammable substance. Lighting the wick was a job I wanted to do, so I appropriated it right away, and brought it onto my side of the table. I waited for Shirley to complete the rest of the construction. Eventually she finished, and stepped back to give me room, to reach across, and place the burner in its position.

As I did so, she drew in her breath sharply.

I froze.

“What?” I said, spinning my head in her direction. Within a split second I both, locked onto the direction of her stare, and found its focal point. It seemed she was starting at the Bunsen burner, now in my right hand. But I could not see anything that could have caused her reaction.

“What’s wrong?” I said.

She was still staring, as though lost in some time and space different from our own.

“What’s wrong?” I repeated a little louder.

“Just remembering...” She said quickly and quietly, stepping back into reality.

I placed the burner in position, and was about to reach for the lighter, when Shirley cautiously ventured, “I do not want to seem fresh, but may I see your scar?”

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“What Scar?” I asked, for a moment not registering, and then remembered the scar on my right hand. “Oh, thaaat scar” I said. I was relieved that that was all she had had a problem with. “Sure.” I said, holding out my right hand, palm up. My trophy, proof, that I was a real tough guy.

She cradled it gently, looking at the scar in the centre of my hand. She traced the scar with the soft tip of her forefinger. She turned my hand over, and looked at the back of it, where the scar was replicated.

“When it happened... Did it hurt?” she queried.

“No not really”, I lied. No guy in his right mind ever tells a girl he is not as tough as nails.

“Does it hurt now?” she asked.

“Only when its very cold, or I write too much.” I was used to lying to manipulate people and my environment, but sometimes the truth worked better. It was best if this lie did not extend to current reality. I chose to believe this anyway. Thinking the truth was useful here because a bit of sympathy would do me no harm.

She nodded and just held on to my hand, staring at it. After a moment she took a deep breath in, and seemed to forget to breathe. I could see that she was a million miles away again. She exhaled, and at the same time whispered under her breath, just loud enough for me to hear, “Thank you”.

I was not sure if she had intended me to hear that ‘thank you’. I sensed her words were too deep, and too emotional, to be a ‘thank you’ for letting her see

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my scarred hand. I looked at her curiously. She had her head tilted down, so that her fringe hid her eyes.

"For what?" I asked bending down to try to make eye contact, by looking up at her face. She tilted her head further down and I gave up. I stood up, but continued to look at her. I waited a moment, and was about to turn back to the experiment, when she said quietly, not looking up. "At McKee's..." she hesitated, waiting for me to go back in time, "Why did you sit at the window?"

"We always sit at the window" I replied, and then added, "I felt something was wrong when I arrived though, a sort of premonition I suppose".

Her head came up sharply. She looked me square in the eyes. Her eyes had taken on a different look. She was suddenly searching my eyes, as if she were trying to plumb the depths of my statement. She had that look that said "Just how much did you feel, and how much do you know." But her lips never moved. Time stood still for what seemed a few minutes, but in reality it could only have been a second, or at most two.

Still holding my eyes with hers, she answered my question.

"You saved my life at McKee's... You took that thing that was meant for me."

Now I was reeling. Suddenly I was back in McKee's. Everything was happening before my eyes in slow motion. The sensation of the premonition of danger, the searching of the room, Shirley's whispering, sitting down, and getting our drinks, taking a sip. Then everything moved into super-slow motion. The 'STOP'

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sign, was slowly breaking through the window, in the direction of the McKees' kitchen door. The glass was suspended in mid air, as it slowly floated across the room. I saw the thirty centimetre long glass missile heading towards Shirley. I recognised it as the one which had ended up in my hand. My hand came up as if it had been pushed, into the strange position, by some unseen force.

I saw the missile slowly penetrate and push through my burger, and then through my hand, and eventually come to rest with two thirds jutting out.

The blurred peripheral vision to my right, where Shirley was sitting, suddenly became crystal clear. I saw her wide shocked eyes, as the floating glass hit the rocks that made up the back wall of McKee's. Each piece was shattering into smaller pieces. The splinters drifted down towards the table, chairs and floor. This of course was happening around Shirley and her family, but it was not what had captivated my attention. Shirley's face was a picture of terror.

As though separated from my body, I moved around, and from the window side, sighted down the protruding glass of death, and saw that it was headed straight at Shirley's chest.

I paused the 'play back' in my mind, which had taken just a moment, but the moment had seemed to last an eternity. As though grabbed by the collar and wrenched from behind, I snapped back into current reality, where I now looked at Shirley with new eyes. Shirley was still looking at me from below her fringe. Her hand was still holding mine. I was strangely comfortable with this.

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I asked her something then that had been playing in the back of my mind for a long time, popping out from time to time, but being shoved back unanswered.

"I've noticed you talk to yourself a lot. When I came into the restaurant, I noticed it again. You were really focussing on something. Not an absent-minded self-chat. What were you saying? I was too far away to hear you. I do not understand why, but it's been bothering me for a long time now, and I thought, maybe you sensed something too. When I walked into McKee's that night, I felt something was wrong, but did not know what. I somehow got the feeling that you were also afraid."

Shirley had gone white as a sheet. She was looking at me, still from between her thick blonde fringe hairs. She was a child hiding in a closet, looking out of the crack, while thieves roamed about her house.

She regarded me for a moment, in silence, as if she were trying to make up her mind if it was safe to come out. I could see she was having trouble, deciding if she could expose some secret, knowing that once it was out, she was at the mercy of my mouth. Her lips moved as if in some silent discussion with herself.

"You're doing it again" I said.

"Doing what?" she shot back, flicking her hair over her shoulder with a deft little movement. She was out of the closet but it was slammed tightly shut behind her.

"Whispering" I said gently. Her eyes closed.

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"What's wrong?" I coaxed.

She gave a deep resigned sigh, and in a hoarse whisper, looking down at the floor, she opened the 'closet door', with the words, "I knew it was going to happen."

Now it was my turn to be shocked. I looked at Shirley. "Who was this girl?" I thought.

I could see she was completely serious. I also knew that she honestly believed that what she was saying was the truth. I reasoned to myself, that for her to believe it, she must have had this happen to her before. I recovered, as though waking from a dream, only to discover it was real.

"You knew?" I whispered. "You knew... You knew the window was going to break! ..." I continued. "Did you know I was going to get hurt?" This thought had just occurred to me, and the tone was one of condemnation, for not warning me.

"No!" She said in protest, almost too loudly. But the humdrum of the students around us, continued unabated, as they proceeded with their experiments.

"No I didn't know the window was going to break, and I didn't know you would get hurt. ... I just knew that I was in danger and that it had to do with the window." she stammered, her eyes beginning to shine, with the tears that were forming there.

"It's like I sense things." She hesitated, treading gingerly, testing the "ice" of my understanding, and then continued. "Someone close to me warns me that something is going to happen. Whenever I get messages, I talk back."

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She hesitated, as if deciding if she really had to, or really needed to, say something. She decided that she was already in so deep, into emptying the cupboard, that adding a little more truth now, was not going to hurt much more. She further reasoned, that it would hurt more later, if ever found out. So she started from the beginning.

“When I sat down at our table, before you walked in, I sensed the danger at the window. I was asking to be protected, from whatever was endangering me, when you walked in.” She paused, as if this was the thing she was reluctant to say, which only served to emphasise it more to me. “When you sat down at the window, I thought you might be the problem. So I asked the one who guides me, you call it talking to myself, that if it was you that was threatening me, that you would leave me alone. I should have asked for you to be protected too. I do not know why, but for some reason the one warning me, didn’t want to warn me about you, or perhaps couldn’t.”

“Couldn’t?”

“I do not know how all this works, but I do know that it cares deeply about me, and other people too. I told you, it often asks me to say things about other people. These things come true later. I sense that it needs me to say it, or it will not happen.”

She took a deep breath, and looked dead straight and deep into my eyes, searching for some hint of understanding, or belief. “You have to believe me. If I had known you were in danger, I would have asked for you to be protected too.”

She bowed her head and looked at the floor again. “I’m sorry”, she whispered.

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“Do you think that if you had said I should be protected, it would have made a difference?” I was not sure what to make of this new information.

“Yes”, she said simply. And, I believe, that she believed it would have.

“What else have you known would happen?” I asked.

“Not much. Most of the time, I just get asked to say and do things, for other people”, she said. “I just do, and say, what I am asked to. It’s quite amazing though. I can sense its presence around me, and there is such an awesome peace when he’s around.”

“he?”

She stopped. “Yes, I somehow know that he is not really an ‘it’, he is a ‘he’, and the way I feel when I think of him, or am near to him, ‘he’ is more like a ‘He’, than a ‘he’” she said this, emphasizing the word ‘He’, to a more powerful sounding word.

Well if I was having problems before, I had just found myself in a minefield. “What was she talking about? An ‘it’ which I could not see, but spoke to her, was tough enough to deal with. But a ‘he’ was quite another story. I had heard of spirits, and the way I had heard it, they were ‘he’s. But as far as I could remember, these spirits were not good things, but things to be feared. Things, whose presence, normally brought with it fearfulness.

Suddenly, I sensed the beautiful presence I had sensed a few times before. It was so tangible, I could almost taste it. The hair on the back of my neck was instantly on end. Why did my body respond in

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opposition to this presence? – It still did not make any sense to me. A shiver rippled right down my spine, and I had to shift my shoulders, as though easing through a narrow space, one shoulder at a time. The deliciously peaceful warmth was here.

I noticed something else too. Shirley was smiling, and her eyes were sparkling. I had never seen her eyes sparkle before. She seemed to have noticed something too. She squeezed the hand she was still holding. "He's here. I can feel Him", she said. Her voice tingling with controlled excitement. "He's here." She repeated. I was watching the changing expressions dancing across her face. If she had been a butterfly in a cocoon, she was now bursting out of it, getting ready to 'unfurl her wings', wanting desperately to take flight.

Suddenly she stopped. As though interrupted, she looked more closely at me, her eyes narrowing. She cocked her head slightly to her right, my left and said exploratively, "He says you can feel 'Him' too." I looked deep into her blue eyes, but had to look away. There was a truthfulness in them that was both terrifying, and refreshingly beautiful, at the same time. I understood, in that instant, that a girl or woman's greatest beauty is not tattoos, belly rings, facial and other piercings, which as I had observed, formed a part of the Hindu religion, denoting submission, and worship, to their gods. Neither did the normally worn, earrings or make up, or for that matter, anything else external, even come close, to the beauty I had just witnessed. It was this purity and honesty that I had just seen in this girl and I just wanted to be close to her.

She watched me closely, waiting for a response. I was stunned. Was this real? Was this thing actually

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speaking to her? The same voice I had had popping into my mind a few times before unexpectedly did so again. "Yes, I am talking to her... and to you."

"He's talking to you too!" She said abruptly. It wasn't really a question. She had heard what I had heard. She was just surprised. I could see by her response, that no one she knew, had ever heard him before, or at least, no one had ever admitted to her that they had heard 'him', or that they had heard any other voices from 'nowhere' talking to them.

I could have just pretended she had lost her mind, or that I had not heard anything, but I wanted to understand what was going on. I just nodded, her eyes shone even more, to match her smile.

"I now pronounce you man and wife. Now get on with the experiment." Mister Stenneson's words cut through our conversation. He stood on the other side of our desk. He was a short man, with a barrel of a chest, wearing a long sleeved checked shirt. His head appeared just above the apparatus. In fact he looked as though his head was placed on the glass jar, which made up a part of the apparatus. Right now I wished I could just chop it off and stick it in the jar. He peered over his half round reading glasses, grinning at his 'clever' little comment, which unfortunately, he had chosen to say loud enough, to benefit the whole class.

We both looked at him sheepishly. The class had not missed anything. They had heard it, each one a statue, some with things still in their hands. All eyes were on us. Mister Stenneson was on a roll. "Oh but you may not kiss the bride, not in my class anyway." He turned around to face the class, who were encouraging him now with their raucous laughter.

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"Why was he saying this?" I thought and then in a sudden moment of horror, as though both of us knew it at the same instant, we both realised that she was still holding my hand. She quickly let go. We both flushed red with embarrassment. The cat whistles and comments shouted out from the class, didn't stop until Mister Stenneson said, "OK that's enough, get on with your experiments." Turning again to us, he continued, "I see you have not even started yet. If you do not finish before end of class, you will finish it after the bell." He turned away, and walked towards the front of the class. We looked at each other. The class room was much too cramped for us right then. Eyes kept glancing at us. We had shared a moment, and bonded in a strange way, but neither of us wanted this kind of attention.

There were a few girls at the two tables close to ours and they kept whispering and giggling. We could hear the stories each was telling the others to 'ooh's, 'aah's, 'no!'s and 'really's. We were hearing the rumours being created right next to us. Wherever a blank or inconsistency in the stories appeared, it was quickly filled by more lies ... The things we were hearing, never happened. But perception is reality, and a good story becomes "the truth". One of the girls had apparently seen us walking hand in hand at the mall. Another, who had a permanent sneer on her face, which detracted from her otherwise pretty features, was saying. "I saw Shirley and Benjy kissing behind the bushes, near the toilets, before school." I had never considered such a thought, but I couldn't say I would not have wanted to kiss Shirley, despite her strangeness. The fact is I was beginning to realise that I was just as strange as she was. Shirley's reaction to the comments we overheard, was one of sheer exasperation. She could not take it any longer.

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Marching over to the two groups of two, she blasted them for making up lies.

This in itself was a mistake, because, not only had they achieved a reaction from her, but her reaction was so loud, it had drawn the attention of the whole class. To get a greater reaction, all they would need to do, was to tell the story to more people. For some unknown reason, they had already completely convinced themselves, that all they had said was true.

The presence and moment were gone, and with it the calm peace too. This had been replaced with a rising fear, of who was going to be saying what, and for how long. It wasn't that Shirley was someone no one wanted to be seen with, it's just that no one thought of her, as someone who would have been interested in boys.

Shirley has straight blonde hair with blue eyes, slender about my height. She is filling out the way girls do, and keeping pace with most of those in our grade. Her body curves from her calves to her cheeks left us boys, with a hint that there was something going on with her that made her different from us in mysterious ways.

Candy, my sister, is a girl, but she has not yet begun developing. Young girls are difficult to treat as though they are not one of the boys. If they have brothers, especially older brothers, they had better be able to rough and tumble. They have to know how to both take, and give, a walloping. But when they develop, boys become completely confused. How are these "strange creatures" to be dealt with? This sparks boys to embark on, a succession of attempts to engage in, mostly faltering, dialogue, in order to gain attention. This they do, by way of making comments,

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helping out, right through to buying things, and taking them out to the movies, or for a soda and burger, if they had the money that is.

Shirley, I had just discovered, was a complex and mysterious personality. She had in that intimate moment, just changed from "girl in my class", to "girl I wanted to understand", and possibly someone who would understand me.

Shirley was blushing and angry at the situation, I on the other hand, had my own set of worries, and not because of what the other boys were saying to or about me either. I was concerned because the cat whistles and comments were aimed at Shirley. The boys were dreaming up a different kind of torture for me. It would be calculated, planned and "out of the blue". Right now, they were saying nothing.

Girls can be like a pack of wild dogs that strip the flesh off their living victims, this was Shirley's lot. Boys were like a troop of baboons, who would rip the limbs off those, who dared challenge the natural order of command. Actually 'natural order' was a poor statement, it was more like the chain of unchallenged command.

I had stepped into a relationship with a girl. Based on the rumours, and the witnessing of us holding hands, this seemed to be a successful relationship. This was something boys secretly searched for. In the same way, that the boys at the top of the pecking order, had the best places on the playing fields, so too, it was considered unacceptable for a "lower ranking" student, like myself, to be seen to be ahead of the higher ranking boys. This was perceived as a challenge to the social order. Being a young teenager, I could not identify this as clearly as spelt out here, all

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I really knew was that they would have a lot to say, and there was going to be a lot of teasing.

Right now though, Shirley was looking at the flame of the Bunsen Burner waiting for the experiment to end. I watched her, out of the corner of my eye, not wanting to draw any further attention to either of us. Her eyes were glassy. I did not want this for her, or for me. So I lent a little closer, and whispered to her, "Maybe we should not be seen together. That way we will prove these liars wrong. The other kids will eventually not believe them, and it will come back at them." Shirley just nodded, took out a tissue, and dried her dripping nose. We focussed on the experiment, and got it finished, just as the bell rang.

As we walked out of the room, Shirley went to rejoin her home room class, which thankfully, was in a different direction to our next class. She had two girls from her own class who also joined us for Science. Both were friends of hers and, as she walked away, I could just hear her saying "Nothing happened, I just wanted to see the scar on his hand, then that stupid teacher, goes and says all that about marriage and kissing." The last thing I heard was her friend's reply, "What an idiot! Never mind ..."

While I was hearing this conversation moving off in the distance, and secretly saying "Goodbye Shirley", under my breath, the comments began to flow.

"So Benjy, what's she like hey?"

"Have you gone all the way?"

"When you seeing her again?"

"What's she like to kiss?"

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I just shrugged my neck into my shoulders, and walked on ignoring them. This was the riff-raff commentary. I could ignore them. Although their statements were crude, and some unrepeatable ones, which followed over the next few days, which were blatantly disgusting, these were not my real problem.

That lunch break found me sitting with Josh and Brin, in a huddle on the field. I had pretty much used Shirley's lines on them. They, being friends, had no reason to doubt me, although they were convinced that I had some sort of feelings for her. I didn't think so, and said as much. We left it there.

Two days later, the menace materialised. I had just come out of Geography class, and before me stood three boys, one of which was Shirley's older brother, the other two were from his class. The ring leader was a Grade eleven boy called Dean Kiney. Dean was a gymnast, with the muscles to go with it. Dean looked at me, standing squarely in my way. Josh and Brin were up ahead, walking and talking together.

The three allowed all the rest of our class to sift through between them, filtering me out, until only I was left. Dean stepped right up to me, and looked down on me. The top of my head, took him just under the armpits, and he was about double my width, solid muscle. His features took on a menacing sneer, as he hissed between his teeth, "Shirley is mine. I hear you are getting fresh with her. If I hear it again, I'm going to find you in a quiet place, and you are going to wish you had never been born. I'll destroy your face, so she will never look at you again."

Then they walked past me shouldering me out of the way, with such solid force, I went flying into the wall of the classroom. My bag, not yet properly closed,

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spread its contents all over the corridor. They walked off, kicking whatever they could keep in front of them still further out of reach. I spent the next five minutes collecting my things, and arrived late for English.

Miss Grinter was already angry with the rowdiness of the class, so I, walking in late, was just the opportunity she needed to make an example, to get the class under control. She screamed at me above the din of the noisy class, and told me to take my seat, and never be late again. There was silence. What kind of answer could I give as to why I was late? Ratting out older boys, was inviting even more trouble. So I just said "sorry" and sat down.

The next two months were a constant checking over my shoulder for Dean and his friends, as well as, ignoring the insinuations made by some of the other boys, not just in my class, but across the school. Sometimes it was a blatant comment, sometimes, a gesture or look. Shirley and I avoided even the slightest eye contact. I was not aware of what was going on between her and the girls, but I assumed, that as my troubles had not ceased, neither had hers. I expect Dean was all over her anyway.

The problem was, the more I tried to ignore her, the more I noticed her. Her mysteriousness was becoming more and more attractive.

One Friday, as school ended, I walked out of class and saw Shirley, tears streaming down her face. She was striding quickly across the playing field towards the main gate, with her school bag over her shoulder.

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I could not pretend I did not care about her, I did. So I caught up with her quickly. "What's wrong?" I asked.

"My brother's friends are being very horrible to me", she sniffed.

"What are they doing?" I asked, handing her a paper serviette, I had received at the tuck shop, but had not yet used.

"Dean won't let me talk to anyone", she said, drying her eyes with the serviette. "He seems to think he owns me. He is hurting any boy who speaks to me. I told Frank, my brother, to tell him to stop, and to leave me alone. I even told Dean myself, that I don't like him, and that I never have. He just swore at me, and called me a 'bitch', 'his bitch'. Frank just stood there and said nothing. He didn't even stand up to him at all. Dean's parting comment was that he was going to make sure no one, not even the girls would speak to me anymore." This last sentence was sobbed out.

I held her, and let her put her head on my shoulder.

"What do you think you are doing squirt!" The voice came from behind me. I tensed, and so did Shirley. We could both hear it was Dean, and his voice told me his fists were already clenched.

I heard, rather than saw, Shirley whispering something, and I moved back, and looked into her eyes. I could see that strange look in them, and then it hit me. She was calling 'Him'.

I heard Dean's grating voice again. "Didn't I tell you to stay away from 'my bitch'?"

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I felt a calm come over me that made absolutely no sense, given the circumstances. I felt the hair on my neck, my spine, and even down my arms and legs standing on end, as though something had just climbed inside my body, and taken over. I realised that I was not alone. Courage, from deep inside me, began to well up. Dean grabbed my right shoulder to pull me around, I would normally have turned around towards my right, being right handed, but for some reason I turned left. This simple change in behaviour, threw Dean slightly off guard.

Dean stood, ready to throw a punch into my face, as my head came around to the right, but when my head came around left, his weight was on the wrong foot, and his attempted punch, glanced off my shoulder, knocking off my bag. I kicked him straight in the crotch, as hard as I could. His head came down, following his hands, to place them both at the centre of the pain. I put my hands behind his head, and pulled it down, while at the same time throwing my knee up into his plummeting face. The impact was so hard; it smashed his nose, broke one of his teeth, and threw him backwards onto his back. Blood squirted from his smashed nose. I yelled at him, "Shirley is not a 'bitch', and she doesn't want anything to do with you anymore." Dean just lay there on the floor, gurgling on the blood in his mouth, his eyes already puffing up.

I turned on Frank "...and you call yourself a brother!! You asshole! Shirley counted on you, and you couldn't even tell your friend to back off. Make sure you take care of your sister, from now on, and you can start with Dean's two friends that are on their way over here. I am taking Shirley home. Oh, and you can tell everyone, that Shirley is with me, and they can just leave her alone."

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"Oh, OK ..." was all he could say, the look he gave his crying sister was the look a protective brother should be giving, and I knew that he was going to be taking care of her from now on. I bent down, picked up my bag, and shouldered it again. I put my arm around Shirley's shoulders, turned her around and faced us in the direction of the main gate, and home. Side by side, we walked. It was a long walk because we had missed the bus.

Shirley lived about two kilometres away from me, and five from the school. We walked together in silence, both processing the consequences of what had just happened.

At her front gate, we stopped; I finally said what had been bothering both of us. "Shirley, do you want to go out with me? After all, the news of Dean and what just happened is going to be all over school tomorrow. So if it's Ok with you, I would rather go through all the gossip for something that's true, and worth going through it for."

"Worth?" she asked enquiringly.

"You are worth it." I replied, and continued, "I'll go through all of this again if you say 'yes', but I'll understand if you say 'no', or that you just want your space to think about it".

She hesitated, and then replied, "I want to think about it. Let's just be friends for now".

"OK", I replied, in a matter of fact tone, showing no emotion.

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“But we can pretend to know each other at school. As friends I mean.” She added.

“As friends... OK... But just so as you know, I like you a lot more than a friend”.

She just smiled and said, “Thank you for sorting out Dean. I’ll ask Frank to get Dean’s friends to leave you alone.”

She turned, gave another little smile, and walked away down her path. As she did, I felt that presence leaving me, as if it was walking off with Shirley. As it did, so did all the courage and all the resolve. The only thing that was left behind was the old ‘scardy-cat Benjy’. I shivered, and felt very alone. For the first time in my life, I discovered a void inside me. No, ‘void’ was not the right word, I felt as thin as the plastic of a shopping bag, and the hole inside me, was as big as the space that would be filled by the groceries. I suddenly felt purposeless, and empty. There was something about Shirley that seemed to complete me.

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Chapter 5 – ‘him’

While walking home, I considered all that had happened since June last year. The most disconcerting thing of all was that it seemed that the presence, which I knew so little about, seemed to hang around Shirley.

I was hungry, so very hungry for this presence. I assumed the presence would give me power. I wanted power, power to be able to communicate with and control the unseen world around me. I was hungry to understand what was going on. This hunger for power is a dangerous desire. It has led more people down the wrong path, into destruction, than up the right path. Mostly because we humans rush in to acting on what we think is true.

We may read half way through a book, and then stop. Thinking we understand, meanwhile the truth lay beyond where we read up to. Or we may listen to, and hear only half of the truths in a story. So we precariously cross the old rotten walkway spanning the great abyss of the unknown. In fact, without the whole map of what is true in the “knowledge bridge” we walk on each day, we will soon step and fall through, the lies and assumptions we believed, in great pain.

The deadliest thing to me, as a teenager, was the thinking that I did not need the full story, before I acted. So I plunged into the web of lies and assumptions that ensnare so many. But then, no one had told me the full truth. How was I to know, that

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the choices I would make, would create more pain, than I would have imagined possible.

(Note to reader from author: For my own conscience to remain clear, I ask that none of you stop reading this book before the end. Benjy is already on the rotten walk-way. Don't stop until he gets to the other side. Along the way, you will see the truth that no one speaks of, and yet, this truth, is more real, than this world we see, touch, hear, smell and taste.)

The whole walk home, I looked at the ground moving beneath my feet, occasionally kicking a stone ahead of me, all the time I was deep in thought. I came to a decision, that I actually liked the presence of Shirley's 'Him'. I said out loud, "I wonder if it is close enough to me, that it would be able to hear me."

"I can hear you", came a voice from my mind.

This time however, I could not feel the presence I had before. I hesitated, not sure if I was actually losing my mind. "Why don't I feel you here?" I asked.

"Shirley has not asked me to come to you", was the reply.

"So why are you here?"

"I care about you."

"Are you really real?" I asked aloud. Most of me wanted to throw in the towel right then, and walk away from this weird and uncertain conversation.

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"Sure I am" was the response.

Somehow I was entranced, and yet deep down, I sensed something was wrong. "OK then, if you are real, tell me what I should do about Dean?"

"Go tomorrow, and stand by the grade eleven lockers. Stare at Dean threateningly, and let him know that you are watching him."

Something was not right about this answer, and I thought to myself, that I must speak to Shirley first. I felt confused, and a little afraid. I did not understand this spiritual world or its rules. The next day, I searched out Shirley's home room class, and saw her standing and chatting to her friends. I moved around to the other side of her friends, about five meters away, and in her direct line of sight. Shirley noticed me, and excused herself from the group, and walked over to me.

"Hi Shirley", I said a little shyly.

"Hi Benjy", she said. She flicked her hair, to move it off her shoulder, and behind her back. She was looking at me with those deep blue eyes, from just under her fringe. I forgot why I was there. "There has to be a law against doing that" I thought. I had been zapped by the femininity of that deft little movement. I just stood there looking at her, dazed.

She looked at me curiously, "What's up? Are you OK? Has Dean bothered you?"

Dean's name triggered my question.

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"No everything is fine, excepting that I got talking to 'him' yesterday and 'he' told me to go and stand by the grade eleven lockers. Stare at Dean threateningly and let him know that I am watching him. Does this sound like something your 'He' would say? Something does not feel right to me."

"Oh! No! Benjy! You can't just talk to anyone out there. There are many spirits out there, who will try to trick you into doing, and saying things, just for the fun of watching you be humiliated and hurt. No you have to ask the right 'Him' to take over your life and then 'He' will be allowed to talk with you. It's like 'He' has to get inside you, before 'He' can flip the communication switch. You can be sure 'He' would never ask you to do something nasty to someone. 'He' loves everyone including Dean. No, the one who spoke to you must be from the dark side. Do not trust that voice. Did you sense 'His' beautiful presence when 'He' spoke to you??"

"No", I replied, "That, I think, is why I am confused. Can you help me, to get your 'him' to be with me, the same way 'he' is with you?"

"I will ask 'Him' what 'He' wants me to do" said Shirley. "Remember, I am not just my own any longer. I can't just tell 'Him' what to do. 'He' tells me what to do and say. I will let you know as soon as 'He' answers me. Meantime, do nothing." The look of warning as she finished off that last sentence was enough to tell me this was not a suggestion, but more of a serious warning.

Through the day I discovered nothing to indicate that anyone knew, what had happened, between Dean and me the day before. Everyone behaved as they always had, and no one said or hinted at anything

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about the fight. I remembered what Shirley had said about 'Him' loving everyone, so I stayed quiet not wanting to humiliate Dean.

While walking down the corridor between English and Geography, I saw Dean coming in the opposite direction. Our eyes locked for a second, and then he averted them towards Frank and his other friends, ignoring me completely. Dean looked all puffed up in the face. I found out later from Shirley, that Frank had said, that Dean was blaming some strange type of non-contagious flu, for his puffy face. Everyone bought it and I felt no reason to expose his lie.

Shirley met me after school. "Do you want to walk home? That way we can talk in private." She said.

"Sure" I replied, excitement rising within me, at what I was going to find out. I was a little afraid, but this was the unknown, I expected to be a little afraid.

We walked and chatted about the various things that had happened. I wanted to remind her, that I was hoping she had an answer for me, but she said nothing. We made small talk for nearly an hour as we walked. As we turned into her street, with her house, just five minutes down this road, and I still had no answers. I could not stand it any longer.

"Isn't there something you are supposed to be telling me?" I asked, trying to lead her to answer the question burning within me.

She was silent for a while. We reached her gate. She looked at me from below her fringe again. She really did look attractive when she did that. She leant forward and gave me a kiss on my cheek, and

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whispered "Yes", then turned, and walked on up the path. I just stood there, torn in two.

Part of me wanted to jump for joy that she had said 'yes', to going out with me. But there was another part of me that was irritated. The whole way home, I had been wondering when she was going to tell me about 'Him', and how I could know 'His' voice. I so desperately wanted to fill this emptiness within me.

It suddenly dawned on me though, that Shirley had said 'yes' to me, but it had made no difference to my completeness. I knew I was no longer alone. I could speak to and share things with someone, but I now knew that it was not Shirley who was going to fill that emptiness within me. Somehow, it was the presence of 'Him' which I needed. I had felt 'Him', all the way home, walking with Shirley, but 'He' was distant. 'He' was walking with Shirley, not with me. When Shirley went inside, the presence moved off too. It took with it that inexplicable sense of purpose, destiny, peace and content. I stood outside her gate for a minute or two. Then I slowly turned, and walked down the street, in the direction of my house.

I moped my way through the front door, and on up to my room, without speaking to anyone.

I made a few assumptions. I was incorrect. But I did not realise then just how dangerous it is to simply assume things, and not first test everything to see if it is in fact true. I assumed that the 'presence' could not be with Shirley and me at the same time. This led me to assume that she had not spoken to 'Him' about me. This led me to the assumption that she did not want to share 'Him' with anyone. Anyway who would blame her. 'His' peace and warmth were worth any amount of money.

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I had also become convinced that 'He' was a spirit, which had also thrown a ton of my theologies and theories up in the air. If 'He' was a spirit, then spirits were real. If they were real, then the Religious Education subject, had to move very high up on my priority list. Over the next three weeks. I searched for answers to spiritual questions. Try as I might, speaking to teachers, checking on the internet, chatting to friends and even a question or two to mom, had not yielded any definitive, provable, answers.

I still could not determine who 'Him' was. Nor could I figure out whether 'Him' was really good, or bad. After all, I had a scar where 'He' had not saved me, even though that same scar had saved Shirley. I could not figure out even if 'He' had any interest in me, the way I was interested in 'Him'. My next assumption was that if I asked Shirley if she had asked 'Him' if 'He' would be with me, this would put her in an awkward situation. I did not want to do that. So I did not talk to her about 'Him'. Looking back, she probably interpreted this, as me not being interested, and so she too had said nothing, waiting for me. I should have asked anyway, but I didn't.

I did not know that I had stepped onto a slide. I wanted to know "the unknown". I was thirsting for this answer, and I was making my choices. What I did not realise, was that each choice I had made so far, and those I would make in the future, narrowed my options for the next choice. As time would go by, I would eventually find myself having slid down to an ending. If only I had known the signs to watch out for. If only I had believed the obvious conclusion, instead of waving it away as "rubbish", "Science-fiction", or

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some other such ridiculing 'fob off' statement... If only... but I didn't.

The information I had found on the internet was from one extreme to another and very little real stuff in between. From really evil looking creatures, with blood and gore dripping from their claws and teeth, to shining white winged angels. I could not really process these properly, because all the computer games I played, were filled with creatures that appeared as these evil spirits did, and a number of these were portrayed as being on the good side. Some good looking angels had been on the bad side too, so my reality and what I saw and heard made no sense at all. To still further confuse me, I saw angels, portrayed as babies with wings, harmless and helpless, certainly not capable of doing what had been done to save Shirley, twice through me, and how many other countless stories does she have. No, 'Him', somehow did not fit into any of these categories.

This mild curiosity, still unfulfilled, became a serious need within me.

One afternoon, after my homework, I determined to properly answer my questions. I sat down at my computer. I hit the 'On' button and shrugged out of my blazer. I tossed it onto my bed. Mom and Candy would be home later, so I would not be disturbed. I had some idea in my head that I was going to have to search 'Him' out and see if there might be any more of them around. Then I could get my own 'Him'. That way Shirley could have her 'Him', and I could have my own 'him'. Because I saw these two spirits as different I referred to them differently in my mind. Shirley saw

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her spirit guide as being a 'Him' with a capital letter, where I did not know what 'him' I would be able to find. I chose to start off with a lower case 'him'. I wondered if the one who had spoken to me, the first time in my bed, last year, was Shirley's 'Him' or was it another 'him' who was passing by my house at the time.

My next fatal assumption was that the internet will only give me honest and truthful information so I could trust it to give me the truth I was searching for. I now know this is in fact not true, but then I did not. So connecting to the internet, I fired up my search engine and keyed in "him" and hit enter. This was probably the silliest thing I had done for some time, as I pretty much got responses from half of the world. I frowned and bit my lip, thinking of a good set of search words. I purposely stayed clear of the word "god" as this was bound to bring in every nut on the internet.

I finally settled on "guide me" and "spirit" and "protect" and using the advanced search function I excluded the word "god". I still got a lot of religious stuff, mostly about the mainstream religions. So I also excluded "Jesus", "Allah", "Krishna", "Mormon", "Buddha" and "Jehovah's witness". This significantly reduced my responses, but I got a very dark set of responses. So I added to my exclusions "Satan", "evil" and "fear". I was narrowing down the answers, and felt I was soon going to get to what I wanted. Still I had too many disparate answers, nothing really concrete. I added to what I was looking for the word "peace". Not quite satisfied I tried to recall what else Shirley had said about 'Him'. Then I remembered her words, "He loves everyone". So I added these too.

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Having trimmed my search down so much, I had reduced my count to just thirteen web sites. The heading that caught my eye read "Spirit Guide – making contact". This looked exactly like what I was after. I began to read. It seemed to make sense, but somehow something inside me was pulling me to read more, and something was tugging me away. I was unsure of what to do, so I printed it out, with the intention of discussing it with my new, or should I say, first girlfriend, Shirley. I did my homework, which took me to supper time, ate, and watched something arbitrary on TV with mom and Candy. Afterwards, I took out the trash, bathed and went to bed.

But I could not sleep. It was as though there was something in my room. Unlike that first night when the burglars came, and my room was filled with a peaceful beautiful presence, now I sensed a presence of a dark thing. It was a calm presence. I had the same feeling a mouse must get when it senses the presence of a cat. That cat can play with the mouse, without killing it. It could choose to just hurt and torture it, and the mouse knows it. I sensed that what was in my room, was like that cat. Big, powerful, and most of all, it had no concern or care for me. It was there for itself.

No, this presence was not 'Him'. I wondered whether or not these were, similar to people, all different, having different personalities. Perhaps this presence wasn't really bad. Maybe I was overreacting a bit. I tried to pin-point where it was. I couldn't see anything, nor in fact, could any of my five senses help me. It was that something, I could not explain nor prove, but which seemed to switch on in my belly, when a presence came near me. Using this, I determined it was somewhere between me and my

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bedroom door. I thought maybe it could read minds, and knew what I was thinking.

Although I was tingling with fear, I got up, and walked towards my door. My hands were open, fingers spread, palms and fingers parallel to the ground, trying to sense everything I could with my spirit. I wondered if anyone would ever believe me, if I told them I could sense things. "Probably only Shirley", I thought. It was next to me on my left now. Just in case it could see in the dark, I did not stop and look around. I kept on to the door, pretending to go to the toilet. The presence had not moved. It was somewhere behind me, almost in the centre of the room, just behind my computer chair.

I left my room and could sense it was still in there. I went to the bathroom, switched on the light, and lowered the lid of the toilet. I sat down, with my elbows on my knees, and cupped my chin with my fists, resting it on my knuckles. I somehow knew that this 'thing' was very powerful, and that it would be cool to have this as my own 'him'.

I also knew this 'thing' was not going to be controlled, unless it was in its own interests, to create an impression it was controllable. But one day, it could just decide to do as it pleased. I knew the thing causing the presence was selfish. I imagined it sitting in my computer chair, feet up on my desk, as though it owned my place. But it wasn't in the chair. I knew that. When I had walked past it, it had been closer to me than the chair.

I tried to remember what else was in my room, especially around that place. Then I remembered placing those printed papers in my school bag, which was on the floor, in the spot I had sensed. "Why

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tonight?" I thought. I tried to remember what I had changed. After a while, I realised the stuff I had printed could be a problem. Perhaps printing it out was an invitation for it to come into my room. I tried to get up, and found I had pins and needles in my legs. I splashed my face and dried it, while at the same time shaking the pins and needles out of my toes.

I walked into my room, picked up my bag, and gingerly put it down, outside my bedroom door, next to the chest with our family photos on. I walked back into my room, closed the door, and slid into my bed. I could sense the presence had left with my bag. I thought to myself "Perhaps it does not know what I think to myself. If it did, it might have stayed in my room." I slowly closed my eyes, and forced myself in to sleep. I was afraid to sleep, but too tired to stay awake.

I awoke the next morning, tired and inexplicably depressed. "Why should I feel so down?" I thought. I ate my breakfast in silence, snapped at Candy for something silly and sat in silence the whole ride to school. I went looking for Shirley, armed with the papers I had printed the night before. But every time I tried to speak to her, someone had to ask her something, or give her something, lead her somewhere, with me in tow, until eventually we were alone. As I reached into my pocket, to take out the papers on spirit guides, the bell rang, and we had to head in different directions. The same thing happened at the second lunch break. I was playing hockey that afternoon, and so could not speak to her on the way home.

This continued to happen through the week, until eventually I was exasperated. I decided to just get on

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with it. I spoke to the presence which, I carried around in my inside blazer pocket. "OK, you can be my spirit guide" I said, as though somehow I was granting it a great privilege.

"I will be your guide, master" it replied. "What do you want done?"

"I want Shirley to really like me, and I want to be happy."

"For Shirley to like you more, and for you to be truly happy, you need to be popular. Do you want to be popular?"

"Well ... yes, if that's what it will take... then yes" I answered.

"You will have to allow me to change things in you. Do I have your permission?"

"Yes" I said, thinking of how Shirley trusted her 'Him' totally. I would obviously have to do the same.

After a week, I had become completely comfortable with its presence, and in fact, seemed to have somehow earned the respect of everyone in the classroom. No one knew about the fight between Dean and me, and yet everyone was kind and polite to me, bringing me lunch. I became important in their eyes. There was always a tinge of fear in them though. My temper was shorter, and it did not get any better either. Even Candy began to give me a wide berth. I began to experience that I had power over others, and I liked it.

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Chapter 6 – Total control

Josh, Brin and I found our friendship, was beginning to fray, and come apart at the seams. To me they appeared so childish and irritating. Over the next two months I found myself gradually forming a second circle of friends. Josh and Brin just did not fit in with them at all. I tried to include everyone together, but my new friends laughed at them, joked and sometimes played jokes on them. At first I had a big problem with this, but did not want to be rejected by my new group, who it seemed respected me, and were accepting me as one of their own.

After a few weeks, I was in on the teasing and joking. A few weeks later, Josh and Brin told me that they no longer wanted me around them. I wasn't worried about it. I didn't even care, that these were people I had been friends with, for so many years.

After all I had my 'him', who did what I wanted. Occasionally 'he' would ask me to do something or say something. In this way, I was able to gain favour with both children in my class and adults everywhere. What wasn't working well was Shirley. For some reason, every time we did get together, she wasn't interested in hugging, holding hands, kissing, or anything. She just wanted to talk. Up until recently I had always just loved being with Shirley, but now I had lost all interest in just talking about our lives. I did not realise, this is so important to keep a relationship healthy.

I had joined a circle of friends, where porn and sex were a part of their way of life. The 'him' within me

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“played” many sexual fantasies, in my mind. I wanted desperately to live these out.

These were stirred and fuelled by the TV and movie sex scenes. I knew I was growing up to be an adult, and modelled in front of my eyes, was something that adults do. “This is just another stepping stone to be considered an adult” I thought in the back of my mind. These scenes were carrots dangled in front of a hormone pumping teenager. What were these adults thinking? Were they thinking at all? Why were they surprised at the result of teasing teenagers with this pornography (and you do not have to see everything for it to be pornography). I suppose, just like me, they were also blind to how those in power have their own reasons to keep a certain amount of chaos going, were very successfully abusing the concept of social tolerance to achieve their own goals. Of course this insight came much later. For now, without me perceiving that I was changing, my mind became more and more warped, very slowly at first, then faster and faster so that I did not detect the change.

One of the results of this was that Shirley no longer attracted me as she had done before; I no longer saw the real beauty in her. More than that, every time she talked about her ‘Him’, I became irritated and agitated. I would still feel that feeling of peace, but it seemed to unsettle me, and not ease me. Eventually after about four months of going out, Shirley came to me and said, “He told me last night that you are in danger of slipping into a very bad place. You have changed so much and seem so unhappy. What is ‘He’ talking about? What’s going on? I care about you, but you seem to not want to be around me any more”.

The words just popped out of my mouth, forced by a burst of irritation. “You don’t love me. If you did you

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would want to go all the way with me, still you keep stalling, saying you have to think about it. Stop thinking and just do it.”

Her eyes told me she was making a very difficult decision. I could see I was tearing her apart, but I was powerless to stop. She looked at me, and then I saw her whispering. I became enraged, “Stop talking to ‘Him!’” I shouted, “Tell ‘Him’ to get out of your life. ‘He’ is messing up our relationship! Get ‘Him’ away from me!” She looked at me with those sparkling eyes, which served only to enrage me more.

She spoke slowly and deliberately, “No. I will not do that, with you, or any one. ‘He’ tells me that this is ‘His’ wedding present to me and my future husband, and that if you really respected me you would respect that too. You would not even have asked me to have sex with you. No! You do not respect me! You have changed so much in the last month. No, I am not going to be treated this way. We are no longer going out.” She turned on her heels, flicked her hair, and walked off. I watched her walk away, disappointment and depression swamping me. What had just happened? I knew I loved her.

In my mind, my ‘him’ said, “She doesn’t know what she’s missing, stupid bitch, you’re better off without her anyway. She was pulling you down. Now you can go with Samantha. She has been hinting that she wants you in every way. With her reputation, she means ‘every way’”. I spun on my heels, away from Shirley, but something in the words ‘he’ had said rang a very hollow note in me.

Over the rest of the year, I had Samantha as my girlfriend, and there wasn’t anything she wouldn’t do with me. But her eyes never sparkled. She never left

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me feeling bubbly and warm inside. I had taken to popping tablets for the headaches, which had begun at some point after I had asked 'him' to guide me. I had had headaches before this, but these were regular and oppressing. Eventually these tablets were not working, so I had switched to stronger drugs when I went to sleep. I was making money on the side by telling fortunes. So I was able to drink myself to a relaxed state every night. Not for long though, as often I had nightmares which wrenched me out of sleep. After that I could only lie awake.

Actually, telling fortunes was 'his' idea. It was not an unusual thought. In all the really exciting kids cartoon movies on TV, on Saturday mornings, and even some on circuit, fortune tellers often play a role. Even the collector's cards we swopped out at school, often had characters involved in sorcery, magic and fortune telling. This was simply a natural step down the slide. I was not aware of the gaming strategy aimed at kids. It is a five step process, designed to separate children from parental guidance. It boils down to the following: Firstly show a cartoon series, with the behaviour you want to engender in the children and screen it at a time, when the parents are too busy to watch as well. In this way, without the parents being aware, the children's minds are programmed to "see and understand". Secondly, bring out cards and tazos to coach the children, and program their minds to "Practice what they have seen and understood". Thirdly make computer games, to allow them to play, the many scenarios in the confines, of the artificially controlled world of the computer games, where real life no longer applies. This programmes their minds, to "Become what they have practised, seen and understood". Even though they would only be imagining it, psychologically speaking they would still be experiencing a measure of

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this as though it were real. Fourthly, link players with strong delusions into a club, the more deluded of which, will create a Cult, where they begin to live out their delusions. Finally use the deluded people, to act out in real life, in line with the characters they most associate with.

Is this strategy working? Look at the parallel, between the ideas in the games, and the ideas acted out, on the daily news on radio and TV: anarchy, destruction, hatred, disregard for authority and the law, and many others. None of these are for human gain. Evil forces, are trying to trap as many people into disobedience, and eventually spiritual destruction. But I did not know any of this. So I, who had already travelled this road, under the radar of parental supervision was ripe for acting on the suggestion, when 'he' had told me that 'he' knew the future, and that, if I found 'him', people who wanted their future told to them, 'he' would make sure I got all the credit. With the money I could make, I was going to be able to buy more computer games. Actually, that was something else that had changed. I stopped spending time on my homework, and started playing these games whenever possible.

In fact the games were never enough fun. The more blood and violence, the more I enjoyed the games. I was captivated by the different ways, in which killing and maiming could be done. I had locked my room long ago, and the music I played, rocked the place. Mom shouted at me, pleaded with me, as did Candy. But I did not want my family interfering in my life. Mom would ground me, but I just snuck out, and joined my friends at night. We would go out and get drunk, and I would get caught coming home and be grounded again. The cycle just repeated itself.

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That's when it started happening. The scar in my right hand became itchy. It would itch so badly that I had to scratch it until it began to bleed. I scratched both sides of my hand, my palm and the back of my hand. I scratched and scratched. Every day I would go to school with a bandage around it. Then one day, as suddenly as it had started, the itchiness stopped, and so did my scratching.

The blood would still seep slowly through the bandages. My mom and Candy were very concerned, but I fought with them about everything, including going to the Doctor. Eventually in desperation mom invited the Doctor, a widower, over to supper in the hopes that he would get a look at my hand.

But 'he', "my spirit guide", told me about mom's plans, and 'he' suggested I go to supper with Samantha instead. I said the words, and Samantha invited me over for dinner. I accepted, and told my mom.

I was slowly being separated from my family.

Mom told me the next morning, that they had missed me at supper. I just grunted, finished my cereal, got up and shouldered my bag. While I walked out mom called, "When are you going to take out the garbage?" I just waved and kept walking. I was far too important to carry out the garbage. I was catching the bus to school now, wanting to only be with my friends, who also caught the bus.

Candy confronted me that day, at school during my lunch break, where I stood on the field with my friends. "Mom cries every morning when you leave. She is really worried about you, and you just slap her

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in her face with your 'I could care less attitude', what's got into you?"

"Who do you think you are" I bellowed, loud enough for the whole field to hear. "I do not answer to anyone. If you and mom carry on like this, I am moving in with Samantha. Now get lost, and make it permanent!"

Things became worse and worse. I kept telling 'him' that I wanted the bleeding hole in my hand to be healed, 'he' remained silent each time. It was as though, this was something 'he' could not do. I eventually went to the Doctor with my mom. He looked at it, and then shook his head. "Benjy" he said.

I stopped him there, snapping back, "Its 'Benjamin' to you". I could feel the heat from mom's blushing. He raised his hand and said, "I am not here to fight with you, Benjamin. There is nothing wrong with your hand. There is no infection, which is very strange. I cannot find the place where the blood is coming through either. The blood is not seeping through your skin, it is forming on the outside. This is scientifically impossible, although there is a phenomenon reported where I have heard this happening. But that has only been reported amongst very devout followers of Jesus Christ."

With that name my anger exploded, and I lashed out at the Doctor, hitting him in the face, with the hand he was holding. "Never say that name in my presence".

The Doctor sat back, wiped the blood from my hand off his cheek and said. "Boy, leave my office now! Only God can save you from what's wrong with you. Get out!" I spun and walked out triumphantly.

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The emotional strain on my mom was becoming too much for her. She screamed at me, then cried, then ranted and raved again, all the way home. When we got home, she collapsed on her bed, cried, and slept. I just shrugged and went up to my room to play the latest game I had bought. In this game, you had to capture and torture people, until they told you what you needed to hear. The graphics were great and there were untold ways of extracting information.

The “good Doctor”, as my mom called him, had however flipped a switch in my mind. Why had I been so incredibly angry with him? Why was the name “Jesus Christ” such a terrible thing to me? I began to suspect that maybe it was not I, but ‘him’ that had a problem with this “Jesus Christ”. But how was I going to find out anything while ‘he’ was always within me.

When I began to see this more clearly, I noticed, that a lot of what I said and did, was not anything, I would normally have chosen to do or say. I started to suspect that actually, ‘he’ had moved from a guest in my body, within me only to advise, to having taken over my controls. By watching myself, I noticed, ‘he’ was more than that. ‘he’ was ruling my thoughts, speech and reactions. ‘he’ was living through me, not for me. How could I escape from this powerful creature?

I needed help, but there was no way I could communicate that I needed it, without ‘him’ finding out. Not only that, but the incident with the Doctor made me realise, that ‘he’ was firmly in control of my physical body and tongue. The moment I started to talk or do something, ‘he’ would just take over, and change the subject.

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Anyway, who could I talk to? Samantha was not bright enough to have a decent conversation with. She had sold herself to lust and manipulation long ago.

A thought came to me, which somehow had not come from 'him'. Maybe there were others also being controlled. Maybe there were others, who too, could not communicate their need. So like me, they allowed a 'him', to continue ruling them. All the superficial laughs, coarse jokes, discussions and actions were a farce, hiding a hurting person behind them, desperate to escape, but isolated.

The word "isolated" bounced around inside my head, triggering an understanding of 'his' strategy. I had been isolated. Isolated from all those that cared for me. Brin and Josh ignored me. My other friends, wanted nothing to do with me. David, from next door, had asked her mom to tell my mom, that I was no longer welcome. This was after I had tied crackers to her maltase poodle's tail, and lit them. Why had I done that? I can remember laughing at the time, but mostly I remember a strange sort of anticipation, of mirth, a desire to scare, frighten, hurt, and worse.

The one person, who could have helped me, as she understood something of these things, was Shirley, but she had distanced herself so far from me, even to the point, of moving desks, to the furthestest point from mine in the science class. Candy hated me for what I was doing to mom.

I regularly teased Candy, and said all kinds of hurtful things, spitefully breaking her dolls too. Home had become a battle zone, me in my room, my base, and Candy in hers. Our fights would often end up physical, where she would come off second best. My mom could not stop me, or control me, and even

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though she had threatened to call my dad, he was so far away, all he would be able to do, was to pay a visit, which he did once. After he left, the house was mine again.

Only mom never gave up on me. She would cry, she would scold. She would read endless books, anything, to try and find out, what she could do, to get her son back on track. She had even, to my horror, started attending church. I refused to go along. I made it my personal duty, to change their happy faces, as soon as they got home, on Sunday after church. Mom tried having her Bible study group come over to our house, but I switched on my music to the loudest and pumped the worst, "kill your mother, sleep with your brother" songs, I could find. They never came back to our house again, although mom would go out. She had also stopped leaving Candy and I alone together, so Candy would go with her too.

No I was truly alone. 'he' had successfully burnt every bridge I had had. Inside, I was one of the people I was torturing on the computer screen. I realised for the first time, that I had climbed on a downwards spiralling slide, the day I had chosen this spirit to be my guide. That had been the day I had stepped into the quicksand. I had gained popularity, but this had driven those who genuinely cared about me, away from me. Even Tas my cat, and previously, my best friend, had left me and moved in with mom.

The more I thought about it, the more I realised, that there had never been any real moments of pleasure for me. Everything had been superficial. I felt as though I was seeing a painted world. The painting had captured a moment, and was re-presenting this moment again, and again. Had this been reality, the

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landscape would be moving. There would be breezes. Birds and butterflies would be in flight, with sounds of twittering in the trees. Leaves would be growing and waving, some falling. All I had had was an empty lie. The emptiness was indescribable, and yet on the outside, I seemed OK.

Then came the day Samantha committed suicide. It was Friday after school. Samantha's mom had found her and the note with her last words. The police and her mom had knocked on our door. It was not the first time the police had knocked at our door, so mom gave me a quick "what have you done now!" look. I just shrugged, not knowing for which one of the many things, they were there for.

Seeing Samantha's mom there, meant it was something we had done together, there were a number of these things too. Once inside, they sat us all down, and Detective James Hadley, as he had introduced himself, handed me the note, and asked me to read it, and see if I could answer any questions afterwards.

I read: I can't go on trapped in this body any more. I try to talk, I try to scream, I need you to hear me, but nothing gets out. I have no life, so why should I live. I have destroyed all around me. I have nothing to live for. I hate myself, hate who I have become. Benjy I see you. You are the same. Get out if you can. I can't go on. Sorry mom. Sorry dad. But I just can't go on. Please show this to Benjy. He knows. I can see he knows. Benjy I love you. Find a way out. Don't do what I have done. I am tired. I can't go on anymore. I hate him, and to leave him, I must leave myself.

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I was in tears, not because Samantha was dead. In my ignorance (and I would find out later that I was wrong, but at this moment) I thought that she was finally free. My tears, the first I had cried in over a year, were because I was not free. She had taken the only way out she knew of. She had known about me, and somehow, that I too was controlled by a 'him'. I felt that tell-tale grip on my throat, as if someone were strangling me. It was not the lump in the throat one gets when crying; the grip encircled my whole neck.

In fact 'he' was holding my throat. But not to kill me, just to let me know, that I was not to give 'him' away, or say anything about 'him', to these people. I was 'his', and I no longer had a life. I just shook my head at every question, unable to speak. They eventually left, putting my silence down, to the fact that I was shocked at Samantha's death. They said quietly to my mom, that they would come back at a better time, and speak to me again.

My mom was as white as a sheet. Her hands were shaking as she came and sat down beside me. She put her arms around me to console me. I felt the overwhelming temptation to grab her, and throw her across the room. Normally I could not control these urges, but in the presence of such love, somehow, I had the power to resist. I found I could stand up to 'him', and forced 'him' to not do this thing.

All through her consoling and loving words, and the gentle rubbing of my back, she had no idea of the battle raging within me. I knew that neither she, nor in fact most people, who have never had 'him' controlling them, could ever truly understand. If I had

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tried to tell anyone, they would have come back with the standard response of, "This is science fiction" or "stuff from horror movies".

Those who have never experienced 'him', could never understand how completely real 'he' is. There are many spirit guides out there, and many people are still on the slide, at the point where they think they are controlling 'their' spirit guides. If they do not get out early on, they will face, Hell on earth, the enemy within, the reality, of the games I play on my computer, and the words of destruction in my music.

Someone once told me, of how computers can only process what you give them. "If you put garbage in, you will get garbage out". The reality of my life is, that everything I was putting in, was feeding 'him'. I was putting garbage in, and now my life had become garbage.

Samantha's words, kept on coming back again and again.

"Get out if you can."...

"Find a way out. Don't do what I have done."...

"Find a way out."...

"Find a way out."

I noticed, that somehow I was able to use the power of mom's love, to subdue 'him'. I drew this conclusion, because 'he' had not listened to me for the past six months, not once, until now, in the presence of unconditional love. 'he' had ruled. But when mom was close, and in a loving and caring attitude, I was

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able to draw on this love, and resist 'him'. "Perhaps there is a way out", I thought, "Perhaps there is a way out".

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Chapter 7 – Spirit Guide

The whole weekend, I stuck as close to my mom as I could. If she was going out, I went with. I would not leave her side, excepting when I was at school, and then my mom would pick me up, and we would go home straight away. I did my homework, downstairs at the kitchen table, while mom prepared supper. I stayed out of my room as much as I could.

Going to sleep was a real problem. My room belonged to 'him', and when I was in there, I did things, thought things, and said things, that I was beginning to hate. I stopped sleeping in my room. I shared Candy's room at night, on the floor, in a sleeping bag. Mom put this all down to me losing my girlfriend, but how could she think any different. I had said nothing. Candy too, was unaware of the real reason.

A minutes silence was observed at school assembly, on the Monday after Samantha's suicide. Somehow mine and Samantha's friends got it into their heads, that it was because of me, that she had committed suicide. The stories doing the rounds varied, from me backing out of a suicide pact, to her being pregnant. Even Samantha was not stupid enough to commit suicide for problems as simple to work through as these. Her problem, as far as she could see, was inescapable, and to these people totally ludicrous. Any way 'he' would not have let me say anything. I would realise later, that had Samantha waited, and not gone through with her suicide, her way out would have come to her. She did not, and everyone blamed me and turned their backs on me. I realised then, that

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they had never really been true friends. It never occurred to me that I fitted in with them, because I was just as selfish and arrogant, as they were.

I did not attend Samantha's funeral for fear of their reactions. This only served to fuel their suspicions though, and they blamed me all the more.

I did not answer any questions. I just turned away. I knew the truth now, but no one was going to believe me, so why try. I spent my lunch breaks on my own, at the edge of the field. I just sat there. No one wanted to be with me. Right now, I wanted no one to be with me either. There were questions I did not want asked, because I couldn't tell the truth. The truth seemed to have become so important to me, mainly because 'he' hated it so much.

I was so depressed, that many times I wanted to throw myself off the building, or run in front of a truck. At the last moment, it was as though an unseen force would take hold of me, and stop me from going through with it. All through this time, my hand did not stop its 'miraculous' bleeding.

Eventually, after the longest week of my life, the first weekend after Samantha's suicide began. That Sunday, I was presented with two totally terrifying possibilities, and no alternatives. Either I stayed home alone with 'him', or I went to church. I was afraid of staying alone with 'him', but it seemed that 'he' was angry and ready to do anything to stop me going to church.

I needed, somehow, to find a way to resist 'him', but had no idea how to do it. My source of escape came from the strangest of places, Candy, of all people. She walked in to the dining room, where I was

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pushing my cereal around with my spoon, staring into the milky swirls. I looked up at the sound of her light quick footsteps, on the wooden floor boards. She looked straight at me and said that she had something for me. Always greedy for more, I followed willingly. She lead me into mom's car, I did not realise we were going to church, until mom started the car, and reversed out the garage, without stopping.

"Hey, where are we going?" I shouted. "You said you had something for me".

"I do. You know a lot about spiritual power. And I heard some stuff from this guy at church, and I need you to tell me, if what he says is true. You do not have to come in. You can stay outside until after the service. Just get his story straight for me."

Strangely 'he' seemed to warm to this idea, of being able to smash down someone's belief system and argue them into a corner.

I got the feeling 'he' had done this many times before, and was anticipating the enjoyment. It was the same sensation I had felt when I had been tying the crackers to David's dog's tail. I could not get over, how I was feeling every feeling, and every emotion that 'he' felt. I could feel none of my own feelings. I couldn't feel the feelings, which I thought I should be able to feel. I could feel nothing any longer. 'he' had rewired my body for 'his' enjoyment. Unplugging me from my body, and plugging 'himself' in. It is a terrifying experience, to be trapped inside a body which is not your own.

We arrived at the church. It was a smallish stone building, with a high pitched roof, and a small steeple, complete with bell and spire. The words "The Way -

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Bible Church” greeted me, on a plain white sign board. We drove into the car-park, where around forty cars were already parked. There were still quiet a few people standing around, as the church service was only due to start in about twenty minutes.

These people were walking around, smiling, chatting and apparently, happy. But their happiness did not bring a smile to my lips. I felt an ugliness and hatred, so black I was afraid for these folk, and what ‘he’ was capable of doing, and probably planning to do, to these good people. I just wanted, to warn everyone to run away, but of course I had long since become a spectator, to what ‘he’ chose to do with my body. I was counting on my mom’s, closeness and love, to be able to control myself.

We got out of the car and stood around awhile. Eventually, just as the service was about to start, a lanky boy, my age, came walking towards us, smiling and saying, “Hi Mrs Turner, Hi Candy.” He looked at me, smiled, stretched out his hand in a friendly greeting, and said, “You must be Benjy, I am George Camp”. I did not stretch out my hand to greet him.

I felt the attack coming on, that rising blackness which would drive me into a rage. The words exploded from my mouth between clenched teeth. “What crap are you filling my sister’s head with?” I said gratingly.

He just smiled back, completely unnerved. He did however whisper something. I do not know what he had whispered, nor in fact, who he had whispered to, but something snapped inside of me. Suddenly I was terrified. Terrified and cornered.

I wish I could explain the terror. There is no bad thing in any movie, game, nor even in real life, any

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person could ever experience, which could match that terror. It was not fear of physical harm, or emotional torture. It was a terror, at the core of my being, and yet, I knew, it was 'he', who had suddenly become terrified, and not I.

'he', my spirit guide, had seen or sensed something that I could not. Somehow I knew, that it was only right at this moment, that I had a chance. Right now, 'he' was at 'his' weakest. 'he' was unnerved and frightened. 'he' wanted me to run, and I could feel my muscles pulling as if to run, but just as in the nightmares, I had been having the past year, I was rooted to the ground, and could not even move my shoes. Something had locked them into place. I knew just what 'he' was feeling, because he had rewired my body, to register 'his' feelings and emotions. I suddenly realised, that if I was going to throw him out, this was going to be the moment. I sensed I was standing before a spirit, of an immeasurably awesome power. A Spirit not controlled by George, but who was operating through George. George was the conduit through which it was threatening the 'him' within me. This was a real, and a permanent threat to my 'him'. I also sensed, 'he' would lose the battle.

"Help ... me Please, help me" I whimpered.

"HE IS MINE!!! GET AWAY FROM HIM!!!!" 'he' screamed out of my mouth and spun me around. 'he' started to run my body towards the gate of the church. I didn't get more than five steps. I was thrown to the floor. 'he', my spirit guide, picked my body up, and threw it down again on the floor. I felt my head hitting the tar driveway, my tongue hanging out, got bitten, so that I could taste the blood. "IF I CAN'T HAVE HIM, I WILL KILL HIM.

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'he' had met with something, or someone, 'he' could not demand things from. Neither, could 'he' stop me from being rescued. I felt as though I was being turned inside out, and a million nerve endings in my body were being wrenched out by the roots. I became hot all over as I felt "him" being torn out of me, in the same way a person would pull one's hand out of a glove. 'he' had no power to stop this Almighty Spirit from "taking" 'him' out. I just lay there, not moving, not daring to breathe, but knowing 'he' was gone.

What had I heard just before I hit the ground? Oh yes. "In the name of Jesus Christ, get out of Benjy! He has called on God for help, and you no longer have any right to his body. Benjy is covered by the Blood of the Lamb that was slain to take away the sin of the world. Get Out Now!"

Yes, I had finally gotten 'him' out of me. I could feel 'he' was no longer in control, but then, neither was I. 'he' was out, and 'he' was no longer plugged into my system any longer. I somehow sensed, that this was going to be a long road, to recovering my feelings, emotions, and body senses. But I was free.

"'he' has gone", I whispered.

George removed some tissues from his back pocket for my bleeding mouth, and bending down he said quietly. "I heard what you said Benjy, 'he' has not gone far. 'he' has gone for reinforcements. We have to be quick. Are you willing to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master?"

I was suddenly paralysed. I could not move or speak. I felt the blackness descending on me again. "WE WILL NEVER YIELD WHAT'S OURS!! THIS IS OUR BODY. WE WILL KILL IT IF YOU DO NOT LEAVE!

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LEAVE NOW!!!”

Inside, I screamed, “NO!!!! DON’T LEAVE ME WITH ‘HIM’ AGAIN!!”. But nothing came out...

George calmly said, “In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the blood, He shed on the cross at Calvary, where you were all defeated, you may not harm Benjy, or his body, or mind, or anything else about him. In the name of Jesus Christ, Son of the Most High God, you will release Benjy, to speak of his own free will.”

Then George asked me again, “Benjy, do you want to accept, Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour? Do you believe, and accept, that His blood paid to set you free? Benjy do you?”

I felt my tongue loosening to my control, but I still could not move.

“Yes!” I stammered, “I accept Jesus Christ, and His blood for my sins.”

There was an immediate snap inside me, and I felt how something left me in a great sigh. It was as though I simply breathed ‘him’, and whoever else had joined ‘him’, out. I also sensed, that I breathed the sweetest, most beautiful, air in again. I felt a release from so deep within me I cannot begin to describe where it was attached to. I knew I was free. But the way forward, I had no idea about. I did know this one thing. I had done the right thing. No guarantees were given me, except the word of a stranger, and I sensed the deep truth in what he was saying.

I was still lying on the floor, flat on my back, looking up at the clouds, bright against the deep blue

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sky. It occurred to me, that I had not really seen the sky, as I was doing now. I was drinking it in, and experiencing it, becoming a part of the sky and clouds. I sensed the tentacles of God's creation, which had been blocked out for so long, begin to expose God's might and majesty again. Not that the creation had gone any where, it had not. When 'he' had taken over, and plugged himself into my body, and mind, I could no longer experience God. I could no longer appreciate that which was around me.

George, to his credit, did not reach down right away, to help me up. He left me there, on the tar of the parking area. Candy and mom had gone in to church, but George stayed with me. He did not speak. It was as though he was waiting for something, some word. He just sat on the curb, arms folded with his elbows on his knees. He was about three meters away from me, with his head bowed, forehead on his folded arms. I could see him out of the corner of my eye, and I was comforted knowing that he was there.

I closed my eyes and just lay there. I felt as though gentle waves of water were washing over my body, my eyes, my nose and my ears. I felt as though I was being "re-plugged", into my body and mind. My body was exhausted, as though I had run a marathon. Every millimetre of it was jelly, as though faint from hunger, excepting that I had eaten well this morning. Quietly, in my mind, the words came to me "I love you Benjy. Do you want Me to forgive you?" I knew it was God.

"Yes" I whispered softly.

A wave of peace flowed over me. I felt every sinew, and every muscle unwinding. I felt my frown disappearing from me and my face relaxing. This

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peace was so deep, and so complete. I moved from the exact opposite of this, anger, frustration, fear, tension, pain, terror, to this complete peace in a matter of moments. I "awoke", into a world I could not even begin to comprehend. Had anyone tried to explain this, I could never have believed them. I had, after all, ridiculed people who had said such things, many times before.

I felt my body strengthening, not tightening or tensing, it was just the "jelliness" was leaving me.

As though instructed to, George slowly stood up. He came over to me, and bent down, his right knee, by my head. He looked into my eyes. I saw something I had not noticed, in anyone for a long time. I saw a sparkle in them. He had tears streaming down his cheeks as he looked at me. For a moment I thought something was wrong with me. He seemed to sense my thoughts, because he just reached out his hand, as if to say, "nothing wrong".

With a smile, he said, "everything's OK Benjy, I am just so incredibly happy for you, and I can feel how happy all of Heaven is right now too. How do you feel? Are you strong enough to stand yet?"

I sat up gingerly, feeling myself recovering every moment. I rolled onto my knees, and slowly got up, pushing my knees, until I was erect. Finally I was standing. We stood facing each other, about thirty centimetres apart, him looking at me, and me at him. George then did something strange. He gave me a huge hug. I did not know how to react. I just stood there, arms at my side. Only when he whispered to me, "Welcome to the family, my brother", did I understand. He was not trying to be fresh with me; this was how Christians expressed their "familiness".

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We separated. He looked at me and said, "I have two very important things to tell you. The first is that you cannot believe that everything you hear is from God, or from Satan, or for that matter from yourself. In the Bible book First John chapter four verse one, we are warned,

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

So test every spirit, to see if it is of God. In Second Corinthians chapter ten verse five we are told,

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ"

We must capture every thought that is not aligned to the Word of God. In second Corinthians chapter eleven verse fourteen we are told, about Satan,

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

So now you know that Satan will try to convince you he is God, to confuse you. There is only one test that works."

"What's that?" I asked, so locked into these words, knowing that this answer was going to become my one and only security, for my relationship with God.

George answered, "If you think back, to a time when you had really good friends", Brin and Josh popped into my mind, and I winced at the pain I had

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caused them, tears coming again to my eyes. George noticed, and hesitated, reached up, and squeezed my shoulder in support. Then he continued gently, "If one of them phoned you, and tried to disguise his voice, would you still know it was them?" I nodded, and smiled at the prank calls, we had played on each other. It is the same with God. Once you know God's character, as described in the old and new testaments of the Bible, both before Jesus brought us God's Grace, as well as now that His grace is with us, you will know when it is God speaking to you. You see God never changes, so you can count on what you read in the Bible, as still being one hundred percent accurate. You will know when it is God, when it is yourself, and when it is Satan, for even Satan's true character is also in there."

I had my answer, but I did not know how to get to know God, like I had known Josh and Brin. So I asked, "How do I get to know God like this?"

He looked at me and said, "It took time spent with your friends, for you to get to know them, it took situations, easy and hard times, for you to learn to trust each other. It took finding out about their environments, friends, family, and background. Only then, could you develop that deep friendship. We do the same with God, and it takes time. Time spent walking and talking to Him, praying to Him, worshipping Him. But finding out what His character is really like, will only come from reading your Bible daily, start at the beginning, and read through to the end, then start all over again. Reading God's Word is a lifetime habit, spiritual food. We are told that we need His Word each day. The first psalm in the Bible makes this clear. I do this every morning and night and I have grown strong in God's love and power. You must do this too. Then there are those situations you will

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walk through together, good and bad, where you will learn to turn to Him, lean on Him, and trust Him. Even when you no longer have anything to hold onto, He will never let go of your spirit.”

I nodded, marking the Bible, as my new anchor, in this new life.

Then he said something which frightened me... a lot. “The second thing I need to tell you, is that that spirit, we call them demons, has not gone far. Don’t be afraid. It cannot get inside you, unless you reject Jesus Christ.” I relaxed again.

Still facing me, George asked “Tell me about your room at home. Describe it to me.”

Not understanding the relevance I said, “Well, it’s square, with a window, and a door.”

“No I mean describe it. What colour is it, do you have posters up, what kind of ornaments do you have?”

I immediately felt uncomfortable. I knew a lot of things in there, would not be found in a Christian’s room, so I began to describe all the good things, leaving out the things, that according to Candy’s chastening words, were not acceptable. George raised his hand to stop me.

“Benjy, when a spirit takes over a person’s life, as that one had taken over yours, they fill their environment with things they like. Your friends are mostly people, the spirit likes to hang around with. Your whole life, becomes contaminated by the demon’s desires. I have heard very little of these things from you. If you can’t name them, you can’t

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shame them. If you can't shame them, you will not shame yourself for keeping them. If you keep them then you keep the environment that spirit likes, and not the environment you, the new Benjy, wants to have."

George continued, "That demon has gone back to the environment it likes. It has gone back to your room, and is going to summon your "friends", the ones you used to be friends with, when that demon was controlling you.

I went cold.

I never wanted to be near 'him' again. George could see the shock on my face, and hastily added. "Its OK, that demon cannot get inside you while Jesus Christ is there. But you have to go, and radically destroy everything which the demon considers to be its home. You must convert it to a home Jesus Christ would feel welcome in, and you must do it today. Everything which represents evil, wrong, darkness, and selfishness, including lust, jealousy, anger and bitterness, all these must go."

I looked at him as if to say "You do not know what you are asking."

It was as though he was told my thoughts, for he responded. "Yes I do know what you are experiencing Benjy. I was where you were a few years ago. I got involved through "White Magic", magic and witchcraft, both of which are evil, have many appearances, but essentially, it is asking demons to act. I did not know that then though. I believed it was OK to practise magic, so long as it was for good."

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He faltered, stopped, and sighed a deep sigh of regret, and then continued' "I did not realise then, that once you start there, a time comes, when those spirits which I commanded to change things, would get inside me, and then slowly, intermittently, they would take over my controls. I was blinded to this truth. I got switched off, when they took over, so I did not even know they had taken over. I found people saying that I had done something, and I could not remember it at all. But the evidence eventually all pointed to me. When I found that out, it was too late. The spirits had me, and only a servant of God, accomplished in dealing with these immortal creatures, by using the various tools God provides (The Blood of Jesus, and God's own Authority), can get rid of them."

He looked at me earnestly and added, "I can come and help you after church if you want. I'll just ask my mom if I can come to your place for lunch. I am sure she won't mind, especially if she knows why."

"OK, but please don't tell anyone", I begged. I was afraid of a social stigma.

"Benjy, everyone in this church knows where you've been, and what's going on. We have all been praying for you for months now. Ever since Candy came and told us about what was going on at home. I knew, quicker than the rest, because I had been there, and knew what to look for. Today did not just happen you know. We prayed until God explained what He wanted us to do. And we did exactly as He instructed for your particular situation.

When this was confirmed in our hearts, in three different and independent ways, we then set up your meeting me. That little church is not having a normal

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church service today. About twenty of them arrived early, and began praying for you, praying that nothing would hinder you from coming. Then the rest of the church arrived. They are still having praise and worship – can you hear them.

They would normally be having a sermon right now, but they are waiting for you. Come meet your new family. We walked across the car park and in through the big double doors, which stood invitingly wide open.

The first face I came across was Candy's. She was standing right at the door. She smiled at me, a frightened, yet hopeful, smile. She glanced at George enquiringly. He smiled and nodded his head. She gave a triumphant squeal of delight, ran into me, jumped up, threw her arms around my neck and hugged me. She cried, and cried, laughing through her tears, in great heaving sobs, into my neck.

I held her tight, finally understanding how much my little sister loved me. She had fought for me all along, in prayer, in telling the church, in being the champion of my cause.

Mom was next, and she also cried, but in a kind of gentle, motherly way. She said, "Are you OK Ben?" I held her, with one hand on each of her shoulders, at arms length, and looked at her. I could no longer contain myself.

I broke down, pulled her close into a great big hug, and said, "I'm sorry mom. I'm so sorry for the way I've treated you, Candy and dad." I held her tight, and being the same height as her, rested my chin on her shoulder and closed my eyes. She just rubbed my back and said, "Its OK Ben. You're back now, and

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that's what counts. I love you Ben, just promise me you will not go back into that stuff again."

"I promise mom." Then remembering my room, I asked, "Can George come over and clean out my room?"

I could feel her nodding, and then adding, "Yes, sure. That George is a good boy. He would make a good friend Ben. You need good friends. Yes, George can come over, if his mom says 'yes' that is".

I opened my eyes to a glassy world, where tears were blurring my vision, and causing the lights in the church, to appear as glowing streaks and shades.

Someone was standing in my view, in amongst the lights. My vision was blonde with long hair. She stood in a top and skirt, hands together in front of her. I could not make out too much more with the tears in my eyes, and I wondered if this were an angel that I was picturing.

The rest of the church had not ceased praising God. The congregation was still facing the cross, which was mounted on the wall, just behind the pulpit. They were, many with arms raised, worshipping Jesus with the singing of the Lords Prayer.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

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I recognised it from the many times Candy had played it, and sang it at home. I remember how angry I used to feel when I heard it. Hearing it now, I made it my own anthem. I was finally home. This was my home. The lights were still creating streaks, dancing around my vision. I blinked away my tears, to see if I could see this vision more clearly.

As my focus became clearer, I began to notice something about this "glowing" girl. Her hair was refined gold, with the light behind her, shining through the finer strands of her hair, at the edges, giving her an appearance of having a halo.

There was something familiar about this person though, but I could not tell what it was. My mom let go of me and stood aside, opening the way between me and this vision of mine. "Could she see my vision too?" I thought. Mom motioned for me to go down the aisle.

I started to walk towards the vision, and through my clearing eyes, I realised with a heart-jump, "Its Shirley!" She too had tears in her eyes. As I reached her, she held out her hands, and took mine, one in each of hers. She looked into my eyes; mine were brimming again with tears. "I'm sorry Shirley ...", I stuttered to a stop. Took a deep breath and continued, "I shouldn't have ... treated you the way I did. I was wrong."

She replied, "I forgive you Benjy. I am so happy you are free, and thrilled that you too are saved. Welcome to the family of God."

"Shirley ... May I ...", I 'disappeared' into those beautiful blue eyes, and realised what I had lost when

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we broke up. A tremendous pain and regret arose in me. I continued fumbling, "... hug you?"

She stepped into me, and put her arms around my chest. I could feel her fingers splayed open on my back, as though she wanted to get hold of as much of me as possible. I felt her crying into my neck, and I cried too. We stood together for what seemed an eternity, and then I stepped back out of the embrace. Gently I said, "I know why I am crying, but why are you?"

"I have been praying ever since we broke up, that God would save you, and that you would give your heart to Jesus Christ. I should not have kept Jesus to myself, nor been embarrassed and hidden the fact that I was a Christian. I should have spoken up in the beginning. I was afraid you would not want to go out with me if I told you what I really was. Can you forgive me for lying to you?"

"Yes" I replied, "I forgive you."

She continued softly, "Now that you have become a Christian, I am crying because I am so happy". I knew this was a 'head answer', not a 'heart answer', but I said nothing. Then with her head slightly bowed, looking at me from just beneath her fringe, she asked hesitantly, "Why are you crying?"

I sighed, looked at my feet for a moment, not sure of how much to say, and then realised that I was a Christian now. That meant I could not manipulate the truth, to achieve my own desired outcome. I had to tell the simple, unambiguous, whole truth. So I just said it. "I just realised what I lost when we broke up, and now I will never be able to get you back." And

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then hastily added, "Not that I blame you, or would expect you to want me back."

"Benjy, you are so special to me. You stood up for me, and by me, when everyone but God was against me. Right now, I also want to be back with you, but you are coming out of something very horrible, and George has warned us all, what you still need to go through. George says you need real friends now. Let me be your 'real friend', until you have healed properly, and let's ask God to show us when we should talk about being closer."

A disconcerting thought entered my head, so I asked it, "Are you seeing someone at the moment?"

"I have some close friends Benjy. Some are girls and some are guys. But I'm not serious about going steady with any of the guys, if that's what you mean?"

I gave a sigh of relief, and saw that she also relaxed. "Come and sit", she said, as she turned and walked down to the front row, with me, my mom, Candy and George following behind. There were five empty seats, so we took them. George motioned something to the pastor, who arose from his seat, and went up onto the slightly raised stage, where the singers and musicians were leading the worship.

Mr Gartier is his name, and he is the pastor of "The Way – Bible Church". He is an average build, dark haired man, clean shaven, in his suit, but no tie. He stood there, while his wife and three children sat in the front row, next to George. They were good people, people I had sensed the demon within me, had been irritated, and agitated around, on those rare occasions, when we had met at the mall. It occurred to me that these meetings had not really been

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accidental. Now, however, he was a comfort to me. He knew this great and mighty God who had saved me.

At the end of the song, Mr Gartier asked everyone to sit, and waited until we had. Then he said, "I promised you all, that today, if God got Benjy to sit in this church, the same "Benjy" we have brought before God every week in our prayers, the same "Benjy" that Candy, his sister, came and told us about over a year ago, I promised that if that "Benjy" was in this service, I would ask George to give his testimony, of what happened to him, and his road to recovery from Satanism. For I do not want you to be lead astray Benjy. I do not want any of you to be under any illusions, about how hard it is to recover. Not impossible, just hard." While speaking the last lines he looked straight at me.

He continued, "All of us will be a target, in the evil one's attempts to suck Benjy back into his control. Benjy has said he will never go back, but he will need our support; in prayer, patience, tolerance, gentle guidance and mostly in our love. For you see, by accepting him amongst us we will have to bare certain consequences. There will be rumours, slanders, rejection, hatred and perhaps even other types of persecution, from those whom the evil one can control. If your brother or sister says one of these things, know where it comes from, and gently and lovingly rebuke them, for not being vigilant over their tongues. Then remind them of God's limitless love and forgiveness".

"Benjy is now family, and God Himself, is the one who has made him family. So we will treat him as one of our own." He looked again at me, "Benjy, In the

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Bible book of John chapter fifteen verse twenty, Jesus himself says,

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

So we can expect to be persecuted. Do not be surprised when it comes. Many will say things about, and to you, some will do things too. Ignore those who are trying to break you down. God does not break down, He builds up, and encourages. The Bible is your foundation and the Bible book of Second Timothy chapter three verse sixteen tells us,

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

Therefore, gentle and loving correction, backed up by scripture, quoted in context, of the chapter, and the Character of God, as shown consistently, across the Bible (old and new Testaments), should be carefully listened to. If you have any questions, speak to George or me. Shirley, next to you, also has some good advice, when it comes to walking in the Spirit."

He continued addressing the congregation. "Everyone stand and give Benjy a real 'welcome home' clap, just as confirmed in the Bible book of Luke chapter fifteen verse ten reads,

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

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All in Heaven, have already rejoiced over Benjy's adoption, this day". The whole congregation stood and clapped a resounding thunderous clapping, some of the younger ones took to whistling too. Others shouted "Praise You Father", and "Thank you Jesus". I just sat.

Never, since before my dad had left us, had I been able to rest in a relationship. And I had never experienced a relationship that was so completely welcoming, and homely, where I did not have to be the strong one. I cried again. My sleeves were wet from all the tears, and from my runny nose, but it did not matter, I wiped my eyes and nose again.

George left his place between Candy and Mrs Gartier. George shook Mr Gartier's hand, and they smiled at each other. I fired a silent prayer to God. "I want my father close by me God." The answer came from deep within me up into my mind. "I am your Father, Benjy. I am your Father." I sighed, a deep sigh of contentment. Mr Gartier took George's vacant seat.

George took the stand, and everyone sat. Mom reached over, across Candy, and gave my right hand a tight squeeze. Candy slid her arm through mine, linking arms with me. She looked up at me, and smiled. My knowledge of just how much, this little sister of mine had gone through, to get her brother free was deepening, and I thanked God silently for her, my mom and Shirley.

Shirley sat with her hands on her lap, in the seat next to me. I looked at her, and she looked at me too. We smiled. I saw that same sparkle in her eyes. I finally understood. The Spirit she had been talking to, back in McKee's, had been Jesus Christ. I had sought

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the power of such communication for myself, but had gone to the wrong place to find it. The evil spirit, had been willing to counterfeit this relationship, for a while, until it had taken control of me. I loved that sparkle even more now, now that I knew that it was Jesus Christ who gave it.

I wondered if that meant my eyes were sparkling too now.

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Chapter 8 – George and the dragon

George stood there, on the two brick high face brick stage, with the large wooden pulpit before him, and the large wall mounted wooden cross behind him. He rested his two hands on the top of the pulpit and began to tell us his story. He was looking at all of us. But for me, it felt as if he was speaking only to me. He told us of his entry into the spiritual world, and it was similar in a way to mine. He started playing fantasy role play games, and eventually he was playing games with magic, wizardry and witchcraft. The games were very mild in the beginning, but after a while he was playing the very heavy stuff.

George began to mix with others playing these games. He never heard others, talking to the spiritual side through the role play games. But the play, lead from "fantasy", into his own reality. He began to hear, and see, things not from this world. This was not delusional, although there are cases of this. The things he heard would happen. The things seen came true. He was searching for the truth, and searched for information in books. He also asked his friends and acquaintances.

George's friends did not walk in the circles he was talking about, so he said nothing to them about it. At socials and at school he said nothing about it either. He did approach the church, but they could not give him understandable answers. They spoke a language, and used terms he could not make sense of. A phrase like "Peace that passes understanding" had made absolutely no sense to him." I, Benjy, thought to myself, that I didn't understand that phrase either,

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these Christians did not seem to speak my language sometimes.

George told us, that he had tried really hard to stay on the right side, and to gain information from Christians. But when he spoke about some of his experiences, to the church pastors and ministers, they would simply tell him, "For your own good, God forbids dealing with these things." No one told him it was the games he was playing, that was exposing him to this darkness. At no point did these pastors, and ministers and Christians, give him alternatives, that were available within the church. It seemed, and George confirmed it was true, that pastors and ministers mostly do not know, how to work at this deep spiritual level. The main reason churches have teams of individuals in leadership with the various gifts of the Spirit of God, is that no person will have all God's gifts. God does this to ensure He retains control of His body. "Sadly", he said, "all the churches I visited, had no one who fulfilled this role that could help me."

George saw me nodding at this point, and said, "I see you also tried talking to the church?"

I answered, "Not the church, but Christians, yes. But they had no answers for me. So I went and looked elsewhere myself".

George continued to the church congregation. "That makes two of us, in here, that have received no help in this area from the church, and I feel lead to tell you all, that there are a lot more of you here, who are secretly searching but will not admit it. May you take heed of the dreadful slide you can get on, from what I will tell you of my story. This is the most common way people are drawn in and deceived."

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Here George took a step closer to the congregation, and as though unveiling a deep secret, he said, "It centres on 'marketing'." He paused, "You see, man is inherently selfish. Until you accept Jesus Christ, selfishness is a part of you and cannot be simply ignored. Some religions teach how to overcome this selfishness, but it is always an effort, unlike when you are a Christian, where your nature is supernaturally changed, and you can overcome selfishness, by accepting Jesus, and making Him your Lord.

Jesus Christ, as Lord, means that He is your 'Decision Approver', with full veto power, to override your desires, and wants, and that you will, honour, and obey, His authority in your life. Jesus is then also your Saviour, and your allegiance is to Him first and above all. This requires obedience, to all He lays down, to guide, and protect you. He is your first port of call, and you should serve Him, above all other authorities and rulers, and His laws override theirs."

"Because 'selfishness' is the nature of people's bodies and minds, advertising and marketing strategies are designed to get people to buy goods and services, by stirring up their desires to satisfy that selfishness. Advertisements, lead you to believe, that the key to self-satisfaction, is having power. Power over your environment, power over other people, power to make your own decisions, power to get rich, power to have what you want, or power to give, what you want others to have, to them. We are told in the Bible book of Ezekiel chapter twenty eight verse eleven to eighteen that Satan started all of this."

George turned to the page in his Bible and continued, "and I quote what God said through Ezekiel in this passage. God was speaking to Satan who was

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at that time residing within the body of the king of Tyre."

"Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise ["merchandise" is what traders buy and sell (or "trade")] they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick ["traffic", in today's language is the word "trade"]; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee."

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This world, and not Heaven, operates on buying and selling. This operates on the principles of trade and any of those with power can play this game and win. All secular marketing strategies and advertising deludes us into thinking we need power. So I, being one of the human beings on this planet, was searching for power - a source of supernatural power. I was not a good academic, with high marks at school, so I did not get recognition (which gives you power, in terms of influencing others). I was also not good at sport, so neither did I get recognition from that quarter."

George hesitated for emphasis, then continued, "No matter what I did, I was the person used as the scapegoat. I was the one that no one wanted to play with. The one that people chose last when choosing sports teams, I was the one rejected and ignored. My parents had no time for me either. They just shouted at me most of the time, and tried to force me to study, but I received no guidance on how. So I could not even go to them, not that I would have anyway, but there was no one else really".

George continued, "I needed, from a self preservation point of view, to find a way to have value and worth in this world". He raised his hands in a gesture of despair, "If I had only heard the message, and more importantly, truly understood, and believed, that God gave me worth. I was already precious, because He wanted to, and did, create me, to enjoy Him, for Him to enjoy being with me, and to give me a purpose. This mere fact, meant that in the eyes of the highest law, and highest authority, in the universe, I already had tremendous purpose and worth, no matter what anyone on this tiny, and insignificant by comparison, planet said to the contrary.

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But I never got the simple message of the Bible book of Psalms chapter one hundred and thirty nine verses one to seventeen which reads

"O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!"

Neither did I hear the cornerstone of the Bible, from the Bible book of John chapter three verse sixteen, which you all know to be

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"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It was not because people did not try to tell me. They did. They just could not explain it in ways my mind could understand. My mind wanted proof. God wanted me to have faith first. On the other hand, I did not want to have faith first, I wanted proof first. I did not know the words which explain why God requires faith first. This is found in the Bible book of Hebrews eleven verse six, and I quote.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him[God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

So I went searching for the source of personal power. If you search hard enough for something, you will find it. If you're looking for this kind of power, the demons hear about it and they send people to talk to you. I had a number of people who came to sound me out, and befriend me. They came by way of the games I played." He raised a finger, and pointed it above the heads of the people, from left to right. "Here is a warning to you who are moms and dads, check out your children's games, and their friends. Watch especially for idleness. I am not talking about resting and "chill" or relaxation time, I mean the boredom that drives them onto the streets, and into the malls, just to loiter around. Look, see where they go, and what they do in their spare time. Teach them the things I am telling you. Get the CD after this service, and let them listen. If they are caught up as I was, then move house, move work, do whatever you must do to get them out of this icy grip. Get them to love nature. God made it, and as the Bible book of Genesis

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chapter one makes clear, everything God made is good. It is the proof of His sovereign power.”

George took the bottle of water at the pulpit, unscrewed the cap, took a sip, and then reversed the actions. He sighed, paused and then continued, “Well no one told me. So I walked into a circle of people who had power. They had real power. They not only played the games, they lived them. They could speak things and things, would happen. If I had known that I had walked into a group of terrified people, cowering in the dark recesses of the bodies of these “friends”. If I had only known that, just as with the demon possessed man in the Bible book of Mark chapter five versus two to thirteen, those who stood around me, were in fact, demons that owned and ran, the bodies and minds, of those I thought of as “great people”. Yes their language was foul, the jokes they told were hurtful and dirty. But they got away with it. They got away with everything. No matter what they did, everyone thought they were good and helpful. In the same way that Simon the sorcerer deceived people, in the Bible book of Acts chapter eight verse nine, they too could twist what others saw, so that they did not seem to register what was really happening.”

George paused, looked at all the people and then continued. “I was a part of their group, but they always let me know I was part of the “outer circle” – I was accepted, but never included. They would say things in code, which I slowly began to pick up on. It would either be hand signals, symbols written on paper, walls and lockers, or coded messages, hidden in books in the library, or other places. I slowly found out, that there was this secret meeting they would go to once a week, mostly at night. I eventually asked if I could go along too, but was told that they would have to consult the person whose meeting it was.”

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"I was eventually given permission to come to the meetings. But I could not go straight away. I was told I would first have to be 'prepared', whatever that meant I did not know. But this new clandestine world had captivated my sense for adventure. The secretiveness was what I would call "cool". I see now how so many books and movies instil in us people, a dissatisfaction, with simply flowing, gently, and quietly, in God's peace, and at God's apparently slower pace.

George stepped to the front of the stage, toes at the end and then in a warning tone he said, "We have swallowed the "hook line and sinker" of having to have excitement, so as to not be bored. If I had only known that! Had I listened to the sounds, smells and messages, from the nature in our garden, just that.. just that, would have shown me, God was not in what I was doing or where I was going. To this end, the whole hub-hub of life, seeks to drown out, the beautiful quietness, of God". The words "Be still and know that I am God" found in the Bible Psalm forty six verse ten is not just an instruction, it is a clue, that you will only know the real God when you are quiet and still. Even Moses in the book of First Kings chapter eleven verses eleven to thirteen knew that God was in the whisper and not in the mighty wind, earthquake and the fire that preceded Him.

He stepped back behind the pulpit, glanced at his notes, and then resumed, "I had the best heavy metal Rock Music, and just the pictures on the cover, should have alerted my family to the evil that was sucking me in. The fact that I had these all over my walls, door, and cupboard, was a way of locking God out too. My room was my room, and I did not want my family

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in it. I would rant and rave if I thought someone had been in there. Eventually, even my mom would not pack my clothes away, but rather leave them outside my door.”

George’s words, were becoming difficult to speak. I noticed Shirley’s lips were moving, and I realised that she was protecting and strengthening him with prayer. He seemed to stand up taller, and then said, “My dad, tried to set me right, but each time he did, I would play the ‘mom card’. I would find something in what he said, or something in the way he said it, and yell out so mom could hear. I would say things like “Mom! Dad’s coming into my room, and I can’t study when he is in here” or “Mom! Dad is messing around with my things.” This would start an argument, where mom, the pawn in my chess game with dad, would “defend” me from him. I would play the cowering, scared, and defenceless child, before a big “ogre-like” dad. This would ignite mom’s “protect your young” instinct. This instinct is blind, which it has to be, to ensure the continuity of the human race. Men on the other hand, are here to ensure that the human race continues in a righteous manner, which is one of the reasons God instructed the woman to submit to the man. You can check this out in the Bible book of Genesis chapter three verse sixteen to nineteen. I also believe that if the man is not in a right relationship with God that he forfeits this authority. A righteous mom and dad, working together, grow upright children. This however, was not a picture of my parents back then. Mom, would then have a full-scale ‘war’ with dad. Dad could see what I was doing, and how I was manipulating my mom, but he could not get past her instincts with his words. Eventually they would part company in a huff, and not speak to each other the rest of the day. I would turn back into my room, victory in hand.” These last words of George’s,

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were said with such disgust, it had the effect of pouring ice cold water on me.

Again, as if imparting a warning to the parents, he stepped to the edge of the low stage. "Had my mom and dad, been able to devise a way to stand, together, against the "alien" in their house, early on, my discipline and obedience might have been intact for me. At this point of my waywardness though, strong arm tactics would have probably driven me out of the house for good. I had other people, unsavoury, bad characters, who would have taken me in. Had my parents turned towards one another, and presented a united front to me, one in which they spent time with me, and showed genuine unconditional love for me, mixed with genuine hurt, at what I was doing to them, in prayer to God, I would have been saved. But they too, had no idea what was going on."

"I had painted my room a dark blue, mom and dad had said 'no' to me painting it black, but the effect was the same. With the curtains closed, it kept out the light. It kept out all that God has provided, to show me that He is real, and that He loves me. How true the Bible book of John chapter three verse twenty is which states,

"For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd."

I know this verse speaks of the light as being Jesus Christ, but we also hated anything that represented light and good. Light was bad, so sunglasses were in, the darker the better. I hated light coloured clothes, and chose to wear dark whenever possible."

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George took a deep breath and said. "One of my focal points in my life was my computer. I was the baby, and it was my bottle. I sucked my sustenance, from my "real mother", out through the screen. My computer was in my room, and I had every game I could copy on it. With two of the biggest, and most sophisticated hard drives, and an external drive, I could sit and feed my warped spirit, every possible scenario of blood, murder, deception, and most of all, the demons spiritual food – fear." He grimaced at some unspoken thought, and continued.

"Why was my environment like this? I did not know it then, but I was already possessed by a demonic spirit". George stopped and walked to the edge of the stage, and in a very careful voice he said. "Please be careful of how you treat your children after today. Most children are normal. Many are influenced by spirits, but that does not mean they are possessed. Beware of "the slide" though. It is a slide, and one which takes any person on it closer to possession, every day that passes. Stay away from thinking that "I am just playing with evil things, they cannot harm me." They can, and will lead to harm. Why play with these when there are so many amazing things in God's beautiful world.

Another thing, only take away the evil things, when you have alternative good, and beautiful things, to replace them with. But don't take your time finding them. Outdoor and natural activities are good alternatives if the people involved, are good people. Check out the leaders involved in these activities. Gardening, even if it's on a balcony, with pot plants, is great. Protecting your children means changing your lifestyle. Are you prepared to do it? ... Are you prepared to do it for them?"

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George put down the bottle he had just sipped from, and then continued, "Your children do not have to approve of what you are going to replace it with. They never will. No child wants their games taken away, but if it's hurting them spiritually, then take it away. You are their parent, which makes you their protector, not just physically, mentally or emotionally, but most importantly, spiritually. The Bible book of Proverbs is packed with advice to parents and children on how to grow up as God intends. We are each, first and foremost eternal spirit beings. We might have a seventy-plus year human experience we are somewhere in the middle of, nevertheless, it's pretty temporary."

He was again at the front to emphasise the importance of these words, "Your children will most probably not enjoy the alternatives at first, but stand together and persevere. If you are a single parent, down-scale your lifestyle, find a new job, make time for your children. Let them get to meet good people, who also love the beauty of nature in God's world. You are their wheels. Get them to the right places, and stop them going to places where they will be idle."

George paused and walked back again to behind the pulpit and continued.

"It is truly a pity, that my mom and dad were never forewarned, and so had no idea of what was happening. We have had long discussions since I came to know Christ, and there has had to be a lot of truth... for as Jesus says in the Bible book of John chapter eight verse thirty two,

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

A lot of the truth hurting all of us, but there has also been a lot of forgiveness, and that was only possible, because of their unconditional love for me. So as I continue with this story, consider how much your child knows you love them. I mean, do you tell them? Do you hug them? Do you show them? Not just when it is easy, but especially when it's hard. Because that's when they know you love them, when it's hard. Boundaries enforced with explanations and understanding, which are relaxed slowly, in joint decision, and mutual respect, is a good way to start. But remember parents, you hold the key, and you have the final say. We kids do not know better than you, but then you parents, are unplugged from our life experiences, where we go, what we do, what we play. You will first need to research our lives and our world, before we can accept that your changes in our life are based on your love for us."

"Back to my story though" said George, somewhat sidetracked. He glanced again at his notes, and then continued. "Now that I had been accepted, and was to be permitted, to attend my first meeting, I was both scared and excited. The preparation, for my first meeting, was held in secret, over a period of about a month. I was told many supposed deep secrets, which I found out later, weren't deep secrets at all, but were just there to get me really hooked, and to see if I was going to back down at the last moment. They told me many times, of people who knew these secrets, and who had told others about them. They had been hunted down and killed. Their families had been butchered, and they were tortured to death. I was terrified, but was made to understand two things. Firstly, I was already in too deep to back out, and

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secondly, there was a need for such secrecy." In both cases these were lies from Satan, but not knowing this then, I believed them.

"I thought that we were real 'princes of power'. Easy to believe when you have no clue about the magnitude of God's power. Anyway, I did not know this, I saw my friends had certain 'powers'. The ability to make people say things, without them realising, what they were saying. If I had then been aware that it was demons doing the message transfer and not my friends own power, I would have at that point, probably still not backed out. I would have believed Satan's lie that it was pretty much too late for me."

A week before my "first meeting", my friends and I got together at one of their houses. In his dark room, we had a discussion which has changed my viewpoint on life. They dropped the 'bomb shell' with the words, "We have an arch enemy in this world, one we are defeating. "Whimpy" people with no backbone follow him, but we hate their spiritual leader. He is trying to destroy all of us who don't want to be his slave. That spirit is Jesus Christ."

George stepped off the stage and stood even closer to everyone. He spoke clearly and with purpose. "Now folks, up until that moment, I had thought religion, and especially Christianity, was a whole lot of rubbish. But when they said that name, the way they did, I knew that Jesus Christ was real. The world being in the terrible state it is, convinced me quickly, that Jesus was definitely losing against these Satanists. So I would rather be on their side, than on the Christians. I had no idea, as the Bible book of Revelation chapter twenty one verse one, explains that this planet is in

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any case going to be destroyed, and so it is more important for God, to save us spiritually, than please us physically. It is, of course, also more important for Satan to please us physically, and so make us, not want to concern ourselves with the rest of the world, or for that matter, with our own cowering and terrified infant spirits.

My friends continued telling me, "You will have to go through a ritual, where you reject Jesus Christ completely. Are you prepared to do that?"

At that point, I made the decision to turn against Christ. I am so thankful, that He never turned against me though. His love for me is beyond understanding. It was this unconditional love, and the prayers of many people, that would eventually save me from the trap I had just walked into."

"Soon I was slipping out at night. I would 'set up spiritual deceptions', as I had been taught to do by my friends, which would keep my parents thinking I was at home. Then I left, escaping out the window, and down the trellis, which held vines of ivy right up the side of our double story house. "

I, Benjy, noticed Shirley was still whispering, and wondered if she had stopped the whole service, probably not. I was witnessing the faithfulness of Christian family, protecting and aiding one another spiritually, just as we are all instructed to do, in the Bible book of Romans chapter fifteen verse thirty one. George was still speaking, but he no longer referred to his notes. He said, "my first experience at a Satanic church, called a coven, was very scary. I did not know that I had not been taken to the real coven though. I sensed an adventurous feeling – afraid but excited. If I had only known then, that, that is what the demons

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always do to new converts. If I had only known that these creatures can create feelings within people, don't trust your feelings folks. Don't trust your feelings, be suspicious of them, and test them against the Word of God. Had I known this, I would have turned, and run, and never looked back. But I did not. The first meeting I attended, was very low key, designed to be secretive, and full of magical tricks – The venue was not the normal venue. Satanists are very careful who they let into their circles.”

There were about thirty other people and they were all hooded. I did not know that this was only a fraction of the coven. Most covens consist of between fifty and a couple of thousand. This was a pre-initiation ceremony. I did not know that either. God's words in the Bible book of Hosea, chapter four verse six is so relevant.”

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge”

It was as though George stole himself away to a safe place at this point, and I remembered that this was the first time he was telling a crowd of people about his life. I marvelled at his vulnerability. George made the sign of the cross on his chest and then proceeded to open up the darkest part of his experiences. “I had to curse God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit”. He said this in a voice, where he was catching his breath, as if he was holding back the heart wrenching cry, which was producing a stream of tears, down his face. Candy took him some tissues. He stood there, cleaning himself up, and recomposing himself. I do not think that there was a single dry eye in that church. Shirley was using her few tissues, but I had reverted to my snotty sleeves again.

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After this holy moment, which took an eternal minute, George continued, his voice breaking to match his regret. "People... I had to curse them... Not Buddha, Allah, or any other religion. ... These are no threat to Satan at all, which raises some interesting questions, about the true power, and validity of non-Christian beliefs." He paused to allow this to sink in. Then he continued, "I then had to curse a chicken, and cut off its head, and drink its pumping blood". A gasp came from some of the congregation, but he continued, making no comment. "I gagged and wanted to throw up. But all of those Satan worshipers screamed at me not to. If I did, they would have to kill me. Terrified, I managed to keep the blood down, somehow.

I was then told to sign a written contract, officially handing my soul over to Satan forever. No pen was used, I had to cut my finger, and sign it with my bloody thumbprint. The contract was taken away, and rolled up into a scroll".

"I was then shown the scriptures in the Bible, that say that those who curse the Holy Spirit, can never be forgiven, and that, those who drink blood, should be cut off from God's people. These were the first words I had read in a Bible, not the beautiful scripture, in the Bible book of John chapter three verse sixteen,

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Nor did I read any of the other, thousands of pictures of God's love and grace. I was told that I could never become a Christian, no matter what lies I was told by other "misinformed" Christians, because

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God himself said, and I had seen it for myself, in His Bible. I could never go to Him from this point on”.

As George continued, I noticed he was searching for someone in the congregation. “I was then taken to a jewellery store, in a quieter part of town, and told to throw a brick through a window, and to steal some of the jewellery. I did this. The police sirens were in the distance, when we all ran back, to the place we had originally met at. There they showed me, a video of how I had broken the window, of the shop, and stolen the merchandise. I was the only one visible in the video. By now my heart was racing, and I was as white as a sheet. I was so afraid of what they would do with that evidence.”

“They told me that this video, and some of the stolen goods were going to be stored, in a safety deposit box together with my blood signed contract. Should I choose to speak about what they are doing, to anyone, then this would be brought forward as evidence, and the police would come and arrest me at home, in front of my parents. The Satanists would then butcher my family, while I was in jail. They also told me, that each of them, also had signed contracts, and so I was not alone. Each had had to go through similar rituals, and all were also sworn to secrecy. So I was ‘safe’ so long as I was silent.”

George seemed to find who he had been looking for in the congregation, and he visibly relaxed. “As part of my recovery from exiting Satanism, I had to go to everyone I had harmed, during the time I had been a Satanist, and apologise. Where no forgiveness was forthcoming, I had to pay in terms of money, or time, for what I had done wrong. Mr Wiley, is the man who owns the store I broke into, on my first night. To his credit, when the church came to speak to him, and to

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tell him my story, he withdrew the charges. I have instead worked at his store on weekends for the past year. I have another three years to go to make up for what I had stolen. Thank you so much Mr Wiley." This last remark was made while locking eyes with someone behind me. "Mr Wiley is in fact now a member of our church, and a very special "dad" to me. The church has correctly ensured, that I could not tell my story to any of you, until I had been forgiven, paid for, or had a signed agreement to, and had begun paying, for all that I had done wrong."

"But back to my story", George said. "I was terrified when I finally got home, and showered. No one woke up. The next day, I was fully accepted by the group, and they told me to go and sit, in the back of the Christian Bible Study group, and listen to what they prayed for. Then I had to pray against what the Christians prayed for. I was to pretend I was a Christian. It was most likely this assignment, which saved me though, for God says in the Bible book of Isaiah chapter fifty five verse eleven

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Unbeknown to me, I had people praying for me too, even though I was out to destroy these same people."

George wiped tears of remorse, away from his eyes, with his right sleeve, and continued.

"I prayed every night... I had to wake up at three in the morning, and start to pray, against what I had heard the Christians pray for. I had to pray hard, using my emotions, and especially, I was told, I had

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to be in a terrified state. That was not hard to do. I could sense a terrifying presence in my room anyway, and so I prayed for two hours every morning. I was awoken by demons. They would wake me up with the most terrifying nightmares, so that I was scared stiff, and full of fear, in preparation for praying. Another thing I had to do, was to pray for the destruction of my parent's marriage. Every time a coven got together, they would celebrate the arguments and fights, which had been caused in the marriages, being prayed against. Those who managed to get a married couple to divorce, or a successful gay or lesbian marriage, were greatly rewarded by the Satanist high priest."

George was really battling to speak now, and Shirley slid off her chair onto her knees. Candy joined her. I just sat, transfixed. George seemed to gain new courage and clarity, at this point, and he continued. "At the coven meetings, the demons would control everyone, even the Satanist high priest. It was becoming more and more clear to me that I was trapped. I could no longer control anything in my life. I hated myself, and I hated these evil things that were running my body, my words and my thoughts. I wanted to, and tried to, commit suicide many times, but each time God would step in, and my attempt would fail. All that happened, was that I ended up injuring myself, and living with more pain and suffering."

George looked at his papers, and then above everyone's heads, not meeting anyone's eyes, speaking words of warning. "There are certain times in the year, like halloween and quite a few more, where there are rituals which have to be honoured by all Satanists. I am not going to go into details, but it is sufficient to say that what I did witness left me cold

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and terrified. Which Christian would accept me into their circle if they knew these things? Those who know the Love of The Saviour, Jesus Christ, could do so. Those who know the greatness of the Grace of God would do so. And those who know that Jesus has seen it all, and still wants to save the lost and scattered sheep. For as Jesus Himself says in the Bible book of John chapter twelve verse forty seven,

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world."

There will of course come a time when God will judge those who reject Jesus Christ, but until then there is a chance to receive His forgiveness. The Bible book of Revelation chapter nineteen verses eleven to sixteen says and I quote:

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

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George paused to allow the gravity of what a war against the Almighty God and His entire created universe would mean.

Then George continued, "But this was not yet my understanding. As a Satanist, I had become especially afraid of myself, when I saw the reflection of my contorted face, in a mirror hanging in the coven. I was cheering and chanting, as much wanting the sacrifice and blood, as everyone else there. It was as though I was watching a movie, with my eyes wired open, so that I could not stop seeing what was happening. As much as I whimpered, and screamed inside, for them to stop, the only sound that came out of my mouth was that deep voice of the demon inside me, booming forth."

George stood a moment. It had taken a long time to say these words, fighting through the terrifying memories to tell just what was needed, without exposing everyone to the evil he himself had witnessed.

He dried his tears and re-composed himself, and continued. "Now I can see a lot of white faces out there, and I can see how shocked you are at who you thought I was, compared to what I have told you now. Children of God, listen to the nature of the creatures, which take over people's bodies, and rule them. Hate Satan, hate evil, but do not hate those trapped within. Pray for these trapped spirits, love them, for they need your love, to grow strong enough, to be able to call on the name of Jesus Christ. Satan hates this love more than anything, for he has no defence, or attack, that can stop selfless love from leading people to God's salvation.

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In the Bible book of Revelations twenty verse two we find out the true identity of Satan, it reads

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"

So Satan is "the dragon". And a dragon is a depiction of the evil one, Satan himself. He loves to see a picture of himself in our houses. He loves the children to play with dragons, and listen to stories of "good" dragons, all designed, to lull the unsuspecting children, as they grow older, to be caught up, and trapped. He hates humans, with an evil jealousy, not equalled in Heaven or on Earth. He has his eyes on you, your children, your parents, and your pets, your friends, your job, your school, your belongings, anything, that can cause pain in your life. I am sad that I have shocked you, but glad that you know the nature of these evil spirits.

Satan and his evil spirits are defeated, and already doomed to destruction. I want you all to know, that Satan is a liar, and God not only tells the truth, He is The Truth!" At this point there was tremendous applause from the congregation, and someone shouted "Hallelujah, God Almighty Reigns!" others whistled, and this sparked some, to begin praising Jesus Christ, and God the Father, in the perfect prayer language, of tongues.

George stood there, not wanting to do anything, to cut short spontaneous praise, for his Lord and Master. I sat and marvelled. Having never heard people praying in tongues before, I was a little uncomfortable with its strangeness. But I identified this strange feeling, as my own physical response, to something I

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could not understand. Eventually the praise tapered off, and a Holy silence remained.

No one said anything, for at least thirty seconds. The Holy Spirit uses silences within services. It is quite something, to experience corporate reverence in silence, from the leader of the service, right through the body of Christ. As if told to, George continued reverently. "Thank you for your Grace Lord Jesus ..."

After another shorter pause, he continued, "So as evil as the thing inside me was, God is always full of more love, than can ever be equalled, by evil and hate.

I stand before you now, saved and forgiven. But each one of those Satanists, and those of you who are not saved, have a chance at salvation, from this constant terror and evil. Feel sorry for them. Christians, feel very, very, very sorry for them. Then picture their tiny, smashed, and crushed spirits, within. Picture them hiding from the brutish, evil, creatures, who have taken over their bodies. Then, pray. Pray with every tear you have. Pray, with love and compassion, for it was such prayer, which brought me to the point of salvation. Every time I sat in the back of that music room, where the Christians would sing their praises, I would feel physically sick, but outwardly, I would smile, and clap, and mouth the words."

George was serious the whole time he was speaking, but this lightened a little. There was just a little hint of a smile when he spoke again. "A young girl, by the name of Lucy Haile, started the whole thing off for me. One Christian meeting, she said that a Satanist was among us, and that we should all pray for him. I went cold at having been discovered. No

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one looked at me directly, but I was shocked. I could fool anyone, and cloak my demons from everyone. I thought to myself, "What's going on here? How could she know?"

She did pray, and when she prayed, she cried. She broke down in tears, and cried, telling me, although she did not look at me, just how much God loved me. She said that there was nothing that could ever separate me from God's love, while I was still alive. You see I did not know of the Bible book of First Peter chapter three verse twelve which reads

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

God certainly heard their prayers and I left shaken to the deepest core of me. I felt so sick, that I stayed off school for a week."

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Chapter 9 – The Silencing of The Lamb

George stood there, on the edge of the stage. His eyes were welling up with tears, as he continued to tell the church of what happened next. "People of God, I want you to know that I could make people sick. I had power, and nothing could touch me. I had learned how to use the spiritual principles, of faith, and prayer. Yes, faith, and prayer, exactly what we Christians use. Satanists also use, only, they have to work really hard at it, while for us Christians, it's so terribly simple. We have the trump cards. We have the Name and Blood of Jesus Christ. As a Satanist, I did not have that, although I knew how to hurt people, through prayer, it seemed these prayers, never worked, against this little group of Christians, at school. I would have understood why if I had known the Bible book of Psalms, Psalm ninety one reads..." and he referred to his open Bible and read out loud.

"Whoever goes to the LORD for safety, whoever remains under the protection of the Almighty, can say to him, "You are my defender and protector. You are my God; in you I trust." He will keep you safe from all hidden dangers and from all deadly diseases. He will cover you with his wings; you will be safe in his care; his faithfulness will protect and defend you. You need not fear any dangers at night or sudden attacks during the day or the plagues that strike in the dark or the evils that kill in daylight. A thousand may fall dead beside you, ten thousand all around you, but you will not be harmed. You will look and see how the wicked are punished. You have made the LORD your defender, the Most High your protector, and so no disaster will strike you, no violence will come near

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your home. God will put his angels in charge of you to protect you wherever you go. They will hold you up with their hands to keep you from hurting your feet on the stones. You will trample down lions and snakes, fierce lions and poisonous snakes. God says, "I will save those who love me and will protect those who acknowledge me as LORD. When they call to me, I will answer them; when they are in trouble, I will be with them. I will rescue them and honor them. I will reward them with long life; I will save them."

Week after week, I prayed against that which this little group prayed for, in the music room, twice a week. I had noticed that my prayers kept failing. I had taken my problems back to the coven, and asked for advice, and help. Their response was always, for me to pray harder, and longer, and to get blood. I did these things, getting hamsters from the pet shop. But nothing changed. I could do nothing to these Christians. Their defences were impenetrable."

He gave a little quivering smile, using his sleeves to wipe his tears of joy and continued. "So when Lucy prayed, in tears and compassion, for me, and I got so physically sick, I began questioning the roots of what I had been told, by these "friends" of mine. I never did so aloud to them, but quietly to myself. I still awoke at three in the morning. Satan was not going to let me get away from him either. I was in any way controlled, so I could not stop doing these things. But I could feel my spirit inside, so very deep inside, had received a deposit of faith, from Lucy's prayer, and the Word of God, quoted out of the Bible, twice a week, once at each meeting. It was feeding, and nurturing my infant spirit."

George stepped forward to the edge of the stage again, hesitated and said. "I was now beginning to

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question, a fundamental statement of the Satanists. "Satan is going to destroy Adonai – the God of the Jews". I was beginning to see, that all my prayers, were having no effect on the real Christians. There are many, who claim to be Christians, but do not practise it. These I could still influence, and cause problems for, but the real ones, I could do nothing to. I eventually went to the Satanist high priest, to ask him to pray against Lucy. He cursed her so badly, and the whole coven stood in unity, that I was sure that Lucy was finished. But nothing happened, nothing except that the Satanist high priest was involved in a car accident, and was killed." I should not have been surprised if I had known that the Bible book of Isaiah chapter sixty six verses fourteen to sixteen reads

"And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many."

"When I got the news of this, I became convinced that something was not right. I began to see things more clearly. I was not aware at the time, but every morning and every night, Lucy was praying for me. She told me later, that God had shown her, that it was I who was the Satanist. She would pray with such brokenness, which by the way, releases God's power to move through the one praying. Nevertheless, I was a bystander. I could not control my body. I watched, but could not say anything. Every time I tried to say something, I would stutter, and never get the words

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out. Everything the demons wanted to say came out perfectly. But I could say nothing.”

George’s bottom lip was quivering now, as he tried to smile. His voice was breaking, as was his heart. “Secretly, the real me, my smashed little spirit, was glad for the bi-weekly Christian meetings, for it seemed, I got stronger when I listened to what was said. I still prayed to Satan every morning, but had become convinced, that the demon, which used my body to pray so fervently, against the prayer requests listed at these meetings, was wasting its time.”

George moved back to his notes, found his place and then holding the pulpit with both hands, he looked up and said, “Now, remember, I said that I was told, that I could not ever become (or return to being) a Christian, because I had drunk blood, cursed the Holy Spirit and signed a contract, in blood handing my soul over to Satan, forever, which made me an enemy of God. Well now I desperately wanted to turn back that clock. I wanted to somehow change sides. But no matter how hard I would try, I could never seem to get my questions out. I was trapped, and locked up in this body, tormented by what I saw it doing, but powerless to stop it. Lucy however, just kept praying. She never gave up on me. She had read the Bible book of Thessalonians chapter five verse seventeen,

“Pray without ceasing.”

She had chosen to make it a habit in her life. With no visible signs that anything was changing in my life, she kept on praying, and trusting God to move when the right time came along.

Four months later, after fervent prayer for me, she came to the one Tuesday meeting, with news, which

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gave me hope. Lucy had arranged an outside speaker. The speaker was a person, who was to speak on a topic very close to my heart. He was an ex-Satanist. If I could believe what Lucy said, then this guy, that was coming to speak, was going to tell us how he became a Satanist, and what I needed to know, how he was saved from Satanism and how God accepted him back too. This was something I did not want to miss. Neither did the demons. "

George took another sip of his bottle of water. Everyone in the congregation was on the edge of their seats, wanting to know what happened next.

George moved back, in front of the pulpit again. "A whole group of my friends, and I, came and sat at the back of the classroom, that Tuesday. The demons within us were ready to heckle their guest speaker, and disrupt him, as soon as he started saying things they did not like. But, they were not prepared for what happened when he did start.

Brian Gerrit was his name. He was a twenty three year old university graduate, with closely cropped curly black hair. He was nothing special to look at, but his eyes, were the same, as most of the Christians in that room. They sparkled, with a light I could not identify, but knew to be genuine. He was tall, about two metres, and was dressed in Jeans and a T-shirt. The picture on the T-shirt depicted a cross. The cross was really the handle of a sword, which had been run through the skull, of a very dead and very evil looking dragon."

George continued, "Satanists, have signs and symbols, and nothing is ever just there by accident. Every picture has meaning, and they love seeing the innocent people, walking around, wearing their

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statements. So, when we saw the picture on his shirt, we all knew, what he was really saying, but, as is most often the case, the Christians missed, or at least seemed to miss, the challenge he was wearing. Brian had not come to tell stories. He had come to do battle. We thought we were ready for him. Never had we been more wrong.”

George’s voice rose a little, almost imperceptible, in excitement. “Brian started, by asking everyone to open the meeting with a prayer. Somehow, neither the demons in my friends, nor those within me, were able to say, or do anything. I could feel how, I desperately wanted to run out of there, and escape. It was as though I was locked in one of those nightmares. I wanted to run away, but couldn’t. This time it was real though, I could feel I was being burnt, by an unseen fire, right there where I sat, but none of us moved.

He opened the meeting in prayer, with words, that I have not stopped using myself since that day, and neither will I ever stop using them.

He prayed, “Almighty Father, You made us all, You love us all, You died for us all, and You saved us all. No one can tell You what to do. No one can stop You doing what You want to do, and no one, can take You on, and win. Show us each who You really are, what You can really do, and how very much, You love each one of us. We know that if our spirit cries out to You, to be forgiven, then the Blood of Jesus Christ, who is one with God, is more than enough, to destroy all contracts, all words, all actions, all thoughts, past present and future. Mankind will try to hold us down, Satan will try to convince us we are bound, and the demons, now frozen within some here, will try to keep their hosts from being saved. But there is nothing,

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besides their own free-will, which can keep them from receiving Your forgiveness, love, and eternal life, in 'Your House'. I stand for Jesus Christ! If there is any here, who will stand with me, for Jesus Christ, to be counted as God's own, to be saved from Satan and all his evil. Then, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are free to stand, and give yourself to God now!"

George Paused a moment, and then said softly, "Now, as I have told you before, I was used to trying to scream, to get myself heard. The demons always constricted my throat, so I could not make a sound. So I screamed out, as loud as I could, "YES!! I DO!!! SAVE ME!!! But this time, nothing stopped me. My voice must have been heard clear across the school. You could have heard a pin drop in the next class room, there was such silence. I was shocked, but ran forward. My friends tried to tackle me, but Brian shouted with such authority "In the name of Jesus Christ, free him. He has called on God to be saved. Let go and get out!" They were thrown across the room, towards the door, by some unseen force, where they scrambled to their feet, and ran out. The rest of the people, those visiting out of curiosity, as well as the regular Christians, in the class room, were stunned."

Brian wasted no time, and said to me "Quick, repeat after me. Jesus please forgive me."

"JESUS PLEASE FORGIVE ME!!!" I shouted.

"Come into my heart and drive away all the evil spirits within me."

"COME INTO MY HEART AND DRIVE AWAY ALL THE EVIL SPIRITS WITHIN ME!!" I shouted again

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"I give you my life and I take yours instead. Keep me and all those I know safe."

"I GIVE YOU MY LIFE AND I TAKE YOURS INSTEAD. KEEP ME AND ALL THOSE I KNOW SAFE!!" I screamed this line in desperation.

"In the name of Jesus Christ and by His blood"

"IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST AND BY HIS BLOOD!" I shouted this, and I did it triumphantly.

"It is done, Amen"

"IT IS DONE, AMEN!!" I felt the demons being sucked out of my mouth, and leaving in a great sigh.

George, had shouted the second line of the prayer out, each time, and now the congregation burst out in clapping, and a few stood. But their standing got the whole congregation on their feet. Everyone was praising God, for His Sovereign, and Majestic Power over darkness.

When this subsided, and the congregation was again seated, George continued. "I collapsed into a heap, on the music room floor, crying and sobbing. I could feel that vast emptiness within me, being filled with peace, beauty, and gentleness all at the same time. I had never been able to fill this myself. I just lay there. Many of the Christians, including Brian bent down, and as the Bible book of Acts chapter eight and verse seventeen instructs, they

"Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

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They laid their hands on me. The Holy Spirit of God, which is indescribably powerful and yet equally indescribable in its gentleness, flowed through their hands, and into me. I lay there, on the floor, eyes closed, enjoying God's presence, until the end of the lunch break.

"As I lay there, I listened to Brian. He spoke about what had happened to me with the others. I just lay there, soaking up God's amazing Grace. Brian told them, that those others who ran out, were going to try and kill me, or hurt me, until I turned against Jesus. He said that this decision I had just made might cost me my life, but he knew from experience, that it would be worth it. He also asked that each of those who were there, would pray for me, and report any wrong things to the teachers."

George moved back to the pulpit, glanced at his notes again, and then looked up. "Brian concluded all he had come to say, just as the bell rang, and classes were due to start. He came and bent down on his haunches, and said to me, "As soon as you get out of school, I will be waiting for you. Your old friends, are going to try and get you arrested, by bogus cops, and they will try to get you attacked in jail, or as you are released. I need to go on your behalf, to stop them doing this. What evidence of things you did wrong do they have?" I told him about Mr Wiley's shop, and he asked what else. I could not remember much, but have had time since then, to deal with these others, for which there was proof, and those, for which there was none too."

"Brian had gone straight to Mr Wiley, who had wanted to have me arrested right away. But Brian took him evidence of how Satanists work and Mr Wiley relented. He had insisted I pay back everything I had

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taken though. Personally I am glad he did this, because I have had a guide and mentor, someone with strong principles, to force me into a decent mould. I have learnt so much, about acceptable and moral behaviour, in the time I have been with him. More importantly, he never gave me a break. He was always fair, but strict, with me. He made sure I had no spare time. No idle time at all. I would do my homework at his store, when there were no customers to assist or if there was no box packing to do. I was too young to work for a salary, so all he did was keep the money to pay for those things I had to pay him back for. At least I never got a juvenile criminal record”.

“I recognise now, that Mr Wiley knew how to show me more love, than my own parents too, because he was not so concerned with how I felt about him, that I could manipulate him with his feelings. If he did not believe something was right for me there was nothing I could do or say, that was going to change his mind. Parents take note. The Bible book of Proverbs chapter twenty nine verse seventeen warns of consequences of not disciplining your children,

“Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”

Verse fifteen shows what you should do.

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.”

So you parents do not have to be liked by your children. You do have to do what is right before God. Just remember though that the Bible book of Matthew eighteen verse ten warns you about us children too, as Jesus says to you,

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"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

After all, we are not just your children, we are God's too. And in His eyes, you are our care-giver, trainer and protector. Take your responsibility seriously, God does, and He is going to have questions, for every parent".

George moved forwards, to the very edge of the two brick high stage, and balanced on the edge of it. He was more relaxed now, more 'matter of fact'.

George continued, "Jesus said of the way God judges, in the Bible book of Matthew chapter five verses twenty three and twenty four,

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

You see God does not want me to be a hypocrite, He will not accept anything I offer Him, nor will He bless me, while others are hurting because of what I have done and said. So I have spent the last year, going to people, and saying sorry. I have been hit; Brian would step in, and help me in such situations. For I never went alone, nor did I go without proper prayer preparation before going. I have been caned, an agreed punishment, and Mr Wiley, has paid money for me. Money, which I now, also have to work back, over and above that which I must pay, to replace the items I stole. Mr Wiley also assisted, in helping to set up meetings, with the people I had wronged. He told

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them his story, of how he had been wronged, and that I was now doing my best to do what was right. Mr Wiley, and our Pastor, agreed that I would have to, redress everything I could remember, before going into witnessing to others. It has been a long and hard road. I can only thank God, for the amazing people he has put around me. My greatest regret is that I was successful in separating my parents. I know they love me, and have forgiven me. So, with a greater fervour, than I ever prayed to Satan to destroy their marriage, I now pray, that one day, they would forgive each other, and renew their marriage vows."

"So it is, that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who was once silenced to allow Satan to gloat, that that same Jesus, who was raised in power, and with the victory over sin, death and Hell. That this Jesus, whom God raised up as the first born of many of His children, saved me. Satan sent demons and Satanists to silence me and destroy me, but they all failed. I have been freed, and raised up. I too am now a child of the living God, which makes me your brother, albeit a prodigal one. This fact also means that you are my brothers and sisters, and for that I count myself as truly blessed. Thank you for listening to how God has saved, and spared me."

When George ended his testimony, there was no clapping, not even a whisper of a sound. The Pastor stood up, and thanked the little church. He said that if anyone wanted to speak to George afterwards, they would be most welcome.

He turned to me and said, "As for you, young Benjy, Mr Wiley wants to know, if you would like to spend the summer working in his store. Personally, I think it would be the best thing for you, as you will also remain close to George. You will be able to talk

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about many of the things you have to get out of, and it will keep you off the streets, and away from those who are after you. George tells me he is coming over to your house, to help you destroy the "temple of destruction", the demon has built in your room. That is a good thing. I suggest Mr Wiley comes over, and has tea with your mom, for there is much she needs to know of your road to recovery, and her own too."

Seven people gave their lives to Jesus in the alter call. "Another four brothers, and three sisters, added to the family of God... My family", I thought, "and they didn't have to do it the hard way either, now that is truly cool." I already loved this new life.

The church then "took communion", which is a spiritual affirmation of Jesus' Lordship over our lives. It consists of a liquid, in our case it was red grape juice, and a piece of unleavened bread, in our case it was a cracker type of biscuit. Both of these were then blessed, and consecrated, to God. God then caused these two, to take on supernatural power. This supernatural power would allow our spirits to drink, and eat, with serious side effects, depending on the state of each person's spirit.

Mr Gartier said to us all, "We are about to take communion together, but first the warning. As the Bible book of Jude chapter one verse four warns,

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

This condemnation is also allotted to those who will drink or eat, if they have not yet given their hearts to

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Jesus Christ. God makes those who do this guilty of murdering His Son.”

He continued, “The Bible Book of Hebrews chapter ten verse thirty one tells us that if you are evil then, for you,

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

I remembered the terror that the demon had felt just before it had been cast out. Yes I thought to myself. A non-Christian drinking the Blood of Jesus Christ would most definitely bring fear and depression down on themselves.

The Pastor kept on speaking, “The Bible book of First Corinthians chapter eleven verse twenty seven to thirty one warns us, who believe in Jesus Christ as follows,

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”

The natural response of someone who has a terrible judgement and sentence hanging over their spirit is fear and depression.”

Mr Gartier continued, “Secondly, do not drink or eat, if you have not forgiven everyone, who has

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harmed, or hurt, you, or someone you care about. For if you have any unforgiveness in your heart, you will cause greater condemnation to fall on you, and you will become sick, and possibly worse, as the root of bitterness twists and writhes deeper into you. For as The Bible book of Mark chapter eleven verse twenty six states'

"But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

If you are not forgiven by God, then you are not a Christian, so it follows that forgiving all who wrong you or those you love is an absolute requirement to eternal life in Heaven."

Mr Gartier raised his right hand, open with his palm facing us, and then said, "I warn you of this, because, although your body will drink grape juice in this building and at this moment in time, this will however not be so for your spirit. You are a spirit. You are not bound by time and distance. You, the spirit, will be drinking the blood of Jesus, which ran down His cross, at Calvary, where He was sacrificed, over two thousand years ago. And although your body will be eating crackers, your spirit, will be eating the torn, and ripped, chunks, of flesh, that hung from Jesus body, after He was scourged. These are awful pictures I know, but that is what it cost to get your salvation and healing. And so with thanks and reverence we again accept His gift to us and confirm our humble submission to Him."

Mr Gartier lowered his hand, looked around at all of us and said, "For those of you Christians, who have forgiven everyone, what you drink, will bring you peace, and confirmation of your salvation. If you have forgiven everyone then what you eat will bring

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healing, to both your bodies, and minds. We like to take the drink first, and then the bread, for healing comes after forgiveness, which is salvation through the blood of the sacrifice, Jesus, God's Christ. So we now do as Jesus did in the Bible book of Luke chapter twenty two and verses seventeen to twenty where it is written,

"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Mr Gartier stood in front, as the little cups and the plate of crackers were being passed around. No one ate or drank, all waited, holding theirs, until everyone had their communion elements ready. I wanted to take a cup, and cracker, but I knew there were many people I still needed to forgive first. So I let it pass by me. I made a mental note though, that I wanted to have forgiven everyone by next week, so I too could join in, in sharing the most powerful statement of allegiance to Jesus Christ, second only to martyrdom.

Then Mr Gartier blessed the drink, and then each drank their juice (spiritually Jesus' blood).

Mr Gartier blessed the bread, and then everyone ate their cracker (spiritually Jesus' flesh).

I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, that Shirley had chosen to keep the cracker, in her mouth, and then to add the drink, before chewing and swallowing,

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almost as though she was putting Him together again, in her spirit, uniting herself with His Spirit, all over again. I thought I would try it that way first.

Mr Gartier blessed, and dismissed the congregation, but no one moved, not even himself. Everyone observed a few minutes silence, while they just sat. Some, I noticed, had knelt in front of their chairs, in reverence. Their spirits at the cross on Calvary, two thousand years ago, and then at the empty tomb three days later, then in the upper room, where Jesus reappeared through the walls, then his ascension into Heaven, and Finally the wind and the fire, of the Holy Spirit, in the room in Jerusalem, as they all gathered in prayer. I put all this together, much later on, in my walk with Jesus as my Lord, but that is what was happening spiritually.

I sat very still, aware of a spiritual gathering around us, of vast proportions. It seemed as though every Christian in the world, both alive and dead, somehow linked up spiritually, with one another, into one great being. I wondered if that's what the "bride of Christ" was supposed to mean.

Then one by one, they silently got up and went outside, dropping off their little cups on a table on the stage.

We all met outside, for tea and coffee. George was surrounded by teenagers, and even some adults too, who had questions and problems. He made quite a lot of notes in his little pocket diary of events he had been asked to attend. He handed out his telephone number, e-mail address, and web-site, to many more. I watched from a distance. I was excited, but afraid.

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We would soon be going home, to the room I had not slept in, in over a week. We were going to destroy 'his' final grip on my life.

After tea, we all went to mom's car. George jumped into the back seat with Candy. Mr Wiley followed in his little beige Volkswagen Beetle. The whole way home, I had expected there to be chatting and laughing in the car, but there was a seriousness of purpose. George prayed in tongues the whole way. His eyes closed, with a look of peace, and a quiet reassuring smile, found only on those, who know the result of the race, before it starts. I was afraid, but I knew that God would protect and guide us. At least I still understood how the spirit world worked, and so applied my faith and prayers correctly, but this time, instead of in selfishness with fear, I applied it in line with God's will – Love and compassion.

As we came closer and closer to home, I sensed a stronger and stronger thickness in the atmosphere. It was as though we were on a journey, into a dark and evil land, and the closer we got to the heart of that land, the darker it was getting. For the first time since I had met 'him', I could feel that there was no power. I began to realise, I was protected in a truly supernatural way. I suppose, explaining this to someone, who has never felt the terrible depressive power, of an evil spirit controlling them, is pretty futile.

As a Christian, I could feel a spiritual strength, so far beyond anything I had ever experienced. I could sense God's protection. Perhaps some would call it imagination, but then why else would God give us imagination, excepting that it could be used for faith, and for translating what we sense spiritually into pictures.

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It was strange to me and unexpected too, that even though I had given my life to Jesus Christ, He had not come in, plugged Himself in, and taken over control. He was within me, but seemed to respect that this was my body. The demon had just taken over, at the first sign of being able to. Jesus seemed to treat me like a priceless individual. This in itself was a good reason to love Him. He had all the power to overrule me, but did not. It was an incredible thought.

Unbeknown to me then, it was this total respect for my free will, more than anything else, which would finally allow me to relax in His mighty presence; it would also be the reason, that over the following years, I would ask Him to take full control of different aspects of my life. Out of love, and trust, I would surrender to Him, and eventually with a gentleness, not known to mankind, we would become one in Spirit, just as Jesus had said in the Bible book of John chapter fifteen verse four,

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

And again in the Bible book of John chapter seventeen verse twenty one,

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

And again in the Bible book of Hebrews chapter thirteen verse five, God says,

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"

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This love relationship, would eventually take me into the dimension of the spirit world, promised by every religion under the sun, but never received by any of their followers, not even by the many Christians, who flirt on the outskirts of total surrender to Jesus Christ. It is an all or nothing relationship.

I did not know the delicious life which lay ahead of me. A roller coaster of ups and downs, in the safe rollercoaster car, mounted firmly on the tracks, designed by the Master Engineer of the universe. I could not fall off. I could enjoy both the ups, and the downs. They are experiences to be savoured, not feared. I would be safe in His hands. He cares for us as deeply, as a shepherd who loves and tends his sheep. For as the Bible book of John chapter ten verse twenty seven to twenty nine reads,

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

But this revelation, would only come after many ups and downs together, He always in the seat next to me. Finally I would let Jesus drive my life, while I enjoyed all He had for me.

My heart was pounding fast, as we turned into our driveway, and parked. Inside, my mom and Mr Wiley went to the kitchen to make some more tea, and to and chat. I could see mom was really nervous, she always drinks tea when nervous, and she had just had tea at the church.

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They were disappearing into the kitchen, when mom gave me a worried, over-the-shoulder glance. I smiled reassuringly. She smiled back, and closed the door.

Candy, had picked up two sticks in the garden, on the way in, and she was now holding them in a cross formation. She had seen this in a vampire movie I had brought home recently. I had forced her to watch it with me. In that instant, I suddenly realised that 'he', had been trying to get into Candy too. I said a quiet "Thank you Jesus" under my breath, that 'he' had not succeeded.

George looked at her curiously and said, "And that?"

Candy responded, "To keep the demon away."

George smiled a grim smile, "We won't need that Candy, we have the Holy Spirit. Remember this is a spiritual battle."

"Oh! I forgot about that", she said, "I just saw it in a movie once, and ..."

"I know", said George, "but movies are most often designed, to trap us in our thinking. Demons do not want us to know the truth about how to get them, which is why you don't find movies which show the simple truth, about how God is supreme, and how people are being misled, and just how free and easy it is, to move from darkness into light. As the Bible book of Romans chapter ten verse thirteen says

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

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Anyway, you can put those away. What I need you to do is, to stay downstairs here in the lounge, and just pray. As the people prayed for Peter who was in prison and God released him, in the Bible book of Acts chapter twelve verse twelve, I ask that you also pray while we go into the prison Benjy used to be locked up in. Pray in tongues, and do not stop, until we come down again."

Candy looked a little downcast, as though she had been looking forward to this confrontation, the whole time.

George looked at her, and for the first time I noticed the bond between these two. There was a real gentle love in his eyes, and her own, mirrored the same. "Sweetness", obviously his pet name for her, "this is critical to our success. It is a 'covering' prayer to open our eyes, to whatever that demon tries to hide from us. Your prayer will protect, and guide, all of us in this task. If God leads you to pray something in English, do so. We stand in agreement with you now, for whatever you pray so be responsible with our prayers."

Candy nodded, and turned on her heels in the direction of the lounge.

As we were about to take the first step, and while Candy was on her way towards the lounge, the doorbell rang.

We stopped and I turned and went to open it. It was Shirley and her parents. My heart gave a jump, as though it was being restarted, and I was both surprised and happy at once.

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"The Holy Spirit told us to be here", said Shirley, "so what do you want us to do?"

Mom appeared in the kitchen doorway, to see who the visitor was. George took control immediately. "Mr and Mrs Johnston, will you please join Mr Wiley, and Benjy's mom, in the kitchen. Shirley, we need covering, insight, and wisdom prayer, while we are at work upstairs. Will you join Candy in the lounge, and don't stop till we're done". Candy took Shirley's hand, and led her towards the lounge. I heard Candy asking Shirley, "Have you ever done this before?", and Shirley's reply, "Yes, I once played with white magic, and got caught up in the same thing as Benjy, so I know what he is going through. Benjy will be fine, you'll see. Let's take the battle to this demon Candy. We'll start with ..." and the lounge door closed.

I glanced at where Mr and Mrs Johnston were entering the kitchen. The relief was all over mom's face. She too had heard what Shirley had said, and now knew, that her guests had travelled this road before, as parents, and that they would be able, to help, and guide her. I sensed she was especially grateful for another woman being present, as it was probably a bit awkward with just Mr Wiley and her alone in her kitchen, even though he seemed to be a nice man.

Mom closed the door to the kitchen, and we turned again to the stairs.

George and I ascended them with a purpose. I was taking back my life.

We got to the door, and George smiled. "You probably realise now, that this "KEEP OUT OR DIE" banner, was the demons warning, and not yours".

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I realised this and nodded.

George continued, "You are coming out of a dark and evil way of life Benjy. You have habits which will try to suck you back down. You must not allow this to happen. A good way is to never be in a situation, except if you're changing, where you cannot have others coming into your room. Having something to hide is not a God thing. So this sign goes now". He grabbed the large tin sign, with its large red blood dripping letters, on the huge black background, as it was spread across the width of the door. With tremendous strength, he ripped the long nails right out of the door, until the sign was completely removed. He was careful to place the sign safely on its side, against the wall, with the nail points facing away from passing people. I took note that Shirley's and Candy's prayers, for wisdom, were not being hindered.

Up until that moment, what we were going to do seemed an exciting adventure. Now it became a frightening reality. My way of life, was about to be, irreversibly, and radically, altered.

As George laid his hand on the door handle, I put my hand on his to stop him. "What about my privacy then?" I asked. "Does that mean Candy can just 'waltz' into my room, whenever she wants to?"

George could see that I was really worried. "Every person has boundaries Benjy. You need to tell your mom, and Candy, and everyone else, what they are. You should however, never have any situations, where people are unwelcome in your room. Your room is the heart of your physical life. If people can never come into your room, how can they ever be close to you in real life? Now I am not suggesting that you should invite everyone into your room, but be at all times

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prepared to open your life to others, and your immediate family should not be excluded from your room. They should respect it as your room, and they should not invite their friends into your room. It is your space.”

He continued, “It comes down to being transparent Benjy. As Jesus instructs us in the Bible book of Matthew chapter five verse fourteen to sixteen, “

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Christians live a clean and beautiful life, so they have nothing to hide, and nothing to fear.

Try leaving you door ajar, unless you are changing. If you feel you need to close your door, ask yourself why. In most cases, you will find that a part of you has a problem. In almost every one of these cases, Satan wants to isolate you, and get you to commit some sin or another, or get you to wallow in self pity. By leaving your door open, God can still send someone in to help you. It’s still your room though”.

As he finished saying this, he looked me dead in the eyes and said. “Are you ready for this?” I looked back into his, and saw a strength and confidence, that reassured me that he knew exactly what he was talking about. I nodded my confirmation.

He kept looking at me and said, “Will you allow me to enter your room, and help you remove all traces, of

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that which is not of God, so that we can take them away, and destroy them?" I nodded my consent again.

"Don't nod Benjy." George insisted, "You must say 'Yes' or 'No'. Words are spiritual, and that demon in there needs to here your answer."

"Yes." I said, leaning slightly more towards the door, and speaking loud enough, for someone on the other side of the door, to hear."

George looked at me and said, "You could have whispered those words, and that demon would have heard it. Not because he has good hearing, but because, there is no distance in the spirit world, when words are spoken. The Roman centurion understood this in the Bible book of Matthew chapter eight verse eight

"The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."

Your room could have been on another planet, it would have made no difference."

Now that was something new to me. Words, as a weapon, took another step up the ladder of my estimation, and not for the last time either.

Another thing happened when I spoke that 'Yes', I realised the commitment required, which I had not realised when I just nodded. I knew I had just bound myself, almost as though I had signed a contract, when I had said the word 'Yes'. I suspected, that what we were about to do, was going to require this, "No going back now" commitment.

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Chapter 10 – Destroying ‘his’ lair

George, as if he had been reminded that he had no mandate to drive the demon from my room, and that this was my battle to fight, released my bedroom door handle. He took a step backwards and said, well then, open your door, and let me in. I placed my hand on the door handle, opened it, and pushed the door open. It was dark in there. I stepped back to let him in first, giving him permission to lead the battle. He walked straight in and switched on the light. The bulb immediately blew, plunging the room back into darkness. He proceeded to the windows and opened the curtains wide. The sunlight streamed in to my room, and for the first time, I really took notice of what my room was like. I instantly hated it. I was so relieved that Shirley had not come upstairs and seen this. George opened the windows, to allow the musty smell to leave the room, and a fresh breeze to flow through.

George said – “OK, empty the cupboards. Get everything out the cupboards, and on to the floor.”

“Huh!!” I said surprised.

“You heard right. The way these demons work, is to allow you to get rid of most of the stuff, but keep certain reminders, to trap you with later. We’re looking for these things, which will trap you back into the lifestyle you were once trapped in.”

“What do you mean by trap me? I am a Christian now. I can’t be trapped again, can I?” I had squeaked

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this out in horror, heard it, recomposed myself, and pretended I had not squeaked at all.

George was looking at all that was in my room, and answered with his back to me. "If you reject Jesus Christ, you can be possessed all over again, and that is exactly the strategy of the evil spirits. The demons use our own bodies to create traps for ourselves like a spider web locking us in. They will also find others who make traps, and then use our bodies to collect and keep those traps too. The demons use these traps as temptation triggers, and proof of our willingness to accept their authority over us. So then it is your will. God has promised He will not act against your will, and so the demons hide behind your acceptance, safe from God until judgement day. Removing these things is the part we have to do, then God is faithful to fulfil His part, as He did for David when he asked God, in the Bible book of Psalms, Psalm one hundred and forty one verse nine,

"Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity."

So we have to go through everything. We also need to check your walls, shelves and doors, inside the cupboards, everywhere."

George turned and looked at me, "When I was a Satanist, the other Satanists would set up locks and snares around me. In my room, were emblems, and symbols, which were used in their prayer rituals. What many people do not realise is that a spirit can be attached to an object, and the object can be used, to bless, or curse, whoever touches, or keeps, that object. Just one of the examples of this in the Bible is found in the book of Acts chapter nineteen verse twelve,

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"So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

He sat down on the edge of the bed, looked at me, and continued. "This spirit-object relationship is a spiritual principle that anyone can use. The Satanists use it particularly well, and those who practise magic too. There are many who make artefacts, symbols, signs, and clothing, each of these bearing some sort of symbol, sign, word or phrase. These things indicate, to those who know, where the money they are paying for these cursed objects will be going. It also indicates, who you are supporting, with your money, a sort of recognition of loyalty. Secondly, these emblems and symbols, act as connection points, between those who create the blessing and the person touching, or keeping, the blessing. If you do not want a specific blessing, then for you, it is actually a curse. If you buy it, or receive it as a present, you may feel you can't throw it away. You are then manipulated by these society imposed sentiments too. There is more going on in the spiritual realm, in relation to our physical world, than most people will accept, or admit to. This 'blind denial' is one of the biggest reasons Satan has any success at all."

"I didn't know that" I replied dragging an entire shelf's worth of clothes onto the floor.

"But don't I have to know about these emblems, for them to work? Isn't it a bit like me having to have faith, and believe, that these things will work, before they can affect me?" I questioned him.

"No", he said simply. "Gravity doesn't work because you believe it. It is a physical law. What I have told you, is a spiritual law. God warns us that an idol is

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something or someone that a religion gives honour worthy of worship to. In the Bible book of Deuteronomy chapter seven, verse twenty six God warns us specifically

"Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing."

If you think about it, God's words in the Bible book of Hosea, chapter four verse six,

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge,"

is so relevant."

I dragged out all the boxes and blankets stored at the top of my cupboard. Three pornographic magazines spilt onto the floor. I froze, and looked at George; I was startled, and highly embarrassed.

As I was turning blood red, he said to me, "Don't stress Benjy, these are highly effective evil traps. The Bible book of First Corinthians chapter six verse eighteen to twenty makes it clear,

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

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To take this further, Jesus explains, in the Bible book of Matthew chapter five verse twenty eight,

"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Another way to see it, is that these magazines, computer porn, and sexually explicit videos, are evil snares designed to make you sin in your spirit. Just as Jesus never condemned the woman who was caught in adultery in the Bible book of John chapter eight verse one to eleven, I do not condemn you either, but I give you Jesus' answer to her too.

"Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

So we must remove these traps and snares, and then you must never go near them again. Do not go to the shelves, in the shops that have these magazines. Do not even go near the shops that have them if you can't stay away from these shelves. Find another way to get the things you need to buy.

Pornography addiction is no different from being an alcoholic, you cannot even touch the stuff again, it will suck you down every time, and so fast. What's more, escaping a second time, is far harder than the first, so this is going in the bin bag, and it will never come back in here again." George paused, magazines in hand and said, "Let's be completely honest and practical about this sexual stuff. Your body stresses can become your enemy, so be wary of these natural desires, rising at the wrong time. Paul in the Bible book of Romans chapter seven verse twenty five says,

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"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

But with God within me I can overcome my body desires.

Some girls get irritated at certain times of the month, and so do some guys, be understanding, that both sexes have these physical body battles to deal with. Try not to fight battles, on too many levels at the same time. For example, sexual desires are a combination of hormonal, emotional, mental and physical levels. You can beat them altogether, but it is harder, so divide them, and never let them all be at a peak at the same time as being in a tempting situation. Wet dreams are messy and not pleasant to wake up to. I understand that masturbating can seem like a less messy option. Masturbating while your mind is not thinking about sex is a mechanical action, which releases semen, and the build up of sexual desire. Rather relieve yourself in this way before, if you are going to go into a situation which could be sexually tempting. In fact rather try to avoid such situations all together, but sometimes this is not possible.

Remember though, if you can't masturbate without picturing yourself with any human or other creature in your mind, then do not masturbate. For then you would be abusing your own spirit and theirs too. You are also training your mind and body to seek an opportunity to commit this sin. Masturbating is so incredibly dangerous. Personally, try to avoid masturbating altogether. Judging by these magazines, you probably have a tough habit to break." But with God and prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, you can overcome it.

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I was still blushing, but I appreciated George's complete honesty and acceptance of what I had been caught up in. I got the feeling he had also been caught in this trap too. I wondered whether girls had this problem too. Judging by my experiences to date, there were many who did. I supposed to myself, that the same rules must then apply to them too. I chose not to think this out loud though.

As George dumped the magazines into the bin bag, I said a silent prayer of thanks, that I was doing this with another guy, and not a girl, especially not Shirley. I think Candy might have guessed. Sisters seem to know a lot about their family "goings on".

George slid a drawer out of my wooden dresser, and gently emptied the contents on to my bed. He turned the drawer over, to reveal the underside of the drawer. There was a pentagram drawn on the bottom. "Aha" he said, "You can't get away from Jesus, demon".

"What is that?" I asked, stepping over to see the symbol, drawn on the board, which made up the bottom of my drawer.

"It's a Pentagram, a five pointed star within a circle. It does not, as some think, matter if it is upside down, point at the bottom, or not. This is Satan's symbol, like the cross is Jesus'. Anything marked with this has been given to Satan. Any evil spirits, are entitled to rest, and remain, at such a symbol."

"But what if I don't believe in it?" I said again.

"I don't have to believe that you are standing there." George said looking at me, "But that does not mean you are not there. The fact is absolute truth, is

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not dead at all. People just do not believe its real, until, "WHACK!" They walk into one of its limits. Like the Tsunami disaster in 2004. No one believed it could happen, that did not mean it couldn't. So people don't believe in the devil, well hey, carry on, "play with the wrong stuff", and then "WHACK!" You wake up in the shoes you were in this morning, possessed and miserable, locked in, with no way but Jesus Christ, to get out." I nodded slowly, he was right. Somewhere deep down I guessed that everyone alive knew it, and they just chose to ignore, rebel against, or simply drown that inner voice out with noise, or being too busy.

George took out his knife and started to scratch the wood away, intent on removing any evidence of the existence of this symbol.

"Aaahh!!" I shouted, "Don't do that!" I held his hand to stop him, "Just paint over it. Don't scratch it away. My mom is going to kill me."

George stopped in mid motion, but did not put anything down. He looked at me with a strange look. "I want you to tell me, exactly how you are feeling, right at this moment."

"Like you are invading my privacy," I said, "taking away something of mine. You didn't even ask me if I minded." I was now shouting at him.

George stood his ground, even though my face was now threateningly close to his. His lips were moving, but there was no sound coming out of them. His eyes were not afraid. There was a deep sadness and love in them. Finally, as though he had just received an answer to a silent prayer, he spoke. "Hold onto that feeling for a moment, and burn it into your conscious

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mind. Burn it into your mind, as an awareness of that truly, and totally, selfish nature. You have not said those words Benjy, that demon did, and you let him. You see Jesus warns us that we will have evil thoughts, but as He says in the Bible book of Second Corinthians chapter ten verse five,

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

Remember, we do not fight against what can be seen and heard, but Paul reminds us in the Bible book of Ephesians chapter six verse twelve,

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

For a moment, I wanted to lash back at him with some comment, as much incensed by his words as by him quoting scripture. But I paused, because I had given George permission to enter my room to help me. In pausing, I saw the very nature of the comment that was being formed in my mind, and realised he was right. These words, and feelings, were not me. I realised that the words forming, would do no damage to the demons. These demons, were trying to get me, to slash George to pieces with my tongue, so that they, could get him to slash me back. They would just watch, and encourage, and mislead, until he and I were emotionally "cut up and bleeding". Then they would laugh at us. No! I determined. I will not cut my brother up, when it is these demons that must be dealt with.

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So I did exactly as George had said I should. I am now very aware when an evil spirit is around me. I monitor my selfishness, and when it goes past a certain point, I know it has gone supernatural, and my self control goes supernatural at that point too. I move from a self talk, and self motivation, to "In the name of Jesus Christ, you evil creature, get away, and take your lies with you. I am a child of the Living God, and as such I will not follow the selfish nature of man." Then I turn around, and purposefully, walk away from whatever snares and traps 'he' has lain before me. It's amazing how simple self control is now. But despite all this that would still become real to me, I had a burning question.

"I thought you said I could not be possessed when I was a Christian?" I pleaded, hoping against all fears that George's original words had been true.

You can't be possessed Benjy, but you can be used. Now that you are a Christian, you belong to Jesus Christ, and the demons may not act out their will by overriding yours. You must first submit yourself to God's authority, His Word and His Will. If after this you resist them, they have to give way. We are promised this in the Bible book of James chapter four verse seven,

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

But now the demons strategy has changed. Now they will pump a thought into your head along with a destabilising emotion, which is why I asked you to remember that feeling. They normally use that same emotion, because it is a powerful invocation, of your own self-preservation forces. Now that you know that, you can control it, and use it as an early warning

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signal to yourself, to watch your words. Anyway, if you do not actively catch the words, and if you do not stop yourself from saying them, then the demon's words, will come out of the mouth, of one made in the image of God. That is an important point to remember too."

George had resumed his scratching while he continued. "These demons do not have the power of life and death, nor can they create and destroy. These powers, God has placed in the tongues of those he created in His image, girls, boys, men and woman. So we hold the most powerful weapon in the universe, within our mouths. If that tongue has faith behind it as well, then that person is a sought after prize for a demon. Because the words the demons can pass through that mouth will do things, create and destroy. Satanists know this. Before you moved from darkness to light, you were doing it without realising it. Most religions teach some form of this you know, but they do not really give these poor people the ability to resist, and overcome evil, for it is only the name of "Jesus Christ" which can achieve this. So you Benjy, you are now a sought after prize my brother, and you are going to have to watch yourself, and your words, every moment, of every day, from now on."

"Another thing", he said, still scratching the bottom of the drawer. "I noticed, you have a lot of books on your book shelf. Just by the titles, you can see the evil, toss them out. You may also have other books, which appear harmless. Often kiddie's books are also used as snares of Satan. It is a well known fact that Satanists are recruiting children from younger and younger age groups. These books lead people to change the definition of, for instance, the word "magic", into an exciting thing, and a tool to be desired to be used for good and not bad. In the Bible

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book of Isaiah chapter five verse twenty God confirms His Judgement,

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

The truth is God has no magic. In fact, in the Bible book of Malachi chapter three verse five God groups magic together with some other evil practises, and warns us He will be judging those who do these things."

George stopped scratching, put on a thinking look, brightened in the face and continued scratching. "I hope I remember this quote correctly, it is found in the Bible book of Malachi chapter three, verse five. It reads,

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts."

So He hates magic. He expressly commands us, to hate, and shun, all magic and those who suggest we practise it. In the city of Ephesus, when the people understood that God hates magic. An event is recorded in the Bible book of Acts chapter nineteen verse nineteen as follows,

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver."

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You must too. Put the books which allow people to accept magic as good, in the bin bag."

I went over to my bookshelf. It was mounted on the wall, above my computer screen, which stood on my desk. I checked each book, and tossed those, which I now recognised as evil, onto the ever-growing pile, around the bin bag. George saw me with a book called "The Wish". I was hesitating with this one, not sure what to make of it.

George said, "Benjy, define the word 'wish' for me."

I looked at him and said, still pre-occupied with the book in my hand, turning it over and over, "A 'wish' is where you say words, which you hope will come true. Those that do come true are powerful words, and your wish has then come true."

"OK", George continued questioning, "What then is a wish that does not come true."

"Easy answer", I replied, "They are just words that have no power."

George hesitated long enough for me to look up from the book, curiously.

His face was a picture of concern, "Jesus Himself warns in the Bible book of Matthew chapter twelve verse thirty six,

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

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It seems as though there are no words, which do not have power. All words change something, somewhere. Satan would love us to believe our words were not powerful. If we truly thought they were powerful, we might become very careful with them, and he does not want that, for then he cannot use us. More importantly, if you really and truly believe, that each and every word has power, then you will also realise, that you will have to guard the definitions of your words very carefully. Remember what God said in the Bible book of Isaiah chapter five verse twenty,

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

These statements can only be true when people change definitions."

Even if it seems cute, harmless, fairytale-like, or any other excuse, used to contaminate, and distort, the true definition of a word. You must reject the source of such word-play, especially where impressionable minds are concerned. Santa clause has nothing to do with Jesus Christ. Although Saint Nicholas was a good kind and generous man, that is not how the marketing strategies operate. Santa clause is used to drive the market into a frenzy, often leaving people in a wake of New Year debt, where is the true good there. No, father christmas, tries to usurp the truly benevolent nature of God Almighty. This fits more in line with Satan's aspirations than Saint Nicholas. Another example, and there are so many more, the Cinderella story, has created many unfulfilled dreams of "happily ever after" marriages, marriages which require no real effort. It is a subconscious expectation, which creates great dissatisfaction in the marriage, when reality proves,

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that all marriages must be worked at. You see books have words. Words have definitions. Definitions are what we communicate, and live by, and base our lives on. Throw that book out.”

I did, and a few others I had put back on the shelf too. If the simple truth was twisted, I threw it out. I wanted the truth in my life. I realised then, just how evil this world had become, by simply comparing the number of books left on my shelf after this exercise. George, still scratching the drawer, said, “Your mom said she had a Bible for you. Never put a Bible in a book shelf. It must remain in plain sight, use a book mark, keep a pen handy, and if possible leave it open in a place you frequently notice. Reserve this place for only your Bible. In this way you will be drawn to read it often.”

George finished scratching, and considered his handiwork. He had been careful not to scratch the ink away, and leave an engraving of the pentagram instead. There was no evidence of it at all. The carvings, I noticed were in the bin. “Those,” he pointed to the carvings in the bin, “have to be burnt outside your property.”

I looked at him surprised. “But there’s no longer a pentagram there, why burn them.”

George replied, “The wood is cursed now Benjy. We can ask God to consecrate your drawer, but those carvings, God will not bless.” The perfect example of this is found in the Bible book of Second Kings chapter twenty three verse four,

“And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the

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LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel."

George slid the drawer back in to the dresser, and took out my next drawer. He gently tipped out my underwear, socks, and some martial arts weapons. "Whew" I thought, "nothing in there." George didn't seem to think so though. He would take each of the weapons, inspect each one thoroughly, and then either put it back on the bed, or toss it in the bin. I felt the indignation rise in me again, identified its source, as that evil spirit again, and then told the evil thing, that I was a child of God, and that I was resisting it, and the emotions and thoughts that were rising in me. I calmed as they fled away from me.

I refocused on the task at hand and walked on over to George. I asked him what was wrong with the things he was throwing away. He looked at me and said. "Imagine you and Shirley were going out. How would she feel, if you kept photographs of your old girlfriend, especially if the old girlfriend hated you, and was still trying to destroy you? For your sake, she would hate seeing those pictures in your room." He paused and held up a Shurikan, a deadly throwing star, a six pointed knife, made out of one flat piece of steel. "Do you see the emblem on this one?" He asked.

"Yes. What about it?" I asked in return.

"Who is it?"

"It's not a 'who'; it's a 'what'." I replied.

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"Nope." George looked at me sideways, as we both stood with our backs to the windows, and the light from the window, caught the smooth shiny steel. The emblem engraved on it, stood out even more starkly. That is a portrait of Satan."

I looked at the shurikan, and for the first time saw how this market served Satan's purpose. I get media reports, which make me afraid. I watch movies, which depict people, who are able to defend and attack others with weapons. Such items I could purchase, as there is no age restriction, on purchasing these items. Then I give my money, to the people who sell these items. The money I pay goes to support the makers of these items, and right there on the item, is the emblem symbolising, who the maker of the item supports, and serves, and to whom the money I paid, went.

The "cute" effigy of a dragon glinted again in the sun. "Its true I thought, as I remembered the scripture George had quoted earlier, from the Bible book of Revelations twenty verse two,

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"

I took the shurikan from him, and tossed it in the bin.

"Well done! How did you feel about it when you understood what it was all about?"

"Repulsed!" I responded, "I won't be honouring Satan with my money again."

"Now you're winning Benjy." He said.

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George continued as if just reminded of something, "Speaking of 'winning', healthy competition is good, but any activity which God commands us not to do, is bad for us. Winning during such an activity is also bad. The 'winnings' from such an activity are then cursed, and you really do not want any share of such 'winnings'. One example of this would be gambling. God forbids gambling for it more often traps the poor and destitute, and makes them seek other gods to satisfy their needs, in this case it is the god called mammon. Gambling is the act of collecting the dreams and hopes and aspirations of many people and denying these people these things by giving all that they desire into the hands of a selected (even if it is randomly selected) few individuals. I would not want to hold the dreams and needs of others in my hand, and then selfishly spend it on myself. God curses such behaviour, and condemns those who keep the food, needs, hopes and dreams of others from them, in whatever form, because this is the opposite of loving your neighbour. So do not play the lottery, or even pretend gamble in card games for example, this is merely training for later in life."

I thought of my Hi-Fi set, which I had won from another guy at school in a poker game. I realised then what I had done and wrote a note on a piece of paper and put it on top of the radio. It read, "Return this to Roger, and apologise for gambling with him."

George was looking over my shoulder while I was writing, and when I finished, he slapped me on the back and said, "Well done good and faithful servant."

I looked at him and asked, "What do I do about all the things I won from lottery and all the stuff I got from fortunetelling?"

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“Destroy them if they are evil and sell them if not, then take the money and distribute it to the poor in the environment that you bought your lottery tickets.” He answered.

This made sense and I made a new pile of a few things that would need to be sold. I certainly did not want to keep other peoples hopes and dreams in my room that would be sowing something terrible I would not want to reap.

We returned to the drawer we had been working through. Only a few items remained. George picked up a particularly nasty looking device, “What’s this for?”

“Actually, only really for hurting people. For fighting and killing.” I answered, knowing what he was about to say.

George said it anyway, “Would Jesus have something like this in his bedroom?”

“I shook my head, and picked up a few other weapons, and tossed them all in the bin. The only thing I kept was an old hunting knife my dad had given me.”

George asked me what the knife had been used for, had it been used in war, or to kill people. I shook my head. I remembered my dad saying, it had been given to him by his dad, and it was used for hunting and skinning. He had peaked my curiosity though. “Why do you ask that?” I asked.

“Well, when something is used to kill someone, then that thing retains a resonance of death about it. Of itself it is not evil, unless cursed, but what is true,

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is that when something is used for evil purposes once, for example, threatening to, or actually hurting or killing someone. After such an event, it retains its sinful aspect. You do not want to keep it after that. This also applies to money which comes as a result of committing such evil acts too. Yes, money can be evil.”

I nodded, tested my spiritual senses about the item, and sensed no evil. I slid the knife into its sheath, repacked my drawer with underwear, made a mental note, that it looked good being so neat, and slid it back into the dresser.

George removed and emptied the next drawer. It was filled with clothing, which I know I had worn at some time or another, but they just never seemed to make it to the washing basket. I picked them up. I was about to toss them outside the door, to be washed, when George said, “Just check the pockets first. The next trick these demons use is to send things into another part of the house, until everything here has been cleaned out, and then have these things returned, by some other unsuspecting person. Or, if they will not be able to return to your room, then, get the things thrown away, so that some other poor unsuspecting person will pick up the cursed objects, and the demon will start all over again with that person. We have to eject this thing from its lair, and close down everything it has gotten attached to. Permanently!”

George remained focussed on me and continued. You will have to check, and re-check, your room, and this house, for new things, that are delivered, sent, given, or just seem to appear from nowhere. Cleaning out your house is an ongoing process. There are times where you come across something evil and it is an

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awkward time to take it out and burn it. What I did, was put a big cardboard box in my cupboard, and I asked God to seal it, so that whatever went into this box, would no longer be considered a part of my house, and could no longer affect any of us who were outside the box. It was a sort of a spiritual jail. God remained faithful to this, so long as I remained faithful, to remove the stuff, as soon as was possible. You can do this too”.

I nodded. The concept seemed good to me so I chose a spot in my cupboard for a box I had seen in the garage. I promised myself, that I would burn the contents of the box as often as I could.

I looked at George a little strangely for a moment, and then made a conscious decision, to no longer refer to 'him' as a 'he' but rather as an 'it'. A demon does not deserve the status of a human being; I now knew that these things were also not male nor female, as they do not procreate. So 'she', also would not be a valid title for these things. I was prepared to call angels 'he', for that is how God viewed them. Also I now knew, that the spirit within Candy, and the one within Shirley, and my mom, were also to be referred to as 'he', they were sons of God, not daughters of God. I had heard Candy speaking to my mom once that there is no marriage in Heaven, I would later find this for myself in the Bible book of Matthew chapter twenty two verse thirty, where Jesus Himself says,

"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

So the sexual definition and bonding for spirits was also not true.

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In this moment, my relationships with other people, and spiritual beings, suddenly evolved into a completely different pattern. I still had the same feelings, for Shirley, Candy, mom and George, but these were now on two planes simultaneously, spiritual, as brothers and warriors, completely equal, and on another plane, I was a part of the physical jigsaw puzzle, where I was, son, brother, friend, apprentice, subject and hopefully boyfriend. Somewhere within this, I also had angels as my Father's servants and soldiers, while demons were my Father's enemies, and things I was to scorn, and drive away. Evil spirits, or demons, were no longer 'he's to me, they were now 'it's. The power of this realisation, brought me to the point of disempowering 'him', and from then onwards, it was all about getting an 'it', out of my room.

I sat down on the bed, and began checking every piece of clothing. The first, a pair of pants, had nothing in the pockets, so I tossed it in the 'to be washed' pile, at George's feet. I started checking the pocket, of my large checked, blue and grey shirt. George bent down, and picking up the pants, said "hmmm. See this?"

"See what?"

"The button."

"What about it?"

"What is the symbol?" he asked, and held out the pants to me.

"Oh, I see. A pentagram."

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"Yes. Burn it! Oh and don't buy them again either. You're money, is not going to a God honouring place."

He tossed it into the overflowing bin – where the things that were to be destroyed lay. I finished the shirt, and unrolled the sleeves. I asked myself why I had kept this shirt in the drawer, was it just that I had had to clean my room suddenly, or was there another reason. Something made me check the label. It had a symbol on it. I called George who was sifting through the clothes on the bed, and he looked up when I asked, "What's this?"

George looked at it then took it in his hand and stood beside me so that we could see the symbol together. "This is considered by Satanists to be a powerful symbol of communicating with the dead and necromancy. It is called an ankh. Do you see how it resembles a cross, but has an oval, where the top of the cross should be." I nodded and George continued, "It is found amongst Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the Egyptian god, Horus, can sometimes be found to be holding it. God hates how people are misled by evil spirits and so warns us in the Bible book of Leviticus chapter twenty verse six,

"And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

God has instructed us not to talk to the dead. Why would He allow those in Heaven to disobey Him and speak to us? Dead spirits talking to us cannot be good spirits, so I wouldn't trust anything I heard from 'the world of the dead'."

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I did not hesitate, but tossed it into the bin, as though it was a rotten, slimy, mouldy lettuce.

A thought occurred to me at that point, and so I asked, "What about clothes that belong to other people?" George looked at me with a look of distinct caution, and I got the feeling I should have known the answer. He answered anyway though. "Don't wear other people's clothes. Most people's clothes are ok, but you are unlikely to be able to tell from the clothes or the friend. Letting others use their clothes, is just another way Satanists get demons to hitch a ride into people's lives. If someone leaves something at your house, get it back to them as fast as you can, even if you must post it." I supposed to myself, that it had been an obvious answer.

"That's going to be difficult to explain to some people, who might get quite offended by that sort of response." I said.

"Yes", George replied, "There will be people who are going to have a problem with the new you, and the things you are changing about yourself. You see, they have an affinity with you based on who you used to be and what you used to do. If they choose not to change, and you choose not to change back, the affinity will break down and eventually the relationship too. But you can't allow yourself to change back, because you haven't just decided to be different and do different things. The Bible book of Second Corinthians chapter five verse seventeen reads,

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

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You see, you can't go back to doing what the old you used to do, because you are no longer that person. You would be pretending to be someone you aren't. So people will not understand you, those who truly love and care for you will get used to and like the new you. "Because Jesus Christ makes beautiful people."

I considered George's words and then decided that he was right. I was now a new person, and people were going to have to accept that this was, another something I have chosen to change about myself.

Rummaging through the clothes on the bed, I found a whole lot of girls' underwear, which I had gotten from Samantha, the girlfriend I had had, who had committed suicide. I tried to hide it, turning blood red with embarrassment again. George noticed, and held out his hand to support my elbow. He looked into my eyes and seemed to see the whole truth of my life, and how I used to be. I felt naked before him and before God. He just looked back into my eyes with the compassion of one who has walked the path I had and understood the feelings I felt.

I took the underwear out from under the bed where I had tried to slip them, and put them on the bed. We stood together for a moment and then I sighed, took a deep breath and spoke from my heart. I felt safe to speak to George. I knew he would not condemn me or ridicule me. I had come to see him as a fellow traveller, a guide within whom my Lord and Master operated. And although I spoke to George, it was as though it was to the Mighty Jesus Christ and the Gentle Holy Spirit and the Sovereign Father God that I spoke. "I remember how I have sinned against God, while being so controlled, that the demon had loved to dress me in them, trying to confuse the simple truth

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of what God made me to be. I was born a boy and this was no mistake. God intended me to be who I was born to be. This thing had controlled my feelings and my emotions. At one stage I considered perhaps I was not supposed to be a boy. I recognise now. Now that it has been driven from me, that everything God makes, Satan and his demons twist out of shape. They confuse every bit of simple truth. Can God truly forgive me for the life I have lived like this?" I asked it of myself, as the first of many twinges of doubt to come, popped into my head.

"Yes He can and He does, and He has" said George. I felt great pity for the gay, lesbian and transvestite communities. Blinded, confused and spiritually controlled. I shook my head, repulsed at what I had been. I thanked God again, and not for the last time either, that Shirley was not up here helping me clean out my room.

George spoke again after a moment. "I too have been there, and done that. But you are no longer there, and you are no longer that. Like I said, God has turned you into a brand new creation, and everything about you has become new. Now choose for yourself, what this "new you" is going to be like."

I looked away, sighed and handed him the red lace panties and bra. I was most upset with myself, that my body had still been aroused, by the thoughts I used to have. It must have registered on my face, or perhaps God told him, but George continued. "Benjy, understand and accept this. The Bible book of Psalms, Psalm one hundred and three verse twelve tells us that God promises that,

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

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There is a very special piece of scripture, which I have made my cornerstone. It was one of the first scriptures I learnt and I repeat it regularly in case I should forget it. It is found in the Bible book of Hebrews chapter ten verse sixteen to twenty three,

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;"

And then he says,

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

And then he continues,

"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"

George paused to let the scripture sink in and then said, "God has chosen to never be able to even remember it again. So when you remember yourself like you just did, it is no longer true for God. At the end of the day, God's view is the only one that counts. Satan is going to remind you as often as he can, of who you used to be. You will take time to let go of these things within you. Your mind has to change first, then your emotions, and then your body will follow.

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Until then, you have to restrain all of these, and keep remembering, your body was always running the show. As Paul says in the Bible book of Romans chapter seven verse twenty three,

"But I see another law in my members [Parts of my body], warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Your body will be at war with you, the spirit, and the real you, the true Benjy. The real Benjy is a spirit. It's easy actually, just turn away and walk. If you have to, then run. Keep yourself accountable to others. Leave your bedroom door open, and allow Candy to walk in, except when you're changing of course. If it's something you can't run from, call me on my cell phone."

George looked again at the underwear, "Who did those panties and bra belong to? Have you lost that precious marriage gift God gave you?" I nodded, regretting every sexual encounter I had had. I had heard that sex within a truly Christian marriage, was a spiritual, as well as physical experience, for God works a spiritual combining miracle at Christian and Jewish weddings. For me it had been pure lust, which had left me, as empty as I had been before. I felt my eyes become hot burning coals in their sockets. Right now, I really wanted to be pure and innocent. If one day, I did marry Shirley, that was one gift, I would not be able to give her. My spirit was now pure and innocent before God, because of the blood of Jesus, which destroys all the sin to make me, the spirit, both innocent and pure. But physically, there was no such miracle available.

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I sighed so deeply, remembering Samantha's suicide. I began to cry. The crying escalated rapidly, into a deep, shattering, guttural, cry that ripped through me, from my very depths. Eventually it calmed down to, a gentler sobbing sound. George had given me a lot of toilet paper. We just sat on the edge of the bed, me processing all that had been my tattered life, and he saying nothing, just being there for me.

Eventually I spoke. I spoke quietly, with a nasal twang, into a glassy world. "If... If... (sniff), If only ... (blow... sniff) ... If only we had known God could save us. (sniff) If only we'd known. Samantha would not have committed suicide. (sniff) She would not have gone to Hell. (sniff) She had never given her heart to Jesus. (sniff) Oh this evil is so consuming, so destroying, I hate the devil, and I hate the demons ..."

A long silence followed, where we both said nothing. We both just sat there, on the edge of the bed, staring at the piles of clothes. ...

I could feel the Holy Spirit gently enfolding me. I felt as if I was being wrapped in a big soft duvet. I slowly relaxed. We must have sat there for about twenty minutes, not doing or saying anything. George just sat there next to me, not daring to interrupt, what the Holy Spirit was doing in my heart. For a moment, I marvelled at George's sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

My mind flitted about the house. I could imagine how Mr and Mrs Johnston, and Mr Wiley, would have been trying to contain my poor mom downstairs, reassuring her, that this crying she was hearing, must happen. Even Candy, must have been ready to run up and check what was going on. I was glad Shirley was

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with her. The crying must have been bad, but this silence, was a deafening thing.

I on the other hand, was so grateful for the quietness, and isolation, together with such an immeasurable Spirit. I now knew the depths of the Love of God. The gentle swirling folds, as gentle as silk on the skin, flowing throughout my innermost being, right through to my outer body. I just sat, not wanting this moment to ever end. Then the gentle whisper came into the quietness of my mind. "I love you Benjy. No one, can ever love you more than, or even the same as me. I am less than a heartbeat away, and just your thoughts cry, has my full attention. I am like this with all my children, and can be with each totally, all the time, for I am God."

I sat there contemplating these words. A new set of tears trickled over my cheeks. Tears of gratitude. I did not wipe these away. I wanted them to remain, as a testimony to how much I loved this great and loving God.

I felt strength begin to course through my veins again, until eventually I felt strong enough to continue. As I was standing up, George, still seated, took my arm gently, and guided me back down onto the bed. I turned to look at him. His eyes were tearful. He seemed to be sharing my experience and God's closeness with me. Using some toilet paper, he blew his nose too, and then said to me in a thick voice, "Benjy, how many friends do you have?"

"None", I said quietly, "they all left me after Samantha died. They blamed me for her death. So none of them care about me anymore".

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He paused long enough to allow me to add anything, if I wanted to. I didn't. He continued, "Which clubs did you join? Were there any secret societies, or gangs you swore allegiance to?"

I thought for a moment, only an internet group called "the sons of horror".

His face became gravely serious. After a pause he asked, "Who are they? And what did you swear to?"

"I don't know who they are, just that I got free porn and free games from them over the internet. I don't know what I agreed to. I did not read the Agreement; I just clicked the "I Agree" button." I replied

George looked at me alarmed. He paused a few moments to allow me to realise what I could have agreed to and then he took my hands in his and closed his eyes. I realised we were about to pray and closed mine too. George prayed, "Father Almighty, we ask that you break all agreements between Benjy and the sons of horror group. Free him and destroy all their records of him. In the Mighty Name of Jesus Christ we ask this, Amen."

We sat there like that for a moment and I wondered if God would do that. When I opened my eyes, George's relaxed face told me that he believed that God would, so I relaxed too. We released each other's grip and George, still looking at me said, "How much do they know about you?"

"I don't think they know much..., Just my name..."

"Your real name?" George quickly interrupted.

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"Yes, why?" I was alarmed by his quick question.

"We'll get into it later. What else? Do they know your cell phone number?"

"No! Of course no..." I stopped in mid sentence, as I remembered something, "yes they do. I downloaded stuff from their website onto my phone."

"OK, What about your postal address, do they know that?"

"Yes."

"Your physical address?"

I thought about that one, but could not remember ever giving my physical address out. I was about to answer when George, obviously seeing my uncertainty asked "What about landmarks. Did you speak of these in their chat rooms; have you mentioned you're out of school activities, what school you go to, the names of meeting places, street names, descriptions of what you look like?"

I didn't hesitate, "Every one of those, at one time or another, but never to the same people."

"You've never heard of 'profiling' have you?" said George.

"Of course I have, but I was never on the same sites when I was passing this information out."

"Well, the internet rules say, that "cookies" should only be placed on your computer for good and agreed upon reasons, but when you agree to something, with

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a group of evil people you can be sure their motives, and scruples, are not going to be "to suit you". The world market works on the principle of "Do what you want with whomever you want excepting if they have the money and the power to out-last you in a legal battle." Respect and truth are gone. So they could be collecting information off your keyboard strokes and screens. Hopefully they have not seen you as an important enough target to have been profiling you, but we can't rule it out."

"What about your porn and other stuff, where do you save these files?"

"Everywhere, in all sorts of non-descript places, on my computer hard drive, on my memory stick, and some old stiffy disks and CDs."

"OK, do you have any school work on your computer?"

"Yes... some... why?"

"The software on your computer? Is it pirated? Or do you have the original CD's to reload it?"

"It's pirated, but..."

I jumped to my feet, extremely alarmed, as I began to realise what was going through his mind.

"In the Name of Jesus Benjy, sit down on the bed, and pray. This is going to be hard but you have to do it", he said gently but firmly, as he started up my computer. But it would not start. George raised his voice, in an authoritative commanding tone, and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, demon, release this

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computer, and release everything on it! Release everything electronic and digital immediately, now in the Name of Jesus Christ.”

He pressed the button again. This time the computer started up. I felt my heart beating faster, as it always did, when my computer started up. I could feel the desire to play the games, pulsing through me. I could feel this threatened feeling rising again inside me. I could feel almost as though ‘he’ was back inside me, although I believed this was not possible. My body was just reacting to previously coded stimuli.

George looked at me and said, “Keep yourself busy Benjy. Lie down on your bed, and clear every name off your cell phone, that you added in the last two years. Don’t keep any of them. You’re starting off brand new. Then go through and delete all movies and pictures, do it while I can sit and watch you, I am checking up on you. I am helping you, by holding you accountable. In the Bible book of Malachi chapter two verse six God commends the priests of old who served Him with these words,

“The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.”

I want to be commended like this one day too. So I will walk with you and help and teach you as we go along. Pass me your memory stick please.”

I took it off, from around my neck and gave it to him. He plugged it in. The computer screen sprang into life. The desktop theme came up. Now I was really glad Shirley was not here. George right-clicked on the screen, and changed to a standard background, applied the change, and clicked ‘OK’. “That takes care

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of that distraction” He said. “Got any work on this memory stick you need?” he said this while opening the explorer. We checked it all out, and deleted just about everything off it, saving the balance to the hard drive. We formatted the stick, wiping it clean, of everything including the unseen stuff. Then we collected only the completely uncontaminated files. “Funny how many files I added emoticons and pictures to” I thought. I had downloaded them from ‘the sons of horror’ and many other websites. If I really had to keep the file, I cleaned these out first, otherwise we deleted the files.

Eventually, after about two hours, we had the most important files on my memory stick. Then George selected “Start” and “Run” and typed in the deadly text “format d:\” and hit the enter button. The checking question, “Are you sure you want to erase everything on this volume (Y/N)” appeared. George did not hesitate. He hit the “Y” key, and I watched, as the percentage information destroyed, climbed until it reached 100%.

Then George said, “Bring me all your software CDs.” I did, and we went through them, picking out the software operating system, and some other software, that I would need to be able to do my homework on. All the games were reviewed; we discussed the merits of each. George said I had to develop the “fruit of the Spirit”, a term which confused me at first, until George explained, “The Bible book of Galatians chapter five verse twenty two and twenty three reads,

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

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These are the things, which I will grow to become like, if I feed my spirit, the correct information and stimuli.

Most of my CDs, we agreed could bring out a little of these, but a lot of their opposites too. Satan always tries to leave a means to justify why something evil should be kept for its "good characteristics". The truth is, the evil was going to do damage to me, and would definitely not bring out much of those pure "fruit of the Spirit". So it would be better, to not "feed" myself with the "poison" that was on these CDs in the first place.

The fact is I threw out every one of my games. The rule for keeping and throwing away was so simple. If it was not going to produce the right "fruit", it would develop poisonous opposites. So I was not going to put it into my mind in the first place. Of course it was in my memory already, and simply remembering it, was replaying it. But if I took away all triggers that made me remember, then I would remember less often, until I no longer remembered at all.

I recognised the obvious fact as I internalised this simplicity. There was almost nothing good in this world, which did create the right fruit. Where everyone else was heading down the road of, "feeding their spirits that which would create the fruit of darkness" within them, I would have to go against society. Jesus Christ wanted me to "eat" good wholesome "food". Society did not provide much of this. I would have to be the "odd guy", the one who was "not with the times". I told George of my revelation and he added, "Jesus tells us in the Bible book of Matthew chapter seven verse thirteen says,

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"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:"

I recognised that I was going to be ostracised for my stand point too. But, this was a small price to pay, for what God had just done for me.

I felt terribly sorry for everyone else "out there", who had no idea of the terrible darkness that was blinding each and every one of them. I was in a strange way, glad that I had gone down the wrong road, for I knew the terrible truth, and reality of this evil. I would not wish the road I had travelled on anyone, and I would never go there of my own free will. In fact I would rather die than go there, and I would sacrifice everything, to stop those I love going there too. I realised that I was going to have to search for the good things in this world. And along the "river of good food" I was going to build my life.

Then, as George was typing in the command, to destroy all the information on my main hard drive, I remembered my portable drive. "Stop George"! Do this one first." I handed it to him and he inserted it, and cleared it too. Then we cleared everything on my main drive. My computer was now perfectly empty.

I spent the next few days reloading it from the original CDs, to be a completely clean machine. George had told me, never to use the same e-mail addresses, and to change my Internet Service Provider too, as directory searches were fairly simple. In fact, I had to swap my 'D' and 'C' drives before I reloaded my computer again. This was because, some programs, can identify who you are, by reading the system information, on your main drive. I wasn't going to ask if people were going to go to such

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lengths. I knew the type of people I had been dealing with, and they could and would do just that.

Most important of all, I had to get rid of my monitor, and get a new, different looking one (something about "brain associations with the past" George had said). In fact, he suggested that I should also get a new computer for this same reason. A monitor I could afford, but I would have to save up for a new computer. The final blow was to tell me that a computer in the bedroom is a recipe for disaster. I had to place it in a common room, where anyone walking by could see what was on the screen.

George explained all this, as we stood there smashing game CDs. We covered them with towels before breaking them, because this stopped their shattering, from cutting our hands and sending shards and splinters, into eyes and stuff.

"Why must we destroy these? They would make great coasters for my cups and mugs." I asked.

George stopped, with a CD wrapped in a towel, which he was about to break. He looked at me and asked, "So who said that anyway?" I hesitated then got the point. I was going to have to think carefully, about what I said, before speaking. The CDs had pictures of blood, horror and evil on them. "Would these feed my spirit the right food?" I asked myself, "Very definitely not!" I answered in my mind.

This wasn't hard, this thinking about what I was going to say. It was just going to take some practise, to catch myself, and repentance, when I slipped up. I decided to make a wristband, to remind me to think before I spoke. It wouldn't be fancy or anything, once

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I had made it, just a little bracelet; I was thinking of making a charm bracelet, and told George of the idea.

Judging by the look on George's face, I thought I had just sworn something awful.

"What?" I asked shortly.

"You obviously have a lot to learn Benjy my brother. Just take it from me, there are many charms made to carry curses, or be "points of prayer contact". For example someone will give you a charm for a bracelet, if you do not know exactly where that charm came from, and what was prayed over it, at the time it was prepared, to be given to you, then do not keep it. Throw it out the window of the car and into a drain, so that no unsuspecting person might find it by accident. Oh and don't bury cursed things in your garden. The curse then applies to your property and everything on it. Keep nothing evil. Remember how we have already spoken about spirits, using objects as places they are allowed to stay in, well I can tell you, that there are a lot of Satanic coven's which make charms. Satanists try to get them to selected people, to make their prayers more effective, and more lasting."

"This sounds a bit like science fiction George. But I have seen enough of this spiritual world, to not only know it's possible, but also to know that it's also true. Are all charms made by Satanists though?"

"No. Many are made by good, honest folk who wouldn't hurt any one. Satan just takes advantage of this fact, and throws his evil stuff into the unsuspecting people's hands. Just because they do not believe, doesn't mean these things do not harm them. You didn't know about it until I told you, you

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too would have suffered the consequences, as you have the last year and half or more. It's not for nothing that God says in the Bible book of Hosea, chapter four verse six,

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:"

, and that's exactly where Satan keeps the ordinary person. Satan is careful not to arouse their suspicions. Satan does not want to alert them to the fact that he (Satan) is real, deadly, and busy in their lives. The Bible book of First Peter chapter five verse eight,

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

I took this in and turned it over in my mind. I could see how true this really is. I noted that George had regularly quoted something from the Bible. I hesitated a moment and then asked, "Do you know every verse in the Bible?"

George replied, "No. I have only read it through once, and I am busy reading it again. I find it fascinating, I am finding things I did not find the first time, it is quite refreshing really. But I do try to memorise parts of God's Word, and where He put it in His Bible. That way when I am in a difficult situation, I can quote it. God loves to hear us quote His Word, and Satan absolutely hates it, because God honours His word. So each day I try to memorise one of the verses in the passage I read."

I thought about it, and it seemed a simple enough thing to do each day. I was however sure that if Satan hated the Bible that much he was going to try everything to stop me reading it. "I am not going to

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let my feelings and senses stop me reading the Bible”
I said under my breath.

We returned to the pile of clothes and continued to go through everything. A few more things were added to the bin bag. A few of my shirts, with dragon designs, and a number of rock star T-shirts, with death graphics depicted on them, were also piled into the bin.

“Benjy, consider this carefully, the Bible book of Second Corinthians chapter six verse fourteen to eighteen says,

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

Holding out his hand, George said, “So we must also do this. Give me your phone please.” I was very hesitant, but handed it to him. He took it, and he and I lay across the width of my bed, propped up by our elbows, with legs suspended in mid air, we looked at the screen of the cell phone.

George moved all the numbers still saved to my phone across to my memory card. Then, while I

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watched, he went through each number, asking me where and when I had met that person, and why I wanted to keep their number. He moved those we both felt the Spirit of God leading us to keep, onto the phone memory. Once we were finished going through the list, George opened the phone, took out the memory card and to my horror, broke it in half, and tossed the two pieces into the bin. He handed the phone back to me and said, "Get yourself a new cell number Benjy, and from now on, be very careful who you give that new number to".

I could see what he was doing. He was slowly destroying all the demons links to its contacts, and temptation sources. These contacts would also no longer be able to reach me, at least not by phone anyway. We carried the computer outside of the room, and called to Candy to bring up two more bin bags. We had removed everything we could find, and filled all three bags to the top. Thousands and thousands in value, all contaminated, and no longer mine, but "its" tools.

Then we went back in, and moved the furniture around into an open plan setting. Everything was now against the wall and everything was in plain sight. Paintings had been taken down; paint was missing, where prestick had been used, to stick up posters. All my heavy metal and rock music posters were gone. I didn't ask why, I just saw the lack of love and beauty. I saw also the hate, anger, and evil in the covers. Normally this was enough for it to make the bin bags. Some songs, I read the words of, and decided, that the words, no matter how great the beat, and the music was, were not going to grow the fruit of the Spirit. So these followed the others to the bin. I had DVDs that we also found. Most of these were also expelled from "my new place". I found things under

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furniture, especially under my mattress and under my chest of drawers (under the last drawer). Most of these, the demon, was desperately trying to hide away from us, but the continual, and faithful, four hours of prayer in the lounge below, was destroying all its attempts, to hide, and blind, and deceive us. The demon kept on losing one hook, into my life, after the next.

When we had finished, we called the rest of the family in, to search for anything we had missed. We took the bags out and put them into the car. This stuff would be appreciated if given away, but I knew, and so did George, that we did not want any of this to find its way into unsuspecting hands.

Shirley was hypersensitive when searching for evil things. She brought another two shopping packets down stairs and gave them to us. I was curious as to what she might have found, but too embarrassed to look. If she felt I shouldn't have something, I would trust her sensitivity to God. I just tossed the packets, into the boot of mom's car. We needed all three cars to remove the bags and all the other bigger evil things.

We drove to the dump, where we dumped it on a sandy place, and covered it with flammable liquid. There was no strong wind, so we set it all alight. A number of people came running up to us, and shouted that we were not allowed to burn things at the dump, but they could not put out the blaze, so we watched from a safe distance until it had all burnt down.

On our trip home, George said he would come around the next afternoon, after school, to help me repaint my room in brighter colours. Mom suggested baby blue, but I really did not think that was my

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colour. It turned out that we eventually chose light yellowy beige, and this is what we used. There were symbols on my dark blue walls, and these had to be removed, with paint remover, again not just the marking but the whole section.

Finally three days later, the paint had dried, and I had received new light coloured curtains. Shirley brought me a beautiful, half by one metre, board-mounted poster. It was a picture of Christ, praying on the mountain-side with His disciples. This I put up on my wall, facing my pillow, so I would see it, last thing at night, and first thing in the morning. Then we all stood in a circle, holding hands, in my room. We prayed, and gave my room and everything in it to God.

Over the next few days, mom, Candy and I went through the rest of our house cleaning it out and giving each room to God, until it all belonged to Him. We were content, even if He chose to take the whole house away from us, and give it to someone else. After all, the house was now His, to do with as He pleased. Naturally, we still had to take care of what belongs to our Lord and Master, but the concerns of value and worth, were His, and no longer ours.

The first morning after I put up the new curtains in my new room, I knew, I had destroyed its lair. I had slept soundly, and peacefully. I awoke happy, and grateful to be alive. And in my mind rang the song I had made my anthem,

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from

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evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

But little did I know the battle had only just begun. I had won the physical ground back from this evil thing, but the spiritual ground, was a battle of an entirely different nature, and one where far more was at stake.

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Chapter 11 – It's not over until it's over

It was the first Thursday afternoon after claiming my room back and George and I were both at Mr. Wiley's store doing homework. We had just taken a break and were moving some boxes in the back of the store. Mr Wiley had diversified into running the jewellery store, and next door, a vegetable shop. All the ladies coming to buy groceries would stop and look at his display in the jewellery shop window. It was a good business strategy.

George and I were in the back of the vegetable store. We were talking in general about the new life I now had entered into. As he passed me a box of tomatoes, he said, "You will experience a period of Grace, where, although you will still be tempted, from time to time, you will be able to ignore the temptation. The length of this period depends on how much you "eat", and how well you "digest" what you "eat"."

Perplexed by this warning I replied, "But I am already eating breakfast, lunch and supper, how much are you expecting me to eat?"

George shook his head, looked at the ground, and then, as if to emphasise the point, shook his head again while still looking at the ground. Then he looked up again at me, and said, "Benjy, I am only going to tell you this once, so I want you to listen really carefully." Then in a whisper, so quietly, he said something I could not quite make out, "You... .. spirit, ... ot ... body... mind."

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"What did you say?" I whispered back, "speak louder, I can't hear you. Why are we whispering anyway?"

George went from an almost inaudible whisper to speaking louder than normal, "I said, YOU ARE A SPIRIT, speak like you are the spirit! Do not speak like you are a body, with a mind."

"I got it", I said, and probably, as much because of its obvious truthfulness, as because of his whispering tactics. But I knew then, I would never stop thinking as a spirit, nor treating others, like they were spirits. It was in that moment that I unexpectedly experienced a strange thing. I no longer saw Candy as a girl, I didn't even see Shirley as a girl, nor George or Mr Wiley as boys or men. One by one every sexual feature of every person I had seen, clothed or otherwise, suddenly disappeared, and fire-like, crystalline creatures, resembling each of them, took their place. "The reality is ..." I thought to myself, "these bodies are like machines, made to keep themselves alive. Created male and female, for the sole purpose of raising up new "machines", into which God could put spirits. Like eggs, which incubate chickens, our bodies incubate spirits, pardon me, incubate Christians."

I immediately identified the root of my sexual desires; it was not me, but my "machine" that got sexually aroused. And yet God had created these urges for sexual bonding, and had made them really powerful. He does not want people to stop having children, or for that matter to abort those he does create. If they did, the entire human race could become extinct.

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Understanding the real nature of these urges, was so freedom giving. Now I knew. If I chose to, I could control them. I could, and in fact, I decided there and then, that I was going to. This was day one of the battle, for my mind, and my body. Me (the spirit) taking over from the auto-pilot impulses, controlling my machine's body and mind. Naturally, my body and mind had been programmed all these years, to do, think and feel a certain "self-pleasing" way. I had to turn this around.

George said "You will have to "renew your mind" by reading God's Word, The Bible."

I received Holy Spirit insight, into how this changing of the mind, was going to work. I would read a passage of Scripture, the Holy Spirit would show me how God saw things, from the Spiritual (real) perspective, and then I would embrace the Spiritual view point, as God sees it.

I realised, that it was not going to be that hard to change my mind; I just had to see things differently. If I try to capture every lesson God was to teach me this way, I would write over a hundred volumes. The fact is, God would teach me the right lesson, at the right time. I knew I was never going to be perfect by the time I went home, to be with Him in Heaven. But I would at least be developing, towards being the spirit He wants me to be.

But taming the body was an entirely different matter. This could only be achieved, through teaming up my spirit and my mind, then turning away from the situation, which was tempting my body. Sometimes walking, sometimes running, away, and praying each time. I realised that it was my body that Satan attempted to mislead first. Satan could, and would,

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make it want something, and the messages our bodies can send our minds are really powerful. I realised, that I have to keep my body, out of places where it can see, smell, hear, touch and taste things, which are going to be a strong misleading message.

Over the coming weeks, months and years, I figured out, that there were some places, where I fell back into sin every time, and some where, I could keep myself under control. So I ran from those I kept falling at, and only after praying, and getting confirmation through peace, would I venture near those I battled a bit with. With a bit of effort, I could maintain control. Eventually this control becomes second nature.

When I could relax knowing I would no longer fail there, I would go on to the next challenge. I was no longer satisfied with becoming a stagnating Christian, where I no longer grew myself, the spirit. This was, after all, the purpose of life on this planet – growing and hatching eternal spirits, of which I am one.

I discovered too, that God sometimes allows one of those places I am weak at controlling myself in, to pop up in a supposedly “safe place”. But I also learnt that I can still run away from these. Most often though, God was saying, “You can beat this thing, just stick with Me and pray. Pray like you’ve never prayed before. Pray with the compassion I have for you, not in your own strength. Submit your decision making to the Authority of My Word, pray for guidance, strength and the ability to resist. Then resist Satan, in the Name of Jesus Christ, and conquer the temptation, and the evil forces. Use your spirit, aligned with My Word, and your renewed mind.” Then I would do exactly that, and win.

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I learned that the sword of God's Spirit, His Word, the Bible, had to be in my head and it had to be a drawn sword at all times. I had to know which scripture, I could use in which situation. I also found that the sword of God's Word, was not only for my protection, but also for attack. I had to know, which scriptures I could use, when I saw someone else suffering. I learnt to never put my sword away, but to walk with it drawn at all times, in my right hand. I would walk through the "battlefield" of conquered sins, strewn about like dead bodies. Every now and then, an evil thing, that was supposed to have been dealt with, would rise up. I had split seconds, to deal it a death blow, cutting it down to nothing.

Naturally, we can't kill these things in reality. They just pop up somewhere else, in another form, to bother someone else, but they do leave us, and those we pray for alone.

But after a month of this, I still had a gnawing discontentment in my heart that there was still something wrong. I could not understand the cause of it so I prayed, and asked God to reveal to me what was causing it.

About a week later, after persistently praying for an answer, I got a message from God while in the shower. A vivid, emotionally charged picture in my mind, of my dad in tears, sitting with his hands supporting his head. I knew he was regretting aspects of his life. I felt tremendous pity for him but realised I was also pitying myself, for all the years I had not had a dad. A dad to be with, to grow with, and to share my accomplishments with, someone in whose shadow I would be able to grow in, and grow straight, and tall in. Perhaps all this would not have happened, had I had the gentle strength of a guiding Father. Mom had

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done all she could, but I realised that she could never fill, the void a father was designed to. How many times I could never speak to her, because I was supposed to be a young man, strong, courageous, and to be relied on. Then in that moment, I knew I needed to talk to my dad.

We arranged for my dad and me to go to the mountain, at my grandmother's house, for a long weekend. Candy would stay home with mom this time, but she said she wanted some time alone with dad too soon. We all agreed that this was a good idea.

They both agreed to pray for dad and I, while we were on the weekend, and mom and I would pray for Candy when it was her time with dad.

On the first day Dad and I climbed and chatted, catching up on everything, relaxing and just being with one another. On the second day, after lunch, while the sun was beating down, we were sitting in the shade of the porch. We were watching the birds flitting through the branches of the nearby trees, with the majestic mountain in the background. The gentle breeze blew fresh and cool on our faces. I had my glass of orange juice in my hand, and sipped the cool liquid occasionally.

During one of the long comfortable silences, I felt the Holy Spirit prompting me, to open my mouth to speak. I was terrified, and prayed for the right words. Peace descended into my whole being, and I knew that God was going to talk to my dad, through me. I looked over at his tough angular featured face. I took a deep breath, and surrendered to God's will. I told my dad, that I was sorry, for all I had put him and mom through. I told him how much I loved him, and how I respected him, for, amongst other things,

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coming to try and help mom, when I was tearing everyone's lives apart. I paused for a moment, and then said, "I also forgive you, for whatever you did to break up your marriage with mom and I forgive you for leaving me". Up until then, He had sat in silence and I could see he was battling with some emotions in his depths. But when I forgave him from my heart, he could not stem the flow of silent tears, which trickled down his cheeks as he pushed his lips tightly together to maintain some sort of control. I got up and knelt on the floor, by his chair, and just hugged him. He did not hug back. He just sat there. I held on to him for about fifteen seconds, and then let go.

I sat down again. We sat in silence for about another minute, after which he got up, and went inside. I wondered if I had done the right thing. My heart confirmed with the Holy Spirit that I had.

The next day, while sitting on the top of our mountain, he told me he loved me, forgave me, and respected me. He also wanted to know, more about what had happened over the last years, and why I had become a Christian. We chatted until the sun was almost about to set. It dawned on me then, and I shared it with my dad. I said, "You know Dad, I used to feel Jesus when I was around Christians, so I thought that He came and went. Now that I have Him inside me I experience His Love and Peace and Warmth all the time, excepting of course, when I choose to allow the world and its noise, to drown out His Quiet Gentleness. But I quickly notice I have moved myself away from Him, and I surrender my driving seat back to Him again. Jesus Christ in my heart is worth more than the world and all the money in the world combined. Nothing compares, and I will never give Him and His presence up. There was a long comfortable silence between us, and then up there on

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the mountain, with the valley spread open before us, my dad gave his heart to Jesus too. I cried with joy, and battled to get down the mountain, I was so happy.

My salvation came from being forgiven by God, but my healing, came from forgiving those who had hurt me. I apologised for what I did wrong. Whether those I had wronged forgave me or not, was a matter between them and God. As far as God was concerned, I had made right with them by apologising. God would never hold other people's lack of forgiveness against me. This made me free. Unfortunately, those who would not forgive me after I apologised, would continue, to remain trapped in bitterness, until they did forgive me. This was a matter of their own free will, so neither God, nor I, could help them any further. They had to let go themselves.

My dad and I still meet and climb, but far more often. I do not know if mom and dad will ever get back together again, but in my heart they are now together, and now Jesus is with both of them too. Our family has been repaired through a spiritual link into God's family.

Candy and mom cried with joy at the news that dad had become a Christian. Candy had a great week-end with dad about a month later, and also set their relationship right. George and Shirley had also been ecstatic. George went out and spoke with his dad too, and their Father-son relationship began to blossom there as well. George applied the commandment he found in the Bible book of Exodus chapter twenty verse twelve,

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"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."

So George honoured and respected his parents, when he approached them, and God opened the way for him to connect with them.

For six months, I had intensive training with George, on all the things of God. I devoured the Bible by reading it out aloud to myself. It was quite something to hear what was in the Bible as apposed to just reading it. I was not sure what the Bible book of Romans chapter ten verse seventeen meant by,

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

But the word used was 'hearing' so I figured that my spirit could hear words better than it could read my mind. This might not have been true, but either way I got more out of reading it aloud, quietly to myself. Perhaps it also had to do with me having to read it slower and take in the meanings of all the words, as apposed to simply speed reading it into my mind.

George and I worked weekends in Mr Wiley's store, and occasional school afternoons. We began a prayer group, for the teenagers at our church. It started an hour before Youth Group, on Friday nights. George, Candy, Shirley, I and eleven other girls and six other guys got together. Everything which the four of us had learned about spiritual warfare, we taught these mighty warriors. They became prayer warriors at Youth Group.

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They would pray the whole way through the Youth Group meeting, providing a curtain of prayer keeping Satan out, and the ministering angels of God, operating by the Holy Spirit, unhindered and free to work. Every now and again, the Holy Spirit would move on one of the prayer warriors to pray for a specific person, or situation, and they would do so. Mostly those being prayed for never knew that this had happened. Sometimes, one of the teenagers in the Youth Group would want someone to pray for them, and they would then go to one of the prayer warriors.

Candy arranged for us to get luminous green shirts with the words, "PRAYER WARRIOR 4 JESUS CHRIST" in big bold letters across the shoulder blades, on the back, and across the chest, in the front. Below these words, in smaller print, Mr Wiley had insisted we add, "Guys pray with Guys & Girls pray with Girls", as this would remove the "hormonal distraction of our age group" as he put it. I understood his words to mean that guys can be open with guys and girls can be open with girls. I thought it was a good idea for another reason too. Some people might pretend to want prayer, but in actual fact they just want to be close to a particular person of the opposite sex. None of us wanted that. This was about being open and honest with God.

On our sleeves (upper arms) was a warrior, with a shield in one hand and sword drawn, and dripping with blood, in the other. In the background, and above, were the three crosses of Calvary, with only the cross on the right having a person hanging on it. This was a clever idea to get people asking questions. Questions like "I thought Jesus was on the middle one?", or "Why is only one person on the crosses?", or "Where are the other two people?" This would bring

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out the salvation message. "The Bible book of Romans chapter five verse eight to eleven is clear,

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

So you see Jesus died to pay for our sins, the guy on the left, gave his heart to Jesus after living a life worth being crucified for. He and Jesus are in Heaven." End of message.

This would almost always bring the question, "So what about this other guy? Why is he still on the cross?" And the answer? "He did not believe Jesus wanted to take away his sin, neither was he prepared to believe that God would want to make a way to save him. Even if he did think that, ultimately he chose to carry all his own sin himself. Sin has to go to Hell when we die, and anything stuck to sin will go to Hell with it too. in the Bible book of Matthew chapter five verse twenty nine Jesus makes this clear when He says,

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

So then to reject Jesus is to reject the only one who is able to pay for your sins, for God alone is perfect, and when He came in the form of Jesus Christ, He

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could live the perfect life and so was able to die for other people's sin. He had no sin of His own that He had to pay for. The Bible book of Hebrews chapter ten verse twelve to fourteen reads like this,

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

But naturally, we must make certain we qualify for this forgiveness, which can not be received by those who reject God. The Bible book of First John chapter two verse twenty two to twenty five warns,

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life."

The person on the other cross chose to reject Christ and so he chose to stay stuck to his sin, so not even God could save him. That person went to Hell with his sin... for eternity."

This team of Prayer Warriors turned the Church into a battalion of Prayer Warriors in a matter of months. Before long, there were Prayer Warriors amongst the mom's and Toddlers, Children's Church, right up

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through the different age groups. The different groups that got together to play soccer, bridge, and even the hospital visitation team. Everyone was wearing the same shirt, in different colours denoting their different ministries.

One day I noticed something else, in small print below the "4 JESUS CHRIST", and above the "Guys pray with Guys and Girls pray with Girls", on the back of the shirts, appeared the words "@ The Way - Bagleystone". All the shirts were redone.

At the church down the road, the same shirts began to appear, the same colours for the same ministries. The same words, excepting that the new print read "@ St Augustine - Bagleystone". Very soon all over Bagleystone the shirts began to pop up and the teenagers in our church decided to make a bold statement, and wore these shirts to school whenever the opportunity presented itself. They wore them to the mall, they wore them all over. People would come up to them. Strangers, in public places and say, "Please pray for me, I am trying to get over my girlfriend", or "Please pray for my child he is so sick". The Holy Spirit had exploded into Bagleystone.

Each prayer warrior had the cell phone numbers of prayer warriors of the opposite sex, on their phones. This ensured that if a girl was approached by a guy to be prayed for, then the girl prayer warrior could refer them to an appropriate guy prayer warrior of a similar age group. In the same way guys referred girls to girl prayer warriors of the same age group. So guys prayed with guys and girls prayed with girls. The prayer warriors were careful to ensure that Jesus would be receiving the praise, and they also did not go into secluded or unsafe quiet places to pray, but

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were living witnesses, praying openly, glorifying The Lord Jesus Christ, wherever they were.

Maybe you want to live in Bagleystone. God wants you to transform the area where you live, by bringing back The Absolute Truth, through love (from which mercy and forgiveness cannot be separated), joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self-control the fruit of the Holy Spirit. You may be at the bottom, as Benjy was, for you there is still hope, or you may be at the top as Benjy became. You do not need to walk the path Benjy walked to become God's child and have Him work through you. God wants you to join His church, "The Way, The Truth and The Life". Jesus Christ is present at every service of every church, every denomination, in every setting, throughout the world, In the Bible book of Matthew chapter eighteen verse twenty, Jesus said,

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

In most cases, there are many at each of these churches, who would not be able to tell you how to find "The Way", for they themselves miss God. God promises, that if you have faith enough to search for Him, He will show Himself to you. In the Bible book of Deuteronomy chapter four verse twenty nine, Moses utters the words God told him to tell the children of God,

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

God is present at every service; He is at work, in every home, street, alley, backroom, open field and homeless shelter. There is no place He is not busy.

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Stay in the light, and stay on the path, of doing what is right, for many have been trapped, died, and went into darkness, for venturing off it.

Finally consider the narrow door to Heaven. Getting to Heaven is not just accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and saviour. You must then keep doing what Jesus says you must do and so keep proving that Jesus Christ is still your Lord and Master.

There is a condition to you receiving God's forgiveness though. It goes beyond simply asking God to forgive you. Jesus explains this to Peter, one of Jesus' disciples, in the Bible book of Matthew chapter eighteen verse twenty one to thirty five,

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison,

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till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

So then we have to forgive others to be forgiven, and if we do not, then our belief in Jesus is lip service and we are not a child of God. Of course forgiveness is practised by many religions, but only Christianity has the sacrifice acceptable to God to pay for our sins. In every other religion there is punishment and each follower dies with all of their sins on their own shoulders. Jesus can only take the sins of those who make Him their Lord and Master, and ask Him to set them free from dying with their sin stuck to them. And only Jesus can do this, for He is the Son of God, and the only perfect and acceptable sacrifice.

For Muslims reading this take note that while Jesus Christ's last words were "Father forgive them they know not what they are doing", and "It is Finished", Muhammad's last words were "Lord forgive me". Only Jesus Christ provides forgiveness of sin, and Muhammad knew that. Who else would He have been able to gain forgiveness from? Jesus had no need to ask The Father to forgive Him, He is perfect, being God's Son, The Word of God, and also the third part of the Trinity which makes up God Almighty.

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Whoever you are and whatever you have believed in the past, The Bible book of Deuteronomy chapter thirty verse seventeen to nineteen warns us,

"But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"

May you choose wisely whom you will serve, and if you choose to be a child of God and servant of Jesus Christ, and then read the Word of God, The Bible, it is the atlas of life, follow God's instructions, and then live like the spirit you are. Then I, your little brother in Jesus Christ, will see you in Heaven, when we have both "hatched" from these human bodies, and continue our eternal adventure, into what God has already prepared, for us to explore, and enjoy.

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Chapter 12 – Reviewer’s lives changed

Corrie <surname withheld>:

Rick,

Thank you for the opportunity to read your book. It took some time for me to “work” through, as the working of the Holy Spirit, memories, thoughts, incidents, and tender scars (to quote your words), can not be rushed through.

Thank you for your obedience to the Lord, in writing this book. There are a lot of people who don’t know or realise the reality of the spiritual world.

Through this book you have managed to convey the reality of the spiritual world, in a practical and understandable way. It is almost like a “peep through the window” of the spiritual world.

God bless each and every Holy Spirit inspired word, which you have captured, may He touch, through His Holy Spirit, every life that this book is intended for.

Corrie

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Martie Venter:

Rick, The Holy Spirit sent you on my path. The timing was perfect. I was ready to receive – just not sure what I was looking for. Nothing in your book shocked me, because it all felt so familiar (though my experiences were different). After reading the book, the strongest feeling was hope. Hope for me. It also helped me to rid my house of all the unwelcome gifts and keepsakes. My house is now friendly, warm and filled with Love.

It is wonderful to know, that no matter what you did or who you were – Forgiveness and Healing, are available to all of us; all we need to do is ask.

As my healing and growth started, I was able to relate to more than one character – having gone through all those things. Sometimes participating, sometimes praying for someone and being very concerned for someone, and not knowing what was wrong with them.

The book made me more sensitive to others, and put the question – why is that person acting in such a way? – into my mind.

The best lesson I learnt from this book: Sharing your story with someone might just change their whole life, even the smallest detail, which might seem insignificant at the moment. And so I did. I shared the smallest detail with someone – in doing this, I gave that person closure on a subject that affected their life, which, even years later, still haunted them.

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I wish more people would have the courage and strength to share their stories. My life was touched, and through it, another person's life. A chain reaction started. I would recommend this book to everyone – not only those in crisis. What a wonderful confirmation of what can be!

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"The Spirit Guide" book review

Name: **Suzette van Staden**

Perspective I read the book from:

The author

How I experienced/related to the book:

Going through life, one always has questions, but very seldom the answers are provided. This is a perfect example of how easy and how quickly things can go wrong. Our own perspective is not often realistic, and the first "influence" that you are approached by (if it somehow makes sense), is the one that you are going to follow. I have often seen (and experienced) this.

What has changed in me as a result of reading this book?

As a mother of three children, aged 6, 11 and 16, I have realized how important it is to always make sure that your children are equipped with the Truth, and to not keep them in the dark with the realities of life. You cannot keep them safe from it, but you can show them the way, and teach them, in such a way that they would be able to make their own decisions, should this cross their path.

Who would I recommend to read this book and why:

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I recommend this book to every single parent out there. The Bible says: "My people are dying because of a lack of knowledge"! Ignorance has never been 'bliss'.....

Closing comments:

Every person is born to believe in something or someone, and if you don't introduce them to God, and teach them in His ways, the enemy WILL. Never think that your child is too young to understand, for I believe that you are born with the same spirit that you are going to die with one day. And even if the child is too young to 'understand', his spirit will still absorb it.

The oldest war strategy in the world is to study and know your enemy. That way you know exactly what you are up against, and this helps you to; 1) form your own strategy of attack, and 2) know and recognize the behaviour/signs of the enemy so that you can counteract their movements. It is of cardinal importance that we know the enemy's camp. I'm not saying that we should all go the route that Benjy & George did, but we do need to know what his plans and his strategies are. And we do need to take our responsibility serious, and pray without ceasing....

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"The Spirit Guide" book review

Name: **Shireen Brocco**

Perspective I read the book from:

As a mom

How I experienced/related to the book:

I could relate to the book because I have felt the presence of the devil on a few occasions. I know that he is very real.

What has changed in me as a result of reading this book?

I have learnt to be more aware. I discussed your book with my children, Megan, aged 16, and Donnae, aged 20. Megan said that she had a terrible, scary feeling the other night, in her room. She felt so scared, and felt a terrible presence. I asked her what she did, and she said all she thought about was to pray. I asked then what happened, and she said the presence disappeared. I would never have discussed this with both my kids, if it was not for your book. This is when I realised that the devil will attack anywhere anytime.

Who would I recommend to read this book and why:

I recommend this book to anybody aged 10 to 100.

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"The Spirit Guide" book review

Name: **Jaryd Hodgkinson (15)**

Perspective I read the book from:

As a Christian who wants to learn more about religion

How I experienced/related to the book:

I can relate to this book because my best friend was attacked by a demon last year and I love to see how Jesus works in peoples lives to deliver them from Satan's evil. Also I know as a fact Satan is real and not to be messed with.

What has changed in me as a result of reading this book?

It has made me realize how much God loves me and how all Christians are protected by the Lord God our Father. God has done so many things for me, most of which I have taken for granted. After having read this book, I praise and thank God everyday for protecting my friend. I had no idea how powerful the demons or Satan was before I read this book and I also know that with God on my side and being a child of his, I am protected from Satan and his forces, so I do not have to live in fear as long as I walk a righteous path.

Who would I recommend to read this book and why:

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I recommend this book to anyone from age 13 and up. Especially Christians, basically so they can be informed of what is out there.

Closing comments:

Thank you for writing this book Rick. It is going to make a huge impact on peoples lives, like it has on mine. God bless you.

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Rick Evans:

I am absolutely stunned by the responses from the reviewers of this book. I claim no responsibility for the source of what has been written in this book, I am a not a fiction writer. I write non-fiction studies of the Bible and practical Christian living books such as the book called "The Army of God".

The way this book, "The Spirit Guide", has unfolded, leads me to believe, that any and all praise for this book must go to, The Father of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ himself, and the Holy Spirit, who all three, make up the one and only God, and creator of the universe, spirit world, and beyond. I am just the instrument, and very privileged to be used as one too.

I especially thank all those many men, women, teens and children who helped me to remain accurate to scripture. I especially thank Vanessa my wife, who is a fantastic anchor, completely honest and forthright. It is at times not easy to hear things I need to hear, but she keeps me humble, amongst other things, and I know that is a safe place to be. I am truly blessed to have her and my children in my life.

So far, everyone who has read this book, and replied to me, has come away to tell me that they have changed, right down to their core. Judging by what I see on the faces of those I come into contact with, that change is real, deep, and I believe permanent. May you be as blessed to have read it, as I was to be a part of writing it.

I have another book, which is a study guide, called "The Army of God". It is a practical book, which helps us adjust our lives to working by the Spirit of God. My

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instructions from our Father, is that that book must be given away for free, and therefore cannot be found on any of the book shelves. You can visit the website "www.freewebs.theArmyofGod.com" to read online or to request it via e-mail at TheArmyofGod@softhome.net .) It is not available in print, but may be printed and given to others, if given for free (no charge, or barter, or trade, whatsoever, is allowed for this book – You will understand why).

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Epilogue

Walk in spirit and in truth, and seek only that which is good.

Enjoy your life, I have. I am finished this work given to me to do, and I thank my God for the life He has given me, and the gifts He has bestowed on me. May I one day be found to have been, and remained, faithful with that which I was given.

May you too learn to know this one indisputable fact, "You are a spirit, you have a body and a mind, that you are supposed to take charge of, and control. You cannot die, although your body will. This means, that beyond the veil of death, you have a future. Make sure you make the best choices you can, for this life, and your eternity."

God our Father is everywhere, all the time, even to the furthest reaches of the universe, and beyond. He is immensely powerful, beyond our wildest imagination. Yet He wants a close relationship with each one of us.

We cannot understand why God should choose to care so much, excepting that we know we have been created in His image. He cares about each one of us that He creates, and maintains. We cannot understand Him with our minds, but with the capabilities of our own spirit beings, we can call to, Him and we call Him "Father". When we do, He will answer, not from the vastness of space, but from within the depths of our being, "My child, I love you, what is it I can help you with?"

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Revision Of 2014-04-21

It has come to my attention the newer Bibles have been corrupted due to the fact that they were translated off manuscripts, originally claimed to be the oldest, and now proven to be the work of those wishing to remove Jesus Christ as being God, together with The Father and The Holy Spirit.

The newer Bibles use the Alexandrian Texts. There are some simple tests you can do to see if the Bible you use is a real Bible or not.

- Check if Mark 11:26 has been removed from your Bible.
- Check if Acts 12:4 has had the word "Easter" removed. This verse shows that Easter was celebrated by King Herod who was persecuting the Christians. It also shows that the Christians, together with the Jews, were celebrating the Feasts of God.
- Check if Luke 10:1 says that Jesus appointed Seventy Two disciples to go to the towns ahead of Him. It should read Seventy. The extra two was added by cults wishing to make money off of religious books.
- Google "The Battle of The Bibles and check it out for yourself. This Youtube series shows over a hundred serious alterations to the Bibles.

I have therefore revised this version, removing all quotes from previous Bibles, and replacing them with

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the only trustworthy English Translation, The Old King James Bible. (The old English language is actually not difficult to understand, and if you pray before reading Scripture, then you will have your eyes opened to the Scripture by God's Holy Spirit, who will make the Truth known to you.

I have also colour coded the text:

Black is the text from this book,

Coloured text are quotes from the Old King James Bible:

Red text are quotes from God's actual words, either by The Father, or by Jesus Christ.

Green text are quotes from the rest of the Bible, where God Himself did not personally speak.

The rest of the Bible is considered to be inspired by God, but does not attain the same level of honour and respect as God's own personal words (which are in red).

When the Bible refers to the word "Scripture" it refers to "The Old Testament".

The New Testament is the fulfilment (in progress) of the Old Testament Scripture. And provides Application Instruction of how to live as a Christian, set free by The Blood of Jesus Christ, who saves all those who come to Him, surrender, and turn from sinning.

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About the Author:

Rick Evans grew up all over South Africa. He moved through many different towns and cities before High School. He was lonely, never having the chance, to develop true and lasting friends, so he sought companionship within the spirit world. Although he was seeking the truth, he wandered into a relationship.

These spirits could do things, they had power and they were able to change his life... for a short time. All the while, though, they spread their tentacles throughout his body, and his life. Too late, Rick discovered that what had originally been innocent, had in fact been a subtle slide, which dragged him day by day, very slowly, and imperceptibly, deeper and deeper, into a darkness that fills most of the world today.

He fought his way back out with the help of the only safe Spirit Guide. Today, he walks with this Spirit Guide, who is known as the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God is the one and only true Spirit Guide. He can only be reached through Jesus Christ.

Rick lives in the spirit, and the power of God's Spirit pulsates through what he does and says. He will quickly add that he slips and falls, just like all of us. Rick managed to escape. He spends a lot of time trying to help others, most of whom, do not realise, that the same things, which had once dragged himself down, and slowly destroyed him, and everything, and everyone, he held dear, are doing the same to them.

Rick currently lives in South Africa, with his wife and three young teenagers. He is a Business

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Consultant during the day, and a prayer warrior devoted to the encouragement of Christians all over the world, whenever possible.

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Acknowledgements:

The Holy Spirit: Who has woven this whole story together, and included many different people's experiences.

The Bible: Sovereign Word of God for planet Earth and beyond.

"House Cleaning" Tiaan Gildenhuis (teaches what things can lead you astray, and should rather be destroyed)

Dimmen Kieviet: Prayer Warrior and authority on spiritual strategy.

Corrie <surname withheld>: Mother who prayed her daughter out of occult practices.

Suzette van Staden: Rejected, betrayed, rebelled, and street raised – councils ex-Satanists.

My own personal experiences.

Many others, whose testimonies, backed by truly, and permanently changed lives, have also been included to weave this tapestry of truth.

There are also so many who supported the writing of this book in prayer, but I need to highlight Andre' van der Merwe (SA), DJ Lewis (USA) and Grant Scott-Hayward (Australia)

Finally a special thank you to my family, Vanessa, my wife and best friend, and my children, Brandon, Daniella and Michael, each of whom have sacrificed a

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lot of time with husband/dad to allow me to bring you this story, that we might all be encouraged, strengthened and guided closer to God's truth and His Word, Jesus Christ.

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Editors:

Structure and Form:

Ulrike Hill,

Real encounters accuracy:

Dimmen Kieviet,

Corrie <Surname withheld>

Suzette van Staden

Exciting and sensible for children:

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Michael Evans (12),

Jaryd Hodgkinson (15),

Exciting and sensible for adults:

Richard & Monique Ball,

Shireen Brocco,

Martie Venter,

Riette Labuschagne

Many more who made valuable comments too.

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