

# THE VAJRA SEQUENCE

A PSYCHEDELIC JOURNEY INTO THE HEART OF RELIGION



RICHARD MERRICK



# *The Vajra Sequence*

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*Richard Merrick*

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

For Sherolyn

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The Vajra Sequence.

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*“Inspecting various episodes in the life of Moses, one encounters striking similarities with features characteristic of the altered states of consciousness induced by the Amazonian brew Ayahuasca. Indeed, the biblical episodes describe experiences that are among the most common with this brew. These include serpentine metamorphosis, synesthesia, intense light, seeing creatures without faces and the encounter with the Divine.”*

— Rabbi Benny Shanon, Professor of psychology at the  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel).

## A List of Facts

1. Psychedelic plants and fungi have been used for millennia to induce religious visions, continuing into present day with certain Native American, African, and Siberian tribes.
2. Scientific study of psychedelics on human consciousness was halted after 1966 with the criminalization of most psychedelic substances, resuming only after the pioneering work of Dr. Rick Straussman in the early 1990's.
3. Test subjects ingesting psychedelic substances, such as DMT, LSD, Psilocybin, and Mescaline, have reported out-of-body visions of other worlds, grand halls, portals, strange machines, and even spacecraft. Encounters with non-physical beings are also often reported, including elves, aliens, angels, deities, and animal hybrids.
4. MRI brain scans during out-of-body psychedelic experiences have revealed that brain activity is significantly reduced, leading some to conclude the molecular structures of psychoactive ergoline, tryptamine, and phenethylamine block ordinary sensory perception in a way that enables human consciousness to perceive nonphysical realities.
5. Experiments by Koren and Persinger applying electromagnetic stimulation to the temporal lobes of the brain in test subjects have induced a "sensed presence" of beings standing three feet above the ground. In initial experiments the electromagnets were mounted in a yellow snowmobile helmet dubbed the "God Helmet".
6. The Global Consciousness Project, a spinout from the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research lab begun in 1998, has found statistical evidence of collective human consciousness. Using a network of 70 random generators distributed around the world, significant deviations from random have been found to correlate with major world events, including the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and sporting events, such as the Football World Cup.

*“We have drunk Soma and become immortal;  
we have attained the light, the Gods discovered.”*

— Rig-Veda: Hymn XLVIII. Soma.



## Preface

In 1919 Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung coined the term *archetypes* in an essay entitled *Instinct and the Unconscious*. Archetypes, he proposed, were underlying or primordial elements in the collective unconscious that emerge in human culture as images and motifs, such as the mother, trickster, and the flood. He believed such archetypes manifest universally in both personal and historical contexts as mythical stories and symbols.

American mythologist Joseph Campbell later built on Jung's idea of archetype with his research into myth and its relation to the human psyche. Evolving out of his study of the Bardo Thodol, also known as the Tibetan Book of the Dead, he developed the concept of *monomyth*. The monomyth is a common pattern, he proposed, that exists beneath the narrative elements of most great myths, regardless of their origin or time of creation. Within the monomyth is a central pattern Campbell called *the hero's journey*, which he claimed could be found in every folk and religious tradition.

This novel now takes these archetype and monomyth models a step further by proposing they may exist entirely independent of the human brain. Here we consider the possibility that archetypes and myths might originate non-locally outside the physical brain; are received by the brain as quantum signals in dreams or psychedelic visions as places, people, or objects; and can be tuned in like a television by certain psychoactive molecules and cognitive technologies. Also presented is the possibility that archetypes and mythical stories may be evidence of non-local intelligences seeking to communicate with us through symbols and images.

For instance, the folkloric elf archetype found in various forms in different cultures might actually be a primordial intelligence associated with groups of electrons or molecules. Likewise, the dying-resurrecting vegetation gods found in so many different cultures may be primordial intelligences associated with psychedelic plants and fungi. Sky gods

might be intelligences of stars and their orbiting planets. All of these might be received from any number of archetypal dimensions that precede physical manifestation. Furthermore, we might view these archetypes as representing ‘intelligence-collectives’ that project into three-dimensional holonomic space-time through living avatars. Receiving these intelligence constructs would then be a matter of tuning out our physical sensory reality and tuning in non-physical, but otherwise real, dimensions.

Based on recent scientific studies, out-of-body experiences occur when normal sensory perception is blocked. This occurs naturally while dreaming or dying, but can also be induced by administering one of a variety of psychoactive compounds whose molecular structures fit into neural receptors like a key. Such psychedelic or *entheogenic* compounds in sufficient dose have been found to attenuate or block neural messages in the brain, forcing non-local perception of archetypal landscapes and beings depending on the molecular structure used.

Since entheogenic compounds are produced naturally in different plants and fungi, which grow in diverse geographical locations and climates, the archetypes and monomyths found in different cultures may well be a direct product of the local psychoactive vegetation. That is, the immortal elixirs, potions, and communions used in religious ceremonies around the world might actually function to tune and filter non-local archetypes and myths to create human culture, not the other way around.

It stands to reason that human self-awareness and tribal culture could have first been inspired by accidental visions induced by eating entheogenic plants or mushrooms; which then evolved into religious communion rites, icons, art, and temple architecture; that then developed into cultural filters to help contact visionary beings, that we humans call gods, and interpret their inter-dimensional communications. This self-reinforcing feedback loop between plants, visions, and religious rites could be viewed as the First Religion whose purpose it was to tune in and explore non-physical realities. Of course, the motivation behind this would be to learn what happens after death and seek a way to survive the loss of physical body.

Yet, we cannot be certain that visions, dreams, or near-death experiences occur outside the physical brain. At present, there is simply no method to objectively pinpoint the location of such visions, much less the source of consciousness. And while there is a great deal of evidence that ancient cultures used different psychoactive plants and fungi in their religious rites, it is still speculative to say that all of humanity's pantheons and mythologies were the product of psychedelic visions. All science can tell us now is how psychedelic compounds interact with the brain and otherwise report on how certain entheogens affect human subjects. Much more research is required to understand the true nature of consciousness and entheogenic visions.

Nonetheless, we can still connect the dots between religious tradition and the visionary experiences that so many have reported. We can also dare to explore the role science might play in enhancing the visioning process that might someday lead to the exploration of non-physical dimensions; communication with non-physical intelligences; a better understanding of consciousness; proof of non-physical intelligence in the cosmos; and how to apply such knowledge to improve the human condition. In the process, we might just uncover answers to our biggest questions using a perfectly natural method that has been around for millions of years, although globally outlawed for the past fifty.

Such are the grand motivations behind this novel. The information and ideas are presented within a fictional contemporary monomyth and hero's journey incorporating familiar archetypes that make an otherwise difficult subject easier to understand. Tangible examples are always better than generalized theory and the Socratic method used within a story context has long been proven the best way to explain things. Besides, fiction offers the best defense against skeptics seeking to discredit exotic ideas. To those I would just say this: "Don't worry! It's all just a fantasy...or is it?"

In fact, every effort has been made to use elements of real visionary experiences in the story. Scenes describing colorful halls, ornate rooms of gold, otherworldly landscapes, elves as bouncing luminous balls, abuse at the hands of aliens, a beautiful woman manipulating dials in mid-air, and a stack of cards as portals to other worlds are all actual

psychedelic experiences reported by real people. Also included are visions from the world's major religions and mystery schools, believed by some scholars to have been the result of psychoactive communions. Indeed, much of the information about religious rites, temple architecture, scientific research, and ancient history is real and accurate. I would urge anyone to do his or her own research on topics of interest to learn more. *The Vajra Sequence* is a point of departure, not an end in itself.

Richard Merrick  
November 9, 2016

## Chapter 1

### *A Cabinet of Curiosities*

Most would think him just an ordinary fellow, sitting there cross-legged in the pale blue glow of his UltraRetina display. Wearing tattered jeans and an olive tee, he looked like any other grad student doing his homework in one of Oxford University's dusty old museums. But this was no ordinary visitor. This was the celebrated Dr. Josh Savin, a brilliant cognitive neuroscientist from Princeton University. Just in his late thirties, he was already famous for inventing a mind-altering device known as the "God Helmet."

Arriving that morning at London's Heathrow airport, he was settling in at the world-famous Ashmolean museum to begin a weeklong examination of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri. As the oldest collection of Christian writings in the world, the Oxyrhynchus manuscripts date from the first to sixth century AD. From preliminary research, Josh believed these manuscripts might contain clues about the communion elixirs once used in pre-Christian cults to induce religious visions. He was looking for specific information—perhaps even a recipe—that could be used with his cranial magnetic stimulation technology to induce more powerful visions than those possible with the God Helmet alone.

Scanning through a number of the Papyri manuscripts in the Ashmolean's vast online database, he had stumbled across a pair of very intriguing fragments written in Greek. Identified in the museum index as *The Logia*, the fragments contained several sayings attributed to Iesous, the Greek name for Jesus. In the second or "B" fragment of the Logia, Josh was particularly struck by a couple of quotes:

"The kingdom of heaven is within you."

"That which is hidden from thee shall be revealed to thee."

“Clearly, these are not just religious metaphors,” Josh murmured to himself, tabbing over to Word to make a few notes. “Iesous seems to be referring to a psychic journey—an inner vision of some sort.”

Looking in an online encyclopedia, he was surprised to find the name ‘Iesous’ was not actually a reference to a person, like the Biblical Jesus, but rather the Greek form of a Phoenician word for the Sun—Ies or Jes. It meant literally ‘the one light.’

“The Logia isn’t referring to a person at all,” he suddenly realized. “Iesous is a personification of sunlight, or perhaps a process of enlightenment where light has illuminated some hidden truth.”

Reading on, it turned out that Iesous had been adapted from the Greek goddess of healing named ‘Ieso’, daughter of Asclepius and granddaughter of sun god Apollo, son of Zeus. To the Greeks, the name Iesous meant “Hail Zeus.” But, even this had an earlier origin.

In ancient Egypt, the root word Esu or Isu was a hieroglyphic inscription for the son of the goddess Isis, namely Horus, which was subsequently adopted into Roman Christianity as the sunburst emblem for the communion of Jesus.

During the era of Roman Emperors, there were numerous worshippers of Isis. Many converted to Emperor Constantine’s religion that blended paganism with the Messianic faith, later becoming the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, the Egyptian sunburst emblem, known as the “Eucharist”, contains the Greek letters “IHS” as a variation of Isu to identify the communion of the goddess’ son. These initials are often found embroidered on sacred altar cloths upon which the Holy Communion of Roman Catholicism is placed.

“Now there’s a new bit of information,” he muttered to himself. “The sunburst symbol for Isis and Iesous, the “one light”, was used by the Roman Church to equate the Holy Communion with Jesus Christ. Christ *is* the Eucharist according to this. The Logia seems to be telling us Jesus is inside the communion and that by ingesting the Eucharist we can see him in the Sun’s light.”

Reading further, the encyclopedia explained Iesous was etymologically linked to a long line of deities in other cultures, including the Assyrian Issus; the Galatian Nyssus; the Hebrew Nizziz; the Greek Zeus, Dionysus, and Iacchus (from Iach, a shout); the Norse EIS; the Persian Yez; the Gaulish Esus or Hesus; the German Hist; and the Chinese Jos or Jess, an old nickname for a Chinese religious idol. Yet it was the Hebrew version of this visionary being pronounced ‘Yeshua’ or ‘Jehoshua’ that the Bible identifies with the Biblical Jesus.

“The Greek authors of The Logia must have considered the Christian Messiah one of these mythical solar deities and so equated him with the Phoenician communion god Ies or Iesous. Maybe there’s something in the museum’s Phoenician collection that can give me a clue about their communion rites.”

Making his way to the Antiquities Department on the ground floor, he strolled past row after row of Phoenician artifacts arranged neatly in large glass display cases. Many of the antiquities in the Ashmolean, he recalled, were part of the famed 17<sup>th</sup> century *Cabinet of Curiosity* collection owned by Elias Ashmole, a highly esteemed Freemason, astrologer, and alchemist of his day. In fact, Ashmole donated his entire collection to found the museum.

“The Phoenicians must have been very important to old man Ashmole, considering the number of Phoenician artifacts in this collection,” he mused. “And look at all the drinking vessels! Perhaps he shared my interest in their communion rites.”

Stopping suddenly at the end of the fourth row of cases, he spotted an unusual amphora on the bottom shelf. Like the others it was a vase design with two handles on the neck for pouring, but this one also had beautiful hand-painted figures around the body.

Bending down for a closer look, he could see it was decorated with the figure of a female-headed phoenix, a variation of the winged sphinx symbol found in many other Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cultures. Next to the phoenix were illustrations of several birds and two lions.

The phoenix he recognized as a symbol of spiritual resurrection and namesake for the Phoenician culture. After all, it was still a prominent symbolism in modern pop culture, having made an appearance at the

2012 Sochi Olympics closing ceremony as the mythical firebird rising from the ashes. But the lion and bird symbols were a complete mystery to him. This amphora, he decided, warranted closer inspection.

Spying a house phone nearby, Josh rang the museum's collections manager to request a private viewing. Checking his academic clearance against the museum's visiting scholar database, the collections manager dispatched two attendants to transfer the amphora to a 3rd floor conservation room for study.

Watching over the transfer process like an expectant father, he could not help but feel concern as the attendants lifted the ancient amphora out of the case and onto a cart. Stabilizing the relic as they wheeled it through the museum and onto the elevator, he imagined himself in a procession to deliver the royal communion. What must it have been like, he wondered, to be a Phoenician king in purple robes preparing to partake of the immortal water? What must he have seen in his visions?

Placing the relic on a workbench at the back of the room, the imagined cupbearers excused themselves.

"Give us a bell when y'r done," the tall one said with a Cockney accent.

"That's it?" he called after the attendants as they headed for the door. "No one to pour my communion? No one to attend me as I journey to meet the gods?"

"Can't help ye there, mate," the short one replied unamused. "Ye're on y'r own from here."

Joking aside, he had work to do. Looking up the piece in the museum index, he hyperlinked from the public record into an internal database for detailed information. Here he found a litany of lab notes taken by prior researchers spanning more than two hundred years. Reading the notes quietly, the symbols on the amphora began to make sense.

"Okay...says here the lions were considered the steed of Astarte or Ashtart, the Phoenician goddess of Venus who resurrects the Sun and carries it across the sky in her golden chariot. Mythologically speaking, the Venusian goddess resurrects the Phoenician sun god Ba'al Melqart in the morning only to accompany him into the Underworld at night where



she resurrects him again into the afterlife. Whatever it was they kept in this amphora,” he figured, “it was definitely some kind of resurrecting potion.”

“As for the bird symbol, says here it represented the resurrected spirit of the Sun himself...”

Benu; the sacred bird of Ægypt believ'd the anima of Ra; t'was us'd in hieroglyphic scripture as thee guise of sol. Same wast true f'r thee maest noblest Phoenicians hwa hath us'd the purple Benu as an emblem f'r their headusigel god Ba'al, symbol of rebirth.

“Well, there you have it. The contents of the amphora represented the combined power of the Sun and Venus to resurrect the spirit. But the question in my mind is what did this planetary reproductive symbolism have to do with psychoactive plants and communions.”

Looking next in the *Oxford Companion to World Mythology*, Josh found an 1845 entry linking the two heavenly bodies through the Egyptian Eye of Ra symbolism.

Eye of Ra. See also: All-seeing Eye, Golden Eye, and Eye of Lucifer. An ancient euphemism for the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun, once believed to be the eye of God looking down from heaven. Anthropomorphized in Egyptian mythology as the vulture of Isis and resurrecting Phoenix, the planet Venus was the goddess Isis herself emerging from the Sun's fire. Vedic Shavite glosses convey this same celestial rebirth as Surya's seed named Shukra, meaning white, bright, semen. To ancient priests, Shukra was spit out from the Sun to fertilize the oceans of earth.

“That's it!” he boomed, ducking from the unintended volume of his voice. “The amphora communion fertilized the worshipper's third eye just as the Sun and Venus fertilized the Earth with their ‘one light’. By ingesting the communion,” he reasoned, “the worshipper might ‘see the

light’ and be ‘born again’ into the sky to commune with the planet gods. That is until the communion wore off.”

Turning his attention now to the amphora’s interior, he could find no discernable markings—only a brownish-purple discoloration on the lower half of the inner wall where liquid must have sat for a time and slowly evaporated. Using a magnifying glass under the LED desk lamp, something on the bottom caught his eye...something that sparkled.

“Will you look at that?” he whispered to himself. “A crystallized residue. Wonder what a chemical analysis of that little gem would tell me?”

Scanning the room to make sure no one was watching; he rifled through the archeological utensil drawers until he found a small scalpel. With this he quickly scraped a sample from the inside bottom of the amphora. Placing the purple-brown crystals onto a sheet of white paper, he folded it neatly into a square. Slipping the package into his shirt pocket, now all he needed was a lab to analyze the sample’s chemical composition.

“Siri, find a chromatography lab nearby,” Josh said, putting on his AR glasses. In an instant, a transparent map appeared in front of him as he made his way to the elevator. One of the best labs in the world, the Oxford Organic Chemistry Laboratory, happened to be located just four blocks away on Mansfield Road.

“Call the number, please,” he said, pushing the elevator button for the ground floor. A woman answered the phone.

“Dr. Winegard here,” the woman said tiredly.

“Um...hello there. My name is Josh Savin and I’m a visiting professor from Princeton University working on a research project over here at the Ashmolean.”

“Okay. How kin I help ya?” she replied with a light Scottish accent.

She sounded youngish, perhaps late twenties or early thirties.

“I have a crystalized sample from a 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE Phoenician amphora I need analyzed. Is this something your lab can help me with...say today?”

“Look, Doctor...”

“Savin.”

“Doctor Savin, I am quite busy,” the young woman replied disinterestedly.

“Yes, yes, I’m sure you are. But this is of the utmost importance and I really need your help. I’m quite happy to pay whatever amount required for your services....”

“But...”

“Can I at least drop by to meet you and explain my project?”

“Um,” she paused. “Well...aye...okay. I’ll take a quick look at your sample. But I’m very busy this week and you’ll need to come right away. Otherwise, laddie, I won’t be able to help ye til next week.”

“Excellent! Thank you so much. I will be there in fifteen minutes,” he replied, but she had already hung up.

Signing out at the front, he exited the Ashmolean and set out at a brisk pace across the Oxford campus. The navigation map in his glasses would guide him to the chemistry lab like a divining rod while enjoying a brief augmented reality tour of Oxford along the way. Ever since the Pokémon GO phenomenon of 2016 there had been an explosion of AR apps that overlaid information on a live video of your surroundings. This one was especially good for touring as it combined the functionality of a nav system with overlaid points-of-interest and a voice interface—all from inside his Apple glasses.

Still trying to overcome jet lag, he was more than happy to spend some time outside in the cool autumn air. It was a crisp sunny day in Oxfordshire and a perfect opportunity to take in the sights of this legendary university town. All around him were medieval buildings, some dating back to the twelfth century when the university was founded. Psychedelic thinkers like Lewis Carroll and Aldous Huxley received their earliest inspirations right here, an irony not lost on him given his current line of study.

Following the directions on the map, he crossed St. Giles street between the Martyr’s Memorial and Balliol College to head up Broad Street past Trinity College and the New Bodleian Library. The AR app offered dozens of information points on each building.

Approaching the Sheldonian Theatre on his right, he barked a command into the air.

“Siri, tell me more about the Sheldonian.”

“Built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Sheldonian Theatre is a D-shaped building best known for its unusual ceiling,” a female voice replied. “King Charles II commissioned thirty-two oil paintings from his court artist Robert Streater to create a single grand fresco on the theater’s round ceiling. Intended as a visual metaphor for Truth descending upon the Arts and Sciences, the scene was said to be an allegory for how Ignorance would forever be expelled from the University.”

Unable to contain his curiosity, he decided to take a peek inside. Strolling through the front gate and around the right side of the building, a door was propped open where workers were streaming in and out. It looked like they were preparing for a graduation ceremony or other special event.

Slipping quietly into the theater, he stepped lightly on the wooden floor to avoid notice. Peering up at the domed room, his glasses automatically recognized the ceiling fresco and overlaid labels to help him identify the gods floating above. There was Venus, the goddess of light, accompanied by her winged erotes; Mercury, winged messenger of the Roman sun god Jupiter; and Bacchus, the god of intoxication—all arrayed within a circle of clouds. For some reason he had expected a Biblical scene.

“Seems to me,” he said softly to himself as he gawked at the ceiling, “that our dear King Charles felt Truth was better represented by pagan gods than by Bible stories. What a perfect send-off for the students lucky enough to graduate inside this beautiful hall every year.”

Exiting through the same door, he continued across Holywell Street to turn left onto Mansfield road. Admiring the old Harris Manchester and Mansfield colleges as he strolled by, he followed the navigation arrows to the Chemistry Research Laboratory at the end of the street and removed his glasses.

It was a modern glass building, out of place in these Old World surroundings. Entering the tall atrium, he spotted the organic chemistry lab on the building directory and took an elevator up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Making his way to the chromatography lab, he found a lone lab technician there peering intently into her microscope.

“Excuse me, miss,” he said in his best Ivy League voice, “Can you tell me where I might find a woman by the name of Winegard?”

“I’m Winegard—Dr. Winegard,” the young redheaded woman replied with a Gaelic accent, still peering into the microscope. “What do ye need? I’m quite busy.”

“Yes...um...I spoke with you on the phone a short time ago?” he reminded her, tilting his head sideways to try and see her face. “You know...about the amphora analysis?”

Swinging around to face him, she was not at all what he expected. Her green eyes, pale complexion, and long copper hair were absolutely stunning, causing him to take a step back. He had never seen such a beautiful woman in such a stark and sterile environment as this. Even with her black frame glasses and white lab coat, she was a striking young woman.

“Och...didn’t expect you so soon. It’s Dr. Savin, right?” Dr. Winegard replied, clearly enjoying the silly look on his face. No one expects to see a pretty female scientist, she reminded herself. “Do you have the specimen for me?”

Reaching for the folded paper in his pocket, he reluctantly handed over the square.

“Open it carefully,” he instructed. “There are crystals there that may be over two thousand years old. I think they might be the residue of hallucinatory plants.”

“You’re in luck, Dr. Savin. Botanical analysis is my specialty,” she replied, taking the sample from his hand. “My field of study at the University of Edinburgh was ethnopharmacology—the study of ethnic groups and their use of medicinal plants, including psychotropics.”

Turning back to her workbench, the young scientist wasted no time preparing the sample for analysis using high performance liquid chromatography. Retrieving a pair of sterilized tweezers, she carefully transferred the crystals into a test tube, which she filled with the standard mobility solution. Placing the mixture into a motorized shaker, she had to wait a minute for it to dissolve.

“Ever since I was a wee girl growin’ up in the hielands, I was quite fascinated with plants and how they can be used as medicine. But when I

learned that certain plants and fungi could induce visions—visions of gods—I was curious to know what could cause this to happen. How could eating hallucinogenic mushrooms cause the brain to see into other worlds...worlds populated by invisible beings? It seemed to me that psychotropic plants and fungi must exist in nature for a special reason. You know—to heal the mind like other plants heal the body.”

Removing the dissolved sample from the shaker, she continued to refine it for high-pressure injection into the chromatograph detector by pouring the solution through a coarse filter into a receptacle inside the machine. This would remove any remaining large particles. Snapping a new silica column into the detector, she noticed her guest was curious about what she was doing.

“You see, Dr. Savin, we inject the sample solution under high pressure through this tube packed with silica. This is what separates the compounds for UV analysis.”

Pausing to double-check her work, she continued.

“My hope is to someday pursue mah own research into the effects of different psychoactive plants to see whether the reported visions occur entirely in the brain or instead as some kind of quantum effect, perhaps a non-local transmission thru the ether. Unfortunately, obtaining a grant to study illegal substances is more than a little bawherr pernicketie, as we say in Scotland—especially if you’re young and untenured like mahself.”

Selecting the button for Reversed Phase HPLC on the detector screen, she pressed the Start button to initiate the analysis. In just minutes the display began to chart out the peaks of each compound in the mixture. Jotting down a few notes as she intently watched the readout, she finally announced her findings.

“Judging from the relative proportions of tryptamine and muscimol in the sample, the amphora liquid was about one-quarter *Acacia Nilotica* and one-half *Amanita muscaria* with trace amounts of *Peganum harmala* and grape tannin,” she announced confidently. “From what we know about ancient communion elixirs, these kinds of psychotropic ingredients were usually blended into a base of red wine.”

“This was no ordinary wine communion then,” he added, stepping over to one of the lab windows to gaze out onto the campus landscape.

“Not at all,” the young woman replied with a knowing smile. “One cup of this potion would have been enough to produce a fully immersive psychedelic vision in an adult male. Acacia Nilotica trees—the sacred Hebrew ‘shittum’ wood used to build and furnish King Solomon’s temple—were a common source for Dimethyltryptamine or DMT, the most powerful psychedelic known to exist. The Amanita mushroom, nicknamed ‘fly agaric’ because its scent attracted flies, was also a popular psychedelic used by Siberian reindeer tribes and the Pontic-Caspian Yamnaya culture more than five thousand years ago.”

“As for *Peganum harmala*,” she continued, “its seeds give a sensation of floating or flying. This effect was discovered quite by accident when Persian rug makers, who used the seeds to dye their rugs, accidentally absorbed it through their skin. Known by the folk name Syrian Rue, *Peganum harmala* gave rise to legends of flying carpets and the winged horse Pegasus. As a life-long student of shamanic traditions, I have found psychoactive communion elixirs like this the central rite in virtually every ancient religion. The Phoenicians were no exception.”

“Fascinating,” he replied contemplatively, still staring out the window as he pondered what this could mean for his work. It was mindboggling for him to think that stories of magic carpets and Pegasus were really just euphemisms for the psychedelic flying effect of *Peganum harmala* seeds. How in the world had they come to be featured in animated children’s films like Disney’s *Aladdin* or *Hercules*? How could something so important have been forgotten? Or, more likely, swept under the rug?

“What else do you know about the Phoenician communion rite?”

“Well, to begin with,” Dr. Winegard continued, stepping back to her workbench to pour the remaining sample mixture into a portable glass container, “your elixir was most likely used in the Phoenician Ceremony of Awakening, known as the *Egersis*, in honor of their chief sun god Ba’al Melqart. Same character as the Egyptian sun god Osiris and Greek superhero Heracles, whose temple by the way was the model for Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem.”

“But the potion itself,” she continued, “would have been the holy communion of Ies or Iesous, the son of Lord Melqart—”

“I was just reading about this,” Josh interjected.

“Good! Then you probably know that Iesous was the Phoenician’s vegetation god, like the moon god Soma in the Rig-Veda who could be envisioned by drinking a psychedelic mushroom drink. They called this elixir Amrita, which meant nectar of the gods. The Greek words ambrosia and amphora also have their origin in the Sanskrit root ‘amrit’ and the Amanita mushroom.”

“Drinking Amrita would enable worshippers of Melqart to envision his son Ies, the ‘one light’, who could show them the way to the heavenly realm behind the Sun. In this way, Iesous functioned as a solar messenger and dying-resurrecting vegetation deity who appeared in visions to guide them into the sunlight to see his father, Lord Melqart. Ethnopharmacologists refer to this kind of vegetation god as a *Green Man*.”



## Chapter 2

### The Vegetation Gods

“O kay, so what you’re saying is Iesous was a plant god, what you call a Green Man, who was the son of...uh...the Sun.” Josh summarized, trying not to stare at the young woman as she finished her lab work. Her presence—the way she held her head and moved her hands—were graceful yet confident.

“Aye...a mushroom god just like Soma in the Rig-Veda,” the ethnopharmacologist replied. “Researchers like Gordon Wasson, John Allegro, and Carl Ruck have all confirmed Soma was originally an Amanita mushroom drink. Our analysis today proves this theory at least partially true since nearly half of the amphora contents were the fly agaric mushroom. If you ask me, I think it was also the original communion of the Essenes and early Christian sects.”

“How so?” he asked, already impressed by her depth of knowledge.

“You see, Dr. Savin, Iesous was just one in a long line of Green Men. All of the ancient dying-resurrecting vegetation gods were considered the son of the Sun. And each one bestowed enlightenment and rebirth through a visionary communion, what we ethnopharmacologists call an *entheogen* to mean ‘generating the divine within’. Many of these plant deities were associated with the moon and sea, sometimes emasculated to incorporate the feminine aspects of the resurrecting goddess. It makes perfect sense when you understand why the Soma mushroom was associated with the Moon.”

“Don’t tell me,” he interrupted. “Because mushrooms grow at night under moonlight?”

“Exactly! We find the same Green Man vegetation deity in virtually every culture around the world. He is the archetype behind the Egyptian story of Osiris and Horus; the Sumerian myths of Dumuzi; tales of the

Akkadian Tammuz; and, as we already discussed, the Phoenician Iesous and Melqart known to the Greeks as Dionysus and Heracles.”

“But that’s not all. The Hindu Green Man was Krishna or Kristos as was Guatama and Maitreya to the Buddhists. The emasculated Attis was the vegetation deity of the Phrygians just as Atunis or Adonis was the Green Man of the Etruscans. And don’t forget Bacchus, the legendary Roman god of the vine who was drunk all the time.”

“So, you see, Dr. Savin? It only makes sense that Christ Jesus and the prophet Muhammad were also visionary Green Men,” the young scientist said with clinical authority. Capping the specimen container, she grabbed a pen to write the analyzed compounds on the label.

“In this way, all the vegetation deities were progenitors for the Christ character Hesus-Kristos, a composite persona believed invented by Roman emperor Constantine in 325 AD at the First Council of Nicaea to unify his eastern and western empires.”

“A very interesting theory, Dr. Winegard,” he replied, “I read something this morning that linked Iesous with a similar line of communion gods. But do you seriously believe that Jesus Christ wasn’t a real human being? I mean, pretty much everyone I know believes that Jesus, along with Krishna and Muhammad, were all real people.”

“Everyone, that is, who never bothered to seriously look into the subject for themselves,” she snapped, surprised that such an educated man could still believe the Christ character was a historical figure. “Okay, so I will admit there may have been a real person known as the Teacher of Righteousness who led the Essene cult about a hundred years before the Biblical Christ, but this is not at all the character described in the Bible. To tell you the truth, there is simply no credible historical evidence for the Biblical Jesus outside of the Gospels, which were written much later. The Christ Jesus everybody knows today was in fact a composite character created from stories about other contemporary vegetation gods, namely Mithras, Attis, Krishna, and Osiris. None of these deities were living, breathing historical people—only visionary beings associated with different teacher plants and ritual communion potions.”

Handing the amphora sample back to Josh, she stepped over to a large bookshelf of botanical references. Removing the book entitled *Plants of the Gods*, she handed it to him and opened it up.

“Unlike the sky gods,” she said, flipping the pages to illustrations of psychoactive plants, “vegetation gods were considered the son of the Sun for one very simple reason. The plant kingdom sits between us and the Sun in the food chain. We cannot live by sunlight alone so plants, including both medicinal and psychoactive plants, must be consumed to be healed by the Sun’s life-sustaining light. For the ancients, the teacher plants had the power to save, redeem, and light the way to the Sun’s heaven. This was known as *enlightenment* or being *born again*.”

“As you can see in this book, Dr. Savin, many psychoactive plants were once considered sacred herbs, including different species of Acacia, Syrian Rue, Henbane, Peyote, Cannabis, Iboga, and dozens of other readily available psychotropic plants,” she said, flipping through a few more pages.

“Sacred fungi were also very popular in religious ritual and folklore, especially across northern lands where they proliferated. Various species of Psilocybe, Ergot rye fungus, and Amanitas are found represented in European folklore as the home of fairies, elves, and gnomes. Their home was believed to be inside the circular growth of mushrooms called an elf ring, which emerges at night out of an underground mycelia network.”

“In Norse mythology, the elf ring was named Asgard, the kingdom of Norse god Odin. According to legend, this was the realm of the light elves, dark elves, and dwarfs, which the Brothers Grimm of fairy tale fame thought were symbolic of the three most popular varieties of psychoactive mushrooms in Europe. So, you see Dr. Savin? The Nordic vegetation god Odin, the Allfather of elf-like creatures, was the archetype for the magical elf we know today as Santa Claus.”

“What?” he said, suddenly realizing what she was saying. He had never heard such a thing. He had always thought Santa Claus was a mythicized version of Saint Nicholas, a Catholic bishop in Myra.

“Truth is,” Dr. Winegard continued. “Santa Claus and Jesus are two sides of the same coin. Both are descended from a prehistoric mushroom god. Santa Claus, as our modern version of the elf-king Odin, was the

Green Man of the northern reindeer herders just as Jesus was the Green Man of the southern Semitic shepherders. It's all very easy to see once you can break out of your cultural programming."

"I have to be honest," he replied, shaking his head. "That has to be the most farfetched thing I've ever heard. The very idea that Jesus Christ is an elf-king living inside a psychedelic mushroom ring that everybody in the world thinks is Santa's elven toy workshop is just hard to swallow!"

"Aye, I know—it is quite absurd," the Scot giggled. "But consider that elves in Nordic folklore were described as craftsmen just as Jesus was described as a carpenter in the Bible. In fact, many DMT test subjects see elf-like creatures working on machinery in their visions. None of this will make sense until you accept the fact that entheogenic communions—powerful psychedelic potions—were at the center of religious practice in every ancient culture."

"But who is going to believe any of this without proof?" he replied, shrugging his shoulders. "Assuming you're right for a minute, how did it all begin? Where did the Rig-Veda and Soma communion originate? Did it start in Tibet or India? And how could these communion rites have made their way so far into the Mideast, Africa, and Europe?"

"To begin with, most scholars think the Rig-Veda began as an oral tradition much earlier than the rise of Indian civilization. Anthropological evidence suggests these entheological and astrotheological rites were brought into India by Indo-Aryans migrating east and south from the Pontic steppes across the Caucasus Mountains into Armenia and Anatolia, then outward in all directions from there. Anatolia, or Asia Minor, is the region just below the Black Sea bounded by the Caspian Sea to the east. Today, this land is mostly contained in Armenia and the Republic of Turkey. However, the origin of the Vedic religion as described in the Rig-Veda probably originated in Armenia in the northern valley of Mount Ararat. It was probably here where the use of Soma communion became ritualized into the Soma-Yajna fire sacrifice of the Vedics and their high ascension ritual of Vajapeya."

"In the original Vajapeya rite, ingredients of the entheogenic mushroom elixir Soma, or Haoma as the Indo-Iranians called it, were

sacrificed as oblations in a fire altar. Known as a kunda-vedi or simply vedi, the fire of Agni was believed to deliver the so-called ‘drink of immortality’ to the gods. The Rig-Veda even describes Soma as the favorite drink of the supreme sky god Indra.”

“Anyway, it was during this ascension ritual where the so-called *Sacrificer* would consume the Soma communion to summon visions of the gods. The ritual involved climbing up a ladder leaned against a ‘yupa pole’. At the top of this pole was a four-spoke ‘wheaten wheel’ referred to as the Sun Door. Later this became the Christian cross and Catholic crucifix symbolizing the communion sacrifice and ascension to heaven. As you can see, Christianity and its communion rite are fundamentally Vedic.”

“But while the Roman Church made every attempt to hide their connection to the entheogenic Soma communion rite and Christianization of the Vedic Soma god as Jesus Christ, the unofficial use of psychoactive substances in the Catholic Holy Communion continued across Europe until well into the Middle Ages. We know this from depictions of Amanita mushrooms in illuminated Christian manuscripts, stained glass windows, and church frescos—such as the fresco in the Plaincourault Abbey in Indre, France. This fresco, created in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, depicts Adam and Eve next to a Tree of Knowledge that looks exactly like a spotted Amanita mushroom. Apparently, a few monks did know the true origin of their religion and the association of Christ with Amanitas, but could only leave clues behind in frescos and illustrated manuscripts for fear of Church retribution.”

“So, you’re telling me that the Tree of Knowledge was actually a magic mushroom?” Josh asked flabbergasted. In just a few minutes, this woman had contradicted nearly everything he had ever believed about Christianity. Where had she learned this and why had he never heard any of it before?

“Dr. Winegard, it sounds like you think everything in Christianity is explained by psychedelic mushrooms—like Christianity was some kind of pagan mushroom cult!”

“That’s exactly what I think, laddie! John Allegro, a preeminent scholar on the Dead Sea Scrolls from right here in Oxford, first proposed

that Christianity originated as a mushroom cult. Take for instance the heavenly manna of Moses. Manna is described in the Bible as a ‘fine flake-like thing’ resembling the frost on the ground arriving with the dew in the night. The Israelites ground up this flakey fungus and pounded it into cakes, which they baked into thin wafers for communion. We know this from the Quran where Mohammad said ‘Truffles are part of the manna which Allah sent to the people of Israel thru Moses, and its juice a medicine for the eye.’”

“Astounding! I wasn’t aware of that. Why is this not common knowledge? How could something so important in human history as the origin of religion remain so well hidden into present day?”

“Dear boy, the reason is simple. The Roman Church was quite successful at suppressing the origin of their Holy Communion. Church Fathers outlawed the use of entheogenic communions very early on to stop the spread of competing religions, especially Roman Mithraism and the Cult of Cybele—both of which descended from Zoroastrianism and the ancient Indo-Aryan communion rites. These communion cults, quite popular in Rome during the early days of Christianity, were a serious threat to the Church and so expressly forbade in canon law.”

“But the outlawing of entheogenic communion actually began centuries earlier in Hebrew temple rites. We know the priests of Solomon’s Temple kept their manna locked away in the Ark of the Covenant in a cave underneath the Foundation Stone in a place called the Well of Souls. Ordinary worshippers were never allowed to eat the manna—only the High Priest and then only once a year.”

“During the annual celebration of Yom Kippur, the High Priest would burn offerings of cannabis, acacia, and mushrooms on the Foundation Stone, essentially ‘hot boxing’ the smoke. Then he would descend down a short flight of stairs into the Well of Souls where he would chant Talmud scripture and eat the manna communion to induce visions of the sky god Yahweh, known earlier as the Vedic god of the dead Yama. To help him see into heaven, the priest would look through two red and green seer crystals called the Urim and Thummim. The fact that these visions were caused by eating psychedelic mushrooms and

plants was, of course, a closely held clerical secret—a magical spell, if you will, of the High Priest.”

“It’s all beginning to make sense now,” Josh said excitedly. “Jesus was a psychedelic mushroom god or, to be more precise, a visionary being accessed through the mushroom. To reconnect with God, mushrooms were first sacrificed by fire to deliver them into heaven. Then, they were eaten in a mushroom infused bread or wine to induce a vision of God in Heaven.”

He began speaking faster now, his thoughts crystallizing into a whole new understanding of human history and humanity’s religious connection to the plant kingdom.

“So, when the Bible says ‘Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him’ or ‘Do this in remembrance of me’, we are literally being told to consume the mushroom communion to help us ‘remember’ or see Jesus, the son of the Sun, in a psychedelic vision. Is this your understanding, Dr. Winegard?”

“Aye, that pretty much sums it up, Dr. Savin,” she replied happily. She was actually impressed by how quickly the Princeton scientist had overcome his cultural programming and academic indoctrination to grasp the central role of entheogenic communion in religious tradition. It was almost as if he already knew it and just needed a little reminding.

“And,” he continued, “if the Hebrews and early Christian cults used the same communion formula to see Jesus and Yahweh as the Phoenicians did for Iesous and Melqart, or say the Greeks did for Dionysus and Heracles, then they probably saw the exact same visions and the exact same disincarnate being. They just gave him different names. Wouldn’t you say Dr. Winegard?”

“Probably so,” she nodded.

“Well then, that’s the answer!” he said excitedly, opening his hands above his head in epiphany. “If Jesus was just another name for Ies and Iesous, then the original Christian communion is probably the same elixir we found in the Phoenician amphora. Now all I need to do is find a way to reproduce this communion and maybe I will see the same vision as the Phoenicians and early Christians.”

Pausing to take it all in, Josh looked skyward as he shook his head in bewilderment.

“I just can’t believe I’m only now learning about all this. I feel totally betrayed by my schools...by society.”

“I know,” Dr. Winegard replied sympathetically. “I felt a little betrayed too when my father first told me about shamanic plants and rituals.”

“Your father?”

“Yes, my father Tommy was deeply involved in the mystery schools in Edinburg during the nineteen seventies and eighties. He wrote a number of books on esoteric subjects inspired by Armenian George Gurdjieff and the Fourth Way School. He’s the one who told me the great secret that entheogenic communions played a central role in early Scottish Rites and Templar practices.”

“I remember when he took me to see 15<sup>th</sup> century Rosslyn Chapel when I was thirteen. He pointed out every one of the 103 Green Man faces carved into its stone architecture, explaining how they were all related to the 13 lunar phases of the Moon over an 8-year Venus cycle—that and the mushroom communion. He told me the Sinclair family who built it used an entheogenic plant communion during their funerary services to summon the Hebrew goddess Asherah who would guide their dead barons to heaven. He claimed this was the most important and most secret Scottish rite in all of Masonry.”

“Well, my family are devout Methodists,” Josh replied, “and would never believe Jesus Christ was just a vegetation deity who appeared in psychedelic visions after drinking a mushroom communion. To them, the communion rite was symbolic of the blood and body of Christ, which incidentally I always felt was somehow tied to cannibalism. Now I see it was just the body and juice of the mushroom which was burned and eaten as a sacrifice.”

“You really can’t blame them for not understanding it, can you?” she replied sympathetically as she extended her hand to shake his. “Like everyone else, they were the product of centuries of Western Church indoctrination and simply didn’t have access to the kind of scholarly research we have today.”



“Dr. Winegard, you have been a delight and very enlightening,” he said as he shook her hand. “And thanks so much for taking the time to analyze my sample. Your results confirmed my suspicion. Now I just need to figure out a way to integrate and test this psychedelic, or rather ‘entheogenic’, communion with my magnetic neural stimulator.”

Shaking hands, her fingers were icy cold from working with the equipment. But her touch was strangely familiar—as if he had met her somewhere before.

“Say, I would very much like to spend more time with you...that is, to get your perspective and suggestions on my project, of course,” he said straightening himself. “Dr. Winegard, would you consider joining me for tea this afternoon so I can explain further?”

Peering into his eyes, the Scottish scientist seemed to be looking for some hidden sign. As she paused to listen to her intuition, he hoped she would not sense his attraction toward her—at least not yet.

“I have so much to do...and would definitely have to work late tonight if I were to take you up on your offer,” she sighed with a weary smile. “But I must admit I’m rather intrigued by your project and could use a cup of tea if I’m to last into the night. I know a little place nearby.”

“Excellent!”

“But, first you must agree to stop calling me Dr. Winegard and address me by my first name.”

Tilting her head slightly to the side as she continued to hold his hand, the green-eyed, redheaded Scot in the white lab coat smiled as she reintroduced herself.

“My first name is Màiri.”



## Chapter 3

### *The Radcliffe Camera*

*M*àiri's favorite Oxford restaurant was the delightful Vaults & Garden café located in the undercroft of St. Mary's university church in Radcliffe Square. Located only a short distance from the chemistry building, she often came here for their locally sourced organic ingredients and tasty vegetarian dishes.

Leading the way to her favorite wooden table beneath the café's gothic vaults, Màiri took the liberty of ordering afternoon tea service for both of them. Glancing only briefly at the menu, she ordered several vegan options in place of the typical scones and clotted cream. Josh figured her study of natural herbs had drawn her toward a vegan diet, thus her slim physique.

"I should probably begin by explaining why I'm visiting Oxford," Josh said after the waitress had left. "I'm looking for a way to improve my cranial magnetic stimulation system—what my students call the God Helmet."

"It is an apparatus I made from a modified snowmobile helmet fitted with a series of electromagnetic solenoids positioned over the temporal lobes of the brain. In controlled experiments with this helmet, my test subjects have reported a variety of mystical experiences and altered states of mind. Typically, they sense the presence of non-physical entities in the room around them, as if they were standing there about three feet off the ground. It isn't just mumbo jumbo—I've experienced the effect myself and I assure you it is quite real."

Pausing to stir his tea, he gave her a few seconds to digest what he said.

Màiri's eyes were transfixed on him, watching his every move as he poured, sweetened, stirred, and finally tasted his hot tea. This was her first chance to admire his unusual features. He had electric blue eyes

with longish dark brown hair that he combed straight back. His complexion was a natural olive skin tone, very different from hers, and his rugged facial structure was accented by a square jawline. He was definitely handsome, but not pretty.

Returning his cup slowly to its saucer, he glanced up to see if she was ready for him to continue. Taking a sip of her Lady Grey with both hands, she raised her eyebrows in anticipation.

“My hypothesis is our sense of self has two components that work together, one on each side of the brain, but with the left hemisphere normally dominant. I call this Vectorial Hemisphericity. The electromagnetic fields in the helmet disrupt this unified sense of self to allow inter-hemispheric intrusions. Some of my critics believe the sense of presence reported by my subjects is just the self in the left-brain recognizing the out-of-phase right brain. This may or may not be the case, but this still doesn’t explain the near universal perception of invisible beings hovering in the room.”

“Most intriguing,” Màiri interjected. “You know, Dr. Savin, the sensation of floating three feet above the ground is a common effect produced by certain teacher plants, such as peyote and the San Pedro cactus. It sounds like your God Helmet is generating the same effect as psychotropic compounds, only in a milder form.”

“Please, Màiri. Drop the doctor title and call me Josh,” the American insisted. “I’m not a defender of the accepted doctrine anyway.”

“Very well then, Josh,” she replied with a slight smile. “But seriously, I do think you are on to something very important with your God Helmet. My sense is the inter-hemispheric intrusions you describe—whether caused by chemical neurotransmitters or electromagnetic stimulation—open a portal to the perception of other dimensions. In fact, I would bet the entities reported in your studies are, in fact, a vague perception of entities typically reported in contemporary psychedelic studies, like those of Dr. Rick Strassman.”

Reaching simultaneously for a sip of tea, the two quietly pondered what this could mean.

“So, Màiri, what do you really think? Do you think these visions are entirely in the brain? Or are they occurring in other dimensions inhabited by, say, non-physical beings?”

“That’s the big mystery, isn’t it Josh? I read a study recently that suggested this very possibility. In the study, MRI brain scans were taken while subjects were under the influence of DMT. The result was contrary to what you might expect. It found that neural activity was inversely proportional to the intensity of the psychedelic experience. So, as the vision intensified to become fully immersive and ordinary reality disappeared completely, the neural activity of the brain actually *decreased* to a very low level. The study proposed that such intense psychedelic experiences might not be occurring inside the physical brain at all but somewhere else entirely—somewhere non-local, outside of space and time. The brain might simply be acting as an antenna to receive the vision; something like how a radio or television set receives a transmission. This is what Tesla believed, you know.”

“But how could the brain do this...transceive signals?” he asked, taking a bite out of his vegetarian finger sandwich.

“It would have to happen at the quantum level where virtual electrons seethe in and out of existence,” she suggested, pausing to take another bite. “One theory of quantum consciousness by Evan Harris Walker proposes our thoughts are guided by the behavior of these virtual electrons. As electrical charge builds on the synapses of neurons, our thoughts could be remote controlled by quantum effects something like a marionette on strings. This way, dreams and visions could be received through the lattice structure of space—the so-called quantum chromodynamic lattice—as a stream of virtual electrons tuned in by the brain’s unique DNA. Under this theory, your technology and my plants would act to disrupt or sever the coupling of consciousness with the brain and body, thereby shifting our attention to extra-sensory or non-physical perceptions.”

“So, what you’re saying Màiri is our conscious self is non-physical, what some call ‘non-local’, and that it tunes into our body something like a television to perceive the physical world and retrieve information from it. Then, when the connection is disrupted, we remain aware but only of

other dimensions,” he summarized, pausing to inspect the swirly patterns on his porcelain teacup.

“But wouldn’t this mean we have some kind of astral body and non-local consciousness projecting itself into this physical space-time?” he continued. “And, shouldn’t we then also have the ability to disengage from our body and travel into other dimensions?”

“I think so, Josh. We see this idea repeated time and again in the ancient mystery schools. But, I would go a step further,” she suggested, inspecting one of the triangular cucumber sandwiches. “I believe your technology could help control and amplify entheogenic visions...like those induced by the Phoenician elixir,” she said, pointing at the vial in his jacket pocket.

“This is precisely what I want to find out, but I need your help,” he said bluntly. “I need your knowledge of entheogenic plants and shamanic rituals to help me experiment with these altered states of consciousness. Furthermore, I need your specialized chemistry skills to help me obtain these substances and distill them down for use in controlled clinical trials. We could start by reproducing the Phoenician communion,” he said smiling mischievously, pulling the vial out of his pocket and dangling it over his teacup, “and then testing it...on me.”

Replacing the vial, he paused to think before saying what was really on his mind.

“Look Màiri, I know we don’t know each other yet...but...I would like you to seriously consider leaving Oxford and come to work with me at Princeton. Together we could create an entirely new field of psychonautic science,” he said, the excitement hardly contained in his voice. “I already have a sizable grant to study this and can give you a slight raise from whatever you’re making here at Oxford. Please consider this seriously and let me know what you think before I leave later this week. There’s no time to lose.”

Taken off guard by Dr. Savin’s unexpected job proposal, Màiri looked away conflicted. She knew this could be her one chance to do what she had always wanted to do. But leaving Oxford and her beloved Great Britain was a difficult decision.

“I’m more than a wee bit flattered by your offer, I have to tell ye. But you must know leaving Oxford would be a big move for me. I don’t know if I can do it, but I promise to think about it and let you know my decision before you leave. For now, let’s just take a little walk before I have to return to the lab. There’s something I want to show ye.”

Placing some cash on the table, Màiri led the way out of the café and across the square toward a round building. Along the way, she described what he was about to see.

“As part of the famed Bodleian Library system, the Radcliffe Camera up ahead was the first rotunda library in England,” she explained. “Inside its circular dome is kept an extraordinary rare book collection that spans two floors, called the Upper and Lower Cameras. By the way, ‘camera’ means ‘room’ in Latin.”

“It so happens this month the library is hosting a special exhibit of the Paris Eadwine Psalter, on loan from the Bibliotheque National de France. The Psalter is a 12<sup>th</sup> century illuminated manuscript written in Canterbury that contains Biblical images of humans interacting with spirits. While this is not in itself unusual, what is unusual is the spirits are surrounded by different kinds of mushrooms—psychoactive mushrooms, to be precise.”

Entering through the front door, she led the way to an exhibit area featuring a square glass display case. Walking up to the case, Josh looked down through the glass top to find an oversized leather-bound book lying open to a page filled with twelve lavishly illustrated and colored panels. Upon closer inspection, he noticed one of the panels contained a character drawing of Jesus Christ inside an almond-shaped decorative border, known as a mandorla or vesica piscis, floating over a garden of stylized red, blue, and tan mushrooms. Interestingly, the Christ figure was holding a cross over a communion amphora as if it was a bull’s-eye.

“This is pretty clear evidence for what you were explaining this afternoon, isn’t it?” Josh remarked. “That is, Jesus and mushrooms were once central to Christian worship.”

“Aye, it is strong evidence of a mushroom cult. And, there are many other illustrations just like this in the Psalter. As I mentioned back in the

lab, three colors and varieties of mushrooms are personified by the elves of Norse mythology and they're right here in this medieval prayer book."

"The red one is the *Amanita muscaria*, the blue one is *Psilocybe semilanceata* and the tan one is *Psilocybe cyanescens*. In the early Middle Ages, Christian monks probably made their communions according to traditional shamanic recipes using each of these mushrooms, depending on the occasion."

"Use of mushroom communions by medieval Christian Cathars is also well documented," Màiri continued. "For instance, Cathar cults in southern France and across southern Europe prior to the 13<sup>th</sup> century used a psychoactive drink called the *Consolamentum*. It was given to initiates to establish their faith and also to the dying to ease their transition into the afterlife. I would not be surprised to find this practice continuing even into present day—by the Pope himself, perhaps, during his visits to the tomb of Saint Peter. Why else would the Pope sometimes wear a red cloak, white smock, and Santa cap to look like an *Amanita*? He represents the elven mushroom shaman of Christianity—the one who communicates with Christ the Soma."

Stepping away from the Psalter, he motioned for Màiri to walk with him around the reading room of the Lower Camera. Looking up at the dome of the library as they strolled, it was difficult to imagine the wealth of rare information that must be contained in its book collection. So much hidden knowledge; so little time, he mused.

"Màiri, with what I have learned today I am more excited and impatient than ever. Hope I'm not assuming too much here, but I have a big favor to ask you."

She knew what was coming.

"Would you be able to recreate the Phoenician communion this week...while I'm still here at Oxford?" he pleaded. "I know you have a lot on your plate. And, I know it would be a huge imposition. But I need to experience the elixir's effect to determine how my technology might be used with it."

"That's asking a lot, laddie," she replied with a worried look, shaking her head. "My lab schedule is so packed right now. I would have to work on it when I should be sleeping and, even then, the botanical



supplies I'd need are illegal. Controlled substances, you know. I could lose my job and even go to prison."

"I know, I know. But it is so critical to my research," he pleaded, "or rather *our* research, if you join me."

Although concerned about the risks, Màiri was by nature a risk taker and could not help but be excited about the possibility of working with Dr. Savin at Princeton. Like any scientist she was eager to pursue a great mystery that had intrigued her for most of her life—an area of research totally off-limits, yet one she knew held unimaginable potential to revolutionize science and change humanity.

"Well...I do have a small supply of *Peganum harmala* seeds," she said slowly, thinking through what she might be able to do. "I can probably get an acacia sample from a horticulturist I know in Surrey. And I would need to beg an old friend in Scotland to overnight the *Amanita* to me—"

"Then you'll do it?" he blurted out like a child who had just been given permission to ride a roller coaster for the first time.

"Shhhh—this is a library! Okay, yes, I'll do it. But the best I can manage is three days," Màiri whispered tentatively. She was as curious as Josh to experience the elixir, but for now her job must be to remain in ordinary consciousness to shepherd him through the experience safely.

"That would be awesome Màiri. I'm so grateful! Consider it the first step in our future partnership."

Exiting the library, the two walked casually toward and then along a narrow road next to the Camera. Stopping suddenly, Màiri turned to look back at the old domed building.

"Look at that, Josh," she said, pointing up to the small round structure on top of the domed building. "What do you see?"

"A bell tower?"

"That's what most people would call it. Bell towers like that are actually based on the ancient Vedic temple design known as a *harmika*. It represents consciousness liberated from the body, a resonant process Vedics likened to a ringing bell. The Camera's belfry is really symbolic of the Cosmic Om chant used during yoga meditation to help induce out-of-body experiences. It also corresponds to the ushnisha or topknot that

protrudes from the crown of the Buddha's head. The word harmika is where we get our word harmony."

"Here—let's sit down for a minute so I can explain," she said, motioning to a nearby bench. "That Camera has a lot to do with religious communion rites and your interest in the visionary experience." Using her fingers, she drew geometries in the air to help Josh visualize what she was saying.

"In Vedic temples, called *stupas*, the harmika typically sits on a stepped pyramid structure symbolizing the sacred mountain of the Rig-Veda. This pyramidal tower or mountain is sometimes imagined inside a dome as a symbol of the Cosmic Egg of the universe. The top of the pyramid then protrudes through the top of the dome to create the harmika just as the Buddhist ushnisha protrudes through the top of the skull as the Buddha's topknot."

"Above the dome and harmika, a conical spire known as the Cosmic Tree continues to extend upward to a point where a *parasol* or sacred mushroom is placed, much like the star on top of a Christmas tree. The Cosmic Tree, of course, corresponds to the mushroom Tree of Knowledge as we saw in the Eadwine Psalter. But this tree symbolism is actually very ancient, taken from the Amanita gift pine of the Siberian reindeer shaman."

"While most church spires today have a Christian cross at their apex, the original Vedic stupa design has a trinity totem just above the parasol that includes the crescent Moon, the sphere of the Sun, and the so-called 'jewel' or 'torch' of Venus. In this way, this Vedic stupa design represents the spiritual link between Heaven and Earth. As a Western interpretation of the ancient stupa, the Radcliffe Camera dome and belfry also symbolize the re-linking or 're-ligioning' of human consciousness with the gods in a place called heaven."

"Interesting story, but what does this have to do with our little project?" Josh asked puzzled. Màiri's rapid-fire associations between religious architecture, harmonic symbolisms, planet gods, and psychedelic plants had frankly become a little overwhelming for him. Her ability to make sweeping connections between religious rites, plant

chemistry, sacred architecture, and esoteric symbols was more advanced than anyone he had ever met. She was a true polymath.

“Josh, this is my point. The Radcliffe Camera, along with every temple, pyramid, ziggurat, pagoda, cathedral, and medieval chapel in the world, is based on the ancient Vedic stupa template. This temple template has its origin in the geometry of the human body and, in particular, the cranial egg of the skull. You see...the stupa is essentially a giant Buddha body designed to amplify and transceive signals from the sky gods. The entire steeple totem is thus symbolic of the mind’s eye emerging from the crown to ascend to heaven, a liberating process achieved thru the power of the Soma parasol—something like a metaphysical Mary Poppins. This, dear lad, is the true story behind Christianity and Christ’s allegorical crucifixion and resurrection. I know it’s a lot to take in all at once.”

“Okay, now I see what you’re saying,” he replied. “The Camera and virtually every other religious or government building like it is a symbol of ascension, which you claim has its origin in entheogenic communion rites.”

“Exactly! And the process of ascension is likened to climbing a transcendental pyramid or stepped mountain, which the Vedics and Egyptians called Meru or Mera. Described in the Rig-Veda as an invisible tiered mountain reaching far into space, it was believed surrounded by seven mountain ranges separated by seven seas. Seven is thus the stupa’s height in tiers. Metaphorically speaking, the stupa and Mount Meru are equivalent and correspond to many other sacred mountains in the ancient world, such as Mount Ararat or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.”

Pausing once again to let all the connections sink in, Màiri continued.

“So, our Radcliffe Camera with its circular shape, inner library tiers, and domed roof topped with a belfry is really a thinly veiled symbolism of the Vedic stupa, transcendental mountain, and even the Buddha body. Do you see?”

“Yes, I see that now. But it seems like you’re leading up to something else.”

“Josh, I am telling you this because what you’re wanting to do is much more than just a scientific experiment. You are playing with pure consciousness here—with what it means to be a human being. It is not to be taken lightly. You will see unseen worlds and meet strange beings that may have been gods and demons to our ancestors. You are embarking on a dangerous journey into the heart of religion and you need to do it right.”

“This building before us was built as a reminder of the First Religion – a world religion that once stretched around the world. It was a story about a sacred mountain and cosmic tree stretching into the heavens where the gods live. It told us about a magical vegetation deity who was the son of the Sun—a Moon god conceived from the Sun’s light in the celestial womb of Venus and born from the sea. It was an idea spread around the world nearly seven millennia ago by the Noble Ones who set out in horse drawn chariots from the valley of Mount Ararat to share their entheogenic communions and temple building technologies. But more than anything, it was a story about the mysterious bond between humanity and the plant kingdom.”

“Is this what we’re doing then...” he asked, a big smile stretching across his face, “rebuilding the world’s first religion? Are we rediscovering the path to heaven from the bottom scrapings of an old jar?”

“Maybe so, Josh...Maybe so.”

## Chapter 4

### The Egersis

The haptics in his smart watch were vibrating. It was a call from Màiri, but he was too busy inspecting a collection of Canaanite and Phoenician Ashtart statues to answer right now. After learning of the amphora's contents, he had buried himself in the Ashmolean's collection in search of more clues. Now his findings were leading him toward an exciting new theory about psychoactive communions.

In particular, he had begun to establish a historical connection between entheogenic communions and the appearance of specific gods. At the same time, he was finding links between communion rites and astronomical conjunctions, temple acoustics, and iconic symbolisms. His sense was the ancient priests were using a combination of techniques to enhance and guide the entheogenic experience to meet certain gods.

Following anthropological references in the museum's archives, he had learned that every major goddess of antiquity from Hebrew Asherah and Egyptian Isis to Babylonian Ishtar and Sumerian Inanna had been associated with the planet Venus, Earth, or the Moon. Such goddesses were believed to have the power of resurrection much like the long line of Green Man gods. Scriptures and philosophical writings from different cultures suggested this goddess archetype often appeared in entheogenic visions like male vegetation deities. The main difference, from what he could tell, was the goddess communion rites were conducted during Venus retrogrades or full Moons rather than the solar solstice or equinox, as was the case with masculine deities.

Since astronomical conjunctions were typically equated with celestial intercourse and cosmic fertilization, worshippers drank the communion hoping to meet the fertility goddess who could resurrect them into the heavenly realm when they died, thus avoiding another

painful reincarnation on Earth. Josh figured the idols found in so many ancient cultures were used during these altered states to suggest or summon the desired visionary being. If so, such symbolisms were actually psychonautic tools used as part of an advanced entheogenic technology, not simply objects of worship.

Finishing his notes, Josh set one of the relics on the workbench and began digging around in his bag for the phone. He had a voicemail from Màiri asking him to drop by the lab that afternoon, saying nothing more. It had been three days since their meeting and he had been waiting to hear if she was successful in reproducing the Phoenician elixir from the amphora.

Heading out once again across the Oxford campus, he took the same route as before. This time, however, he was carrying a large umbrella to shield him from the afternoon rain. Unlike the soaking downpours typical of Princeton, it was the gentle and soothing shower unique to England. Josh thought it made Oxford feel much more earthy and medieval, as if he had been transported back to the time of Elias Ashmole himself.

Passing the Sheldonian Theatre and turning left on Parks Road he was reminded of the Radcliffe Camera just down the street behind him and what Màiri had told him about its stupa symbolism. It occurred to him that this entire campus might have been designed as a temple complex for the study of nature—an island of enlightenment in a world of ignorance. Yet, he figured few in Oxford knew this any more than they would know the pagan gods on the Sheldonian's ceiling were probably depictions of visions induced by magic potions and teacher plants. And who else, other than Màiri Winegard, would know the Camera was really a temple of the Buddha body and its bell tower the spiritual liberation of a psychedelic communion? It seemed to him that despite King Charles and Robert Streater's best intentions, ignorance had not been entirely cast out of Oxford University.

Arriving at the lab, Màiri was busy working on a distillation apparatus she had constructed to distil the Phoenician communion. Looking over the apparatus as he walked into the room, Josh was impressed with the network of glass flasks and tubing—all powered by a

very industrial looking Bunsen burner at one end. Standing there in a white lab coat with red hair flowing onto her shoulders, the young scientist had the appearance of a modern-day priestess conjuring spells before an alchemical altar.

Grinning widely as she turned to greet him, Màiri reached back to retrieve a small beaker at one end of the apparatus. Handing the beaker to Josh, her triumphant smile quickly turned serious as he held the beaker of dark liquid up to the light.

“Set and setting are everything, Josh. Ritual preparation is how we show our respect to the teacher plant. It is a sacred thing we must do.”

Taking his hand, Màiri led him to a corner of the lab she had partitioned away from the rest of the large room with an oriental screen. Motioning him toward an old recliner she had moved next to a small table, Josh sat down slowly before pushing back into the classic lazy boy position. Lighting a large candle on the table, she reached over to switch off the bright fluorescent ceiling lights.

Free now from artificial light, shadows danced under the spell of the flickering flame. The lab had become a sacred space and Màiri now spoke in a hushed, serious tone.

“Josh, this will be your incubation chamber for the duration of your journey. From this womb you will be born again.”

To help create the ideal meditation environment, she had arranged a small altar table next to the recliner that she called a *vedi*. Covered with an ornately embroidered Buddhist altar cloth, she had decorated the makeshift altar with an assortment of religious relics.

“This is a statue of the Vedic goddess Shukra,” she explained. “And those two quartz crystals are seer stones I purchased years ago in Romania. That brass votive pyramid represents the Sri Yantra Meru, a symbol of the transcendental mountain to heaven. The wooden slat is, of course, an ordinary incense burner.”

“But what is that?” he asked, referring to a small iron doorknob object.

“That, laddie, is a Dorje. It represents lightning and the path to heaven. I’ll explain it all later but now we must begin.”

Lighting the frankincense as Josh closed his eyes to relax, Màiri began to recite her favorite hymn to Venus from the Rig-Veda.

“See, Vena, born in light, hath driven hither, on chariot of the  
air, the Calves of Prsni.

Singers with hymns caress her as an infant there where the  
waters and the sunlight mingle.

Vena draws up her wave from out the ocean, mist-born, the fair  
one’s back is made apparent,

Brightly she shone aloft on Order’s summit: the hosts sang  
glory to their common birthplace.

Full many, lowing to their joint-possession, dwelling together  
stood the Darling’s Mothers.

Ascending to the lofty height of Order, the bands of singers  
‘sip the sweets of Amrta.”

“The time has come to accept the communion,” Màiri instructed.  
“Drink it now—all of it,” she urged, as she continued her recitation.

“Knowing her form, the sages yearned to meet her: they have  
come nigh to hear the wild Bull’s bellow.

Performing sacrifice they reached the river: for the Gandharva  
found the immortal waters.”

Taking the vial, Josh downed the dark liquid in a single gulp. It  
tasted a little murky, but only mildly unpleasant. Handing the empty  
beaker back to Màiri with a slight wince, she nodded and held it above  
her head as an offering.

“The Apsaras, the Lady, sweetly smiling, supports her Lover in  
sublimest heaven.

In her Friend’s dwelling as a Friend she wanders: she, Vena,  
rests on his golden pinion.

They gave on thee with longing in their spirit, as on a strong-  
winged bird that mounteth skyward;

On thee with wings of gold, Varuna’s envoy, the Bird that



hasteneth to the home of Yama.  
Erect, to heaven hath the Gandharva mounted, pointing at us  
their many-coloured weapons;  
Clad in sweet raiment beautiful to look upon, for she, as light,  
produceth forms that please us.  
When as a spark she cometh near the ocean, still looking with a  
vulture's eye to heaven,  
Her luster, joying in its own bright splendour, maketh dear  
glories in the lowest region.”

By the time Māiri had finished the hymn, Josh felt as if something had changed. A distinct buzzing had filled his ears and he could see patterns suspended in the air. Looking at Māiri, strange Maori patterns were now overlaid on her face, giving her the distinct appearance of a tribal priestess. Looking around the room, the walls had begun to breathe in and out—throbbing to the rhythm of his heartbeat. The relics on the vedi had also begun to shimmer and animate slightly, as the seer crystals captured and amplified the warm yellow glow of the candle in the surrounding haze of the lab's atmosphere.

Then with a sudden involuntarily inhalation, the entire room began to collapse inward on itself. Swelling into a massive tidal wave, the liquefied room crashed over him in a rush of hot air. In an instant, the lab was gone and Josh found himself in another place.

He was in a tunnel, alive with swirling colors, undulating fractals, and geometric patterns. It was the most impressive visualization of mathematics he had ever seen, proving in an instant the presence of a greater intelligence apart from his own. In his periphery he noticed something moving, an entity of sorts. It was composed entirely of geometry with a head shaped something like an inverted star. The creature seemed to be trying to blend in with the fractal patterns and colors, shifting his position whenever they did. Curious about what it was, Josh started to move in that direction when a female voice suddenly spoke inside his head.

“Don't bother with him—walk to the end of the Hall.”

“What?” Josh said to himself, wondering if the voice was just his own paranoid imagination.

“Ignore the Baphomet and continue down the Hall,” the voice said sternly.

Following the voice’s instructions, he floated down the hall toward a bright light that opened onto a stone boat dock at sunrise. Before him stood an ancient wooden sailing vessel moored to the side, swaying in the breeze under a deep blue sky. Sunlight glinted off the white crests of a stunning aqua reef as waves rippled into lacey patterns that stretched far out to the horizon.

To his right stood a group of dark-skinned men dressed in loincloths. They were loading provisions onto the ship, apparently in preparation for a long journey. For what purpose had the potion brought him here? He wondered. Why had he been transported back in time to take an ocean voyage?

Surveying the scene, he could discern every detail. He could also focus and zoom into anything he wished, though it was difficult to sustain for more than a few moments. His human eyes were nowhere near this level of power and precision.

He could also hear conversations at a distance, though they spoke a language he did not understand. One thing was certain—this was no dream. In fact, it was more real than anything he had ever experienced during his time on Earth.

Just then a tall, rather handsome man in his early thirties approached two taskmasters at the end of the dock. Barking orders to the men, he turned to walk toward Josh. The man’s skin was dark, but still lighter than the others. He had blond shoulder length hair that draped loosely around a ragged beard. Dressed in a light brown toga and leopard skin cape, Josh figured the man must be a king, or at least the ship’s captain.

Stopping midway, the man motioned for him to follow and then turned to walk back to the ship. Without thinking, Josh followed. His mind’s eye simultaneously took off on a cinematic orbit around the ship to inspect the scene from different angles. No longer restricted by a body, he had the distinct feeling he was looking through a camera drone inside what might be a Hollywood movie set. Returning to a first-person

perspective after a few spins, he crossed the gangplank to board the vessel. This is when the man turned to speak.

“How are you, my old friend? The vessel of *Aramazd* welcomes you.”

Josh tried to answer but could only manage a guttural sound. He did not yet know how to control his disembodied voice.

“Today we journey to Armorica beyond the Pillars of Aril, then west to the furthest land of Amurru. Behold!” the man said, sweeping his arm along the horizon. “The answer you seek lies beneath the water.

But no sooner had the man started to explain the purpose of his voyage than the buzzing sound returned, rendering the captain’s speech only partly intelligible.

“Verily I tell you, for as sure as—”

“—you will use the lightning of vajra—”

“—over again, held in sequentia—”

“—will be hailed at the end of the bloody conflict.”

Josh could not understand a thing the man was saying. The incessant buzzing in his head was drowning out everything. All he could do was stare at the man’s lips, which now seemed to be moving in slow motion.

Pointing at the Sun, the man leaned in to whisper into Josh’s left ear as the entire scene began to fade away.

“—strength of Melqart be with you—” he said, as the lab suddenly materialized before his wide-open eyes.

While there was still some residual patterning on the walls, Josh’s out-of-body experience was over. Confused and disoriented by what had just happened, he looked to Màiri for an explanation.

“You were gone for twenty-two minutes,” she said matter of fact. “Can you remember anything?”

“Yes! It...it was astonishing!” he replied, rubbing his eyes. “I’ve never experienced anything like that in my life! I was completely immersed in another reality. And I may have seen what the Phoenicians and early Christians saw after taking the same communion.”

Straining to clear his mind of the elixir’s effects, Josh continued.

“At first, I passed through a fractal hall filled with a whirlpool of colors where I saw a strange geometrical creature. A female voice told me it was Baphomet and to continue down the hall.”

Màiri nodded, offering her interpretation.

“Sounds like the Hall of Colors—a transitional phase often reported on initial entry to an entheogenic vision. Baphomet is the medieval name for the Sabbatic Goat. During the 11<sup>th</sup> century, French Pope Sylvester II had a mechanical talking head made of brass fashioned after such a vision. It was built as a prophetic device in hopes that the spirit would speak to him through it during his communion rite. Later gifted to the Knights Templar, the Baphomet automaton was soon recast by the Church as a satanic idol when they persecuted the Templars. I think the entity you saw was this Sabbatic Goat archetype,” she concluded. “Please go on.”

“Then, after passing through the hall, I arrived on what looked like an ancient ship dock where I met a man—a Phoenician ship captain or king perhaps—who spoke...to...me,” he said distractedly, suddenly mesmerized by how his hands left tracers in the air whenever he waved them. “But I can only remember fragments of what he said. He mentioned something about the ‘lightning of vajra’ while pointing to the sky. I also recall him saying ‘held in sequentia’ and ‘end the bloody conflict’ before the vision ended.

Pausing to consider what this vision could mean, Màiri again offered her interpretation.

“The word ‘vajra’ refers to an ancient Vedic symbol for lightning. It was known in different cultures as the thunderbolt of Indra or lightning of Zeus—even Thor’s hammer. In fact, an entire sect of Buddhism called Vajrayan was founded on it,” Màiri explained, stopping abruptly to reach for the barbell-like object from the vedi.

“The vajra design is like this Dorje,” she said, holding the relic out to Josh. “The doorknob pattern on either end is typically carved by Tibetan monks into the pommel of a *kīla* ritual dagger. Known as a *vajra-kīla* in this configuration, the dagger is used by Vedic priests to mark the location of a lightning strike on the ground to be used as the

center point for a Vedic temple complex. This spot is where the yupa pole and Sun Door are erected. Remember?”

“Yes...the Vajapeya ascension ceremony you told me about,” he replied, reaching up to try and grab something in the air.

“Well this spot, interpreted as the phallic center point of a giant human figure on the ground, was believed to represent a bridge to heaven. Not coincidentally, psychedelic mushrooms grow around lightning strikes due to an electrical activation of their underground mycelia network. In this way, the vajra-kīla also represents the sacred mushroom delivered by the gods through the lightning. This is the parasol or manna from heaven—the immortalizing food of the gods said to reveal the pathway to the heavenly realm.”

“But some believe the vajra is more than this,” Màiri continued. “It can also be understood as an electromagnetic field that acts like a template to guide the cellular growth patterns of life. For instance, mushrooms grow according to this doorknob shape—what biochemist and plant physiologist Rupert Sheldrake would call a morphogenesis. The same is true for tree leaves and animal organs.”

“But no matter which interpretation you prefer, the vajra-kīla was considered by ancient cultures to open a metaphysical door into non-physical realms. It was called the ‘thunder nail’ because holy men believed it had the power to capture or ‘nail’ spirits, inspiring the legend of Solomon’s secret ‘keys’ said to control demons.”

“Okay then, what about his reference to ‘held in sequentia’?” Josh asked. “What could that possibly mean?”

Màiri shrugged, “Ah dinnae ken—something to do with a numerical sequence maybe?”

“The last thing the man told me was: ‘May the strength of Melqart be with you’. Isn’t that the name of the Phoenician sun god you told me about?”

“Aye, exactly. This entity you saw may have actually been Melqart, or more likely his son Iesus. Josh, it seems to me like you have just experienced the so-called awakening of the *Egersis*.”

Pausing to consider the mind-blowing implications of his encounter with a Phoenician god, he glanced at his wristwatch. Surprisingly, it was

embedded in his wrist as if he himself had now become a clockwork mechanism.

“Oh my God! It just happened again,” he said, showing Màiri his bionic wrist.

“What happened again?”

“It was 10:11 when I arrived and now it’s exactly 11:11. Lately I’ve been seeing a lot of elevens when I glance at the clock—any clock. It’s as if everything I do these days is mechanically synchronized with the number eleven.”

“I’ve heard of others tuning into elevens like this. It’s called the *time prompt phenomenon*,” Màiri said quietly. “Ethnobotanist Terrance McKenna said that such synchronicities mean you’re following the right track for your life, but personally I think it has something to do with the elves.”

Josh raised his left eyebrow as he looked at her askance.

“Don’t look at me that way!” she said defensively. “I’m not crazy. The English word eleven comes from the Germanic word ‘ainalif’ and Norse ‘alfar’, meaning elf.”

“Wait! Tune in?” he said excitedly, still saucer-eyed from the potion. “Maybe the elves are prompting me to do something—like a Facebook poke.”

Scooping up the two seer crystals from the vedi, he peered through them toward the candle flame while twisting them back and forth like a kaleidoscope. Through these, the flickering shadows seemed alive, laughing like mischievous clowns. Slumping back into the recliner, he now knew what the elves were trying to tell him.

“There is a connection between plant and animal consciousness that the God Helmet can bridge. Tuning the electromagnetic field to the plant’s resonant frequency should increase lucidity and improve memory during visions.”

Sitting upright again, he carefully placed the crystals back on the vedi. He knew what he needed to do.

“You must help me return to the ship to ask the Phoenician what he said. We were meant to work together, Màiri—you and I. You know this

to be true, don't you?" Josh implored, his voice still intense from the communion potion. "Have you made up your mind yet?"

She had been mulling over his proposal since the day they met. Over the past year, she had become increasingly discouraged by the absence of funding at Oxford and, more importantly, a complete lack of interest in her ethnopharmacological research. There was no time to lose if she was to discover something important in her chosen field—this she knew. Research into the applications of psychoactive compounds had taken off like a rocket in the United States and the window of opportunity would soon close if she didn't move fast.

"Well, why the hell not," Màiri finally blurted out with a sigh of relief. "I would be most honored to come work with ye at Princeton. We do make a good team, dun't we?" she added with an impish grin. "Like you, I am quite sure we are on the threshold of a major scientific breakthrough in inter-dimensional travel and communication. But to be totally honest, I'm more interested in cracking an even bigger mystery.

"Oh yeah? What's that?"

"You know—is there life after death?"





## Chapter 5

### What is Real?

Everything became a whirlwind of change once Màiri decided to leave Oxford for America. In just two weeks, she had quit her job at the university; packed up her small flat; and flown to Princeton, New Jersey to search for an apartment. Three weeks later she was still living out of boxes, but very happy with her decision to move. The people she had met at the university so far were very friendly and extremely open minded, making this school a much better research environment for psychedelic studies than stuffy old Oxford.

The Savin Group Laboratory, a modest room on the fourth floor of the Princeton Neuroscience Institute, was quite different from what she was accustomed. It was filled with a wild assortment of tools and instruments. Wires and cables were running all over the floor and even strung thru the air between tables to enable various experiments.

Workbenches for mechanical fabrication were positioned along one wall with a workspace for electrical components on an adjacent wall. A third wall had an observation window that looked into a converted closet, which Dr. Savin dubbed the psychonautic chamber. It was furnished with a well-worn brown Barco lounge. A built-in workbench in front of the observation window held two computer displays and various biotech devices, including an EEG system for use in God Helmet experiments. Here Màiri would be able to monitor Josh's brainwave readings and control the feeds into the helmet.

Having set up a makeshift botanical refining lab in the one remaining corner of the main lab, Màiri was already making good progress distilling an initial supply of psychoactive plants and mushrooms she received the day before from her vegetalismo in the western United States. By the end of the week she had already produced another small supply of the Phoenician communion elixir for Josh's next

experiment. This time, however, she had improved the preparation method, making it pure enough to mix with a saline solution suitable for intravenous injection. Administering the communion intravenously instead of orally, she believed, would make dosing far easier to control and the experience much more immediate and powerful.

Josh had made a few improvements of his own to the God Helmet. He had added high-resolution earphones and an old pair of Meta Quest2 VR goggles to deliver a multi-modal “flickering” display known as the Ganzfeld effect. Based on a sensory deprivation method developed in the 1930s by psychologist Wolfgang Metzger, this effect involved immersing the subject in an unstructured, uniform audio and video stimulation field capable of inducing hallucinations. To further enhance the effect, Josh had added a variable capacitor to pulse the audio-video feed with the helmet’s electromagnets at a flicker rate of 111 hertz—a frequency chosen for a very good reason.

He had read that Pythagorean adepts, along with other early Greek philosophers such as Plato, Parmenides, and Empedocles, used a similar sensory deprivation technique known as incubation. Josh had learned of this practice from a 1996 study entitled *Acoustical Resonances of Assorted Ancient Structures* by the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research group directed by his friend and colleague Robert Jahn. The study found that many ancient temples, such as the five-thousand-year-old Newgrange temple in Ireland and the six-thousand-year-old Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum caves in Malta, had been purposely tuned to a prime resonant frequency of 111 hertz. Jahn and his team theorized this was done to enhance the meditative effect of resonant chant throughout the cave complex.

Then in 2008, a UCLA cognitive sound study by Ian Cook entitled *Ancient Architectural Acoustic Resonance Patterns and Regional Brain Activity* had found this same frequency switches focus from left-brain language centers to the right-brain centers associated with intuition, empathy, and imagination. From this and the ancient structures study, Josh had deduced that a 111-hertz flicker in the multi-modal Ganzfeld effect and God Helmet field might help focus and control his visions.

For their first experiment at Princeton, Màiri had again prepared a small table next to the lounge for use as a vedi. She wanted the set and setting to be as comfortable and familiar as possible, decorating it once again with the same altar cloth, votive candle, and relics from her old lab at Oxford. She figured these tokens might help Josh conjure the same visionary being.

“If I’m going to meet Iesous tonight, I best hold onto these,” Josh said half in jest, picking up the hexagonal seer crystals. “They seemed to help last time.”

Màiri smiled and nodded only slightly as she motioned for him to take his seat in the recliner.

“That’s why crystals are used in reiki healing,” she said, lighting the candle. “Quartz crystals focus resonant energies, including the subtle flow of Chi through the body.”

Continuing her preparations, she attached EEG electrodes to his scalp. This would help her monitor any unusual spikes or patterns that might correlate with specific visions during the experiment.

Handing Josh the God Helmet, Màiri connected the color-coded wires dangling from the back into the female sockets of the grey cable that ran under the door to the monitoring station outside. With the helmet in place and connected, she turned to prepare his left arm for injection, a skill she had learned while caring for her father.

Tying a rubber tourniquet around his bicep, she had him make a fist to pop the vein. Swabbing the antecubital area inside his elbow, she gently picked up the hypodermic; squeezed out any excess air; and skillfully inserted the needle through his skin. Loosening the tourniquet once the needle was inserted, she removed the hypodermic and connected the needle to a clear tube running into a drip bag filled with a small quantity of the refined Phoenician solution. All she needed now was the green light from Josh to open the valve and send him on his journey.

Gripping the seer crystals in both hands, Josh closed his eyes to clear his mind. Knowing what was about to happen, he was a little more nervous this time and needed a few minutes of meditation to clear his mind. Taking several deep breaths, he exhaled a final time and nodded to

Màiri to open the valve. Turning the knob slowly on the IV tube until it reached 100%, Màiri slipped quietly out the door to take her place at the monitoring station outside the window.

Pushing the Play button to start playback of the Ganzfeld signals into Josh's helmet and goggles, she could only imagine what he must be feeling right now. It must be an exhilarating blend of trepidation and sheer excitement, she imagined.

In only a few seconds, Josh could hear the same buzzing sound as before. Then suddenly—violently and without warning—he felt a kick in his upper back that thrust him into an altered state of consciousness. Looking down, he was astonished to find himself now outside of his body, floating some three feet above it in the air. But then something even more astonishing happened.

The room folded in upon itself as before, only this time collapsing into a flat two-dimensional layer and sliding into something that looked like a deck of cards. It was as if he was now completely outside of the physical universe in some intermediate nexus hovering above a stack of doorways spread out like playing cards on a glass table. But before he could choose which doorway to enter, Josh found himself being sucked down into one by some unseen force.

Passing through a curtain of zigzag Aztec patterns into the same Hall of Colors as before, he continued without stopping to again arrive in another earth-like world. It was the same Phoenician sailing vessel as before only now in full sail, plying thru a sparkling cobalt sea. A mild breeze swept across his face, immersing him in the unmistakable aroma of fresh sea brine.

This time he could see the vision with even greater clarity and lucidity than before. His and Màiri's improvements were obviously working. Surface patterns were less jittery and his emotions more stable. He also seemed to have acquired a new capability. He could actually see through the surface of objects and fly around at will, which he tested by lifting himself off the wooden deck a few feet.

Looking down at what would normally be his right hand and arm, he was surprised to find that it too was transparent. Inside his astral arm he could see an underlying standing wave layer oscillating just below the

surface. Alternating red and green—or rather pink and chartreuse—the substratum was organized as a cubic lattice of resonating waves moving outward to his fingertips and back with nodes forming at each joint of what would have been the skeleton of his physical body. In fact, he could now see a resonating egg-like structure surrounding his entire astral body within a larger cardioid Gaussian field resembling the geometric fractal pattern known as the Mandlebrot Set.

He was no longer separate from the vision. Instead he saw himself as an integral and fully connected part of his surroundings. No matter how he moved, he was invisibly attached to the objects around him, which shifted and bent slightly as he walked or turned. It was a very odd sensation.

The sailors were interconnected too, creating a single elastic entity with the ship and ocean. Concentrating to try and understand the mechanics of what was going on, Josh realized that everything on the ship was part of a single flexible user-interface stretched over an elaborate machine operating just beneath the surface. The machine itself was shaped like an upright crescent that seemed to function as an abstract trigonometric skeleton for the sailing vessel.

Josh figured this must be how every reality worked. He was seeing into the Machinery of the World, some kind of invisible archotyping mechanism underlying material objects. In the case of this wooden ship, the tree archetype was deconstructed by people into planks and joined together with wooden pegs or metal nails that were also reduced from larger archetypes. These combined archetypes then created new composite archetypal mechanisms from which the sailing ship could materialize. Of course, the people themselves must also be the product of archotyping machines—ones that had evolved inside the fabric of space-time. The Machinery of the World must have the ability to reconfigure itself, he reasoned, as it learned and evolved.

Josh recalled hearing of a possible archetypal realm at work behind physical reality from interviews with leading physicists such as Hans-Peter Dürr, former head of the Max Planck Institute for Physics, and his friend Robert Jahn of Princeton. These men had long claimed wave-particle duality manifests at the macro level as body-spirit duality. Just as

a particle stores its information on its wave function, so too must the brain upload information into the quantum field. In this way, consciousness lives on in the field as archetypes or “spirit” after the physical mechanism is gone. He could see this happening all around him now. Everything was interconnected and conscious at an archetypal level, fully aware of itself and its surroundings.

The ancient sailing ship, blue sky, ocean, sailors, everything must be a holographic simulation, albeit a very high-resolution one, projected from some self-transforming archotyping machine onto the quantum screen of three-dimensional space. The actual source of this projection he could not tell, at least not yet, but it would have to originate from some coherent light source, some kind of unfathomable lasing source, in order to produce a holonomic reality like this.

Unlike his previous vision, Josh had arrived at the rear of the sailing ship where the leopard-cloaked Phoenician was manning the steering oar. The man was again barking orders to the oarsmen and sailors who, with the steady tempo of an intrepid flautist at the bow, were methodically tacking the ship against a strong southwesterly wind.

Although Josh could not recognize the man’s words, he was still somehow able to understand the meaning. Everything was perfectly lucid now. He could think with the deepest possible clarity and recall every detail. If he wanted answers, it was now or never.

“Is this real? Are—you—real?” Josh inquired, approaching the man.

“There are three ways to know reality,” the Phoenician replied without taking his eyes off his target on the horizon. “The Absurd Way, the Sensorial Way, and the Gnostic Way.”

“What is the Absurd Way?”

“The Absurd Way tells us that no possibilities exist. It means I don’t exist, you don’t exist, and this world does not exist. But since we speak of existence, as we speak now, we certainly must exist and thus the Absurd Way is irrational.”

“What then is the Sensorial Way?”

“The Sensorial Way says that some possibilities exist while others do not. It implies that physical senses and the human mind are the only way to determine what is real. Yet this cannot be true, as the universe has

existed long before human beings. Thus, the Sensorial Way is clearly irrational too, for it says that human perception must precede its own creation.

“Well then,” Josh reasoned as he turned to face the Phoenician, “the answer must be the Gnostic Way.”

“Yes,” the man replied, “the Gnostic Way is the true and correct way. It states that all possibilities exist. Elves, dragons, aliens, and I exist only in your mind, which itself is the face of all that is. These things are all real and never can you say the things that exist in our mind do not exist. This is consistent and sensible as it tells us all things, not just some things, exist. It is the one correct way and only way that is rational and coherent.”

“Then for everyone who has seen you, as I do now, you are real,” Josh replied, “And your world is real, even though it is but an illusion—a fabrication. What then is the nature of this machine? Is it a control room? If so, controlled by whom?”

“Worlds like this one are created by only one of countless machines that manifest substance from the Clear Light of intent,” the Phoenician replied. “It is the Gandharva who operate the machinery. But only you can decide what your world will become—you who make it become as it is; to make it into whatever pleases you.”

“Then are you the one who decided what this world would become?” Josh asked, as he traced the horizon with his right hand, “For it is more beautiful than anything I have seen before.”

“Yes, but only with the agreement of those who share it with me, including you,” the Phoenician replied, turning to look eastward as he barked another tacking command. “There are many such realms, each inhabited by their own intelligence-collective. Yet they are as real as your own world. They have been visited by your people many times under guidance of the teacher plants just as the teacher plants have sent you to me now.”

Pausing for a few moments to ponder what the Phoenician had said, Josh continued his line of questioning.

“Then—I suppose you are the great teacher they call Iesous?” Josh asked slyly.

“The Phoinikes knew me as Ies, the messenger of Melqart, yes,” he replied. “But the Graecus knew me as Heracles whom they also recognized as the son of He-Zeus. I am born of the One Light known by many names.”

“And to the Jews?”

“I am Yeshua, the Hebrew Eucharist, and Christ teacher.”

“Then we exist now in a state of Christ Consciousness and you are the visionary archetype some call Jesus,” Josh reasoned.

“Yes—have you not felt the awakened Kundlini arise from your sacrum?” Iesous replied. “Can you not see yourself now as the winged uraeus tethered to your material projection. Is your presence here not a construct of your own gnosis?”

Pausing to crank the wheel a quarter turn in another tacking maneuver, the Phoenician continued.

“My brother, truth is found in the teacher plants whose Source lies at the center of the Sun? Do you not depend on the Sun’s light to exist? Do you not thank the Green Men of the plant kingdom for your sustenance every day? Is not the sky your womb and your seed the sunlight incarnate?” the teacher said as he faced the burning orb. Closing his eyes, he embraced his father’s warmth.

“Any teacher can show you the path to Source as I can,” he continued with eyes closed. “It is spoken of in your most ancient writings. But you need only see through the illusion of Self—the temporary realm of separation, desire, and sensation—to reenter the One Light. This is for you to decide.”

“But for my world—can there ever be peace?” Josh inquired, feeling his time with Iesous slipping away.

Turning the wheel south to tack in the opposite direction, the Phoenician gave his final answer.

“As I have told you before, the lightning of the vajra will calm the seven seas of Amurru. When held in sequentia, it can end the bloody conflict. Seek Rambha, the Gandharva consort and Queen of Elphame, and she will give you the Sequence you need.”

Suddenly it was over; the vision was gone. Returning to his physical body, he was exhausted—too drained for the post session interview they



had planned. All he could do now was sleep, falling into a surreal dream landscape that was but a shadow of the beautiful world of the Phoenician. If only he could dream in that heavenly world. If only.

Removing the helmet, EEG electrodes, and syringe, Màiri blew out the candle and covered the scientist with a blanket to let him sleep it off on the recliner. Returning to the lab, she paused to glance back before closing the door. There was something special about this man. She felt like they had known one another before, maybe in a previous life.



## Chapter 6

### Of Seven Heavens

“I met Iesous again,” Josh announced the next morning, squinting at the bright light as he emerged from the psychonautic chamber. Concerned that Josh might need her assistance, Màiri had slept the night at her desk. Sitting up quickly, she rubbed the sleep from her eyes as she stumbled over to the Mr. Coffee to flip on the switch. Knowing they would need a strong jolt in the morning, she had prepared a batch of her favorite Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee the night before. It was expensive, but well worth the price.

“Well? What did he say?” Màiri asked, as she retrieved two 500-milliliter borosilicate beakers from the chemistry cabinet to use as coffee mugs.

“I asked the Phoenician if he was the one known as Jesus. He said he was.”

“Not much of a surprise there,” Màiri replied, gazing blankly as the dark liquid dribbled slowly into the Pyrex coffee pot.

“No, not from what you told me,” Josh replied with a smile. “Still, it takes time to unlearn what you’ve been taught all your life and accept the idea that Jesus was a visionary being and not a historical person. Just as you predicted, he said he was the Christ Consciousness of the teacher plant known by many names. I’d bet he appears differently depending on which psychoactive plants are used and in what blend, explaining the different representations of Green Men across different cultures.”

“Aye, but did you learn what you couldn’t recall before? You know—what he said about *in sequentia*?” Màiri asked, pouring the Blue Mountain java up to the 400-milliliter mark on one of the beakers and handing it to Josh.

“Yes, I remember everything this time, though I’m still not sure what it all means.” he replied, blowing little puffs of steam off the dark

liquid's surface. The coffee gave him a sense of normalcy after the intensity of his surreal visionary experience.

Overall, he felt quite good this morning; calm and contemplative, not at all disoriented like the last experiment. This could only be due to the God Helmet, he was certain—that and Màiri's improved distillation process.

"This is totally insane, but I could actually see how the vision was being created through some kind of archotyping machine, which the Phoenician explained was a light projection of intent. He said I should visit Rambha, the Gandharva Queen of Elphame, to find what he called *the Sequence*. I think he told me it could help calm things on Earth."

"The Gandharva?" Màiri repeated, raising her eyebrows. "Josh, Gandharva is the Vedic name for elves. In Hindu lore their consorts are the Apsaras or feminine water sprites. Apsara sprites are essentially feminine elves or fairies said to protect the Soma mushrooms. Rambha is the name for the queen of the Apsaras, so she is your Queen of Elphame—the land of the elves. We Scots know her as Nicneven, the Gyre-Carling Crone."

"As for the Gandharva, they are described as having superb musical skills and for being clever builders just like the Nordic elves. But they were also pranksters and sometimes deceitful—not to be trusted," Màiri explained as she sipped the black Jamaican brew from the edge of her beaker.

"Some interpret their musical skills as a veiled reference to the Sound Current, what Vedics call Shabda, the fundamental resonant frequency of the universe. As sons of Brahma and the primal creative force, the Gandharva are the ones believed responsible for creating the illusion of reality. McKenna called them 'self-transforming machine elves' who are able to 'sing Faberge Eggs into existence' from their mouths. Others say they control the Celestial Monochord that transforms potentiality into certainty. Perhaps this Monochord is the holographic projection machine you mentioned."

"But whatever they are, you're going to need a different entheogen to reach the machine elf world. According to a recent psychedelic study, a high incidence of elf sightings has been reported using an acacia extract

of DMT blended two parts to one with psilocybin. That should get you to the Gandharva Kingdom.”

Finishing her coffee, Màiri made a call to her *vegetalismo* out west to order another batch of ingredients. And the next morning, just like clockwork, they arrived. Opening the box, she felt like a child at Christmas.

“Wow! Would you look at this, Josh,” she said eagerly. “There’s one pound of fresh *Acacia Obtusifolia* bark, which I estimate should produce about 4.5 grams of pure DMT crystals—enough for about seventy-five doses. And here...look here...a bag of twelve *Psilocybe cubensis* mushrooms. This will yield enough psilocybin powder for about three strong doses.”

Setting to work on the raw ingredients, the lab was soon filled with the dark musty aroma of earth. Extracting the psilocybin was easy. She began by crushing the dried mushrooms into a powder that was then blended into a 200-proof ethyl alcohol base. This step was followed by several filtering and evaporation cycles to produce a refined white psilocin-psilocybin powder suitable for use in an intravenous solution. But the acacia extraction would not be this easy.

Shredding and pulverizing the *Obtusifolia* bark into a coarse powder, Màiri first soaked it repeatedly in a heated mixture of tartaric acid and water to extract the DMT alkaloids. Transferring the resulting brown liquid into a separating container, she added 200ml of naphtha before placing the extract into a shaker to separate.

To this she added 250ml of sodium hydroxide to raise the pH level to 13, a necessary step to drive the alkaloids out by binding up the tartaric acid. It was the tartaric acid, after all, that caused the alkaloids to become water-soluble.

With the tryptamines now in freebase form, Màiri again added naphtha, gently agitating the solution to produce a non-polar extract base. Finishing it off with several polar rinses in distilled water, she finally had the clarified base she needed. Pouring the liquid into an evaporating dish to dry overnight, a strategically placed fan would speed the evaporation of the solution into white DMT crystals.

Scraping out the residue the next morning, Màiri finished the process by dissolving a full 60mg dose of the DMT crystals with one-third of the psilocybin powder into a saline solution suitable for intravenous injection. From start to finish, the entire process took three days to complete.

While Màiri prepared the communion serum, Josh had been preparing himself both mentally and physically for the next experiment. To help discipline his mind and focus attention, he had undertaken a daily routine of yoga and meditation under Màiri's guidance. Purging his body of toxins to reduce the possibility of a negative reaction to the entheogens, he had switched to a strictly vegetarian diet. Although he was not yet vegan, he was definitely on his way. Màiri's knowledge of plants and nutrition had been very helpful in his dietary transition. He could already feel himself becoming cleaner and more spiritual inside.

Like the last experiment, he would use the God Helmet to stabilize and focus the effects of the serum Màiri had prepared. Inspired by what she had told him early on about the Hebrew temple ritual, he had again modified the Ganzfeld program to display a red static field in the left goggle display and a green one in the right. The complementary colors, he hoped, might intensify his visions like the Urim and Thummim divination crystals used by Hebrew priests. After all, if red and green glasses can be used to decode 3D movies, it only stood to reason this red-green symmetry around indigo in the Newtonian color wheel might help strengthen the Ganzfeld effect. As light impulses are filtered through the frontal cortex of the brain, it might help him differentiate visual patterns during trance. It was worth a try anyway.

Taking his place once again on the old brown Barco lounge inside the psychonautic chamber, Màiri set to work attaching the cranial electrodes. Placing the headphones, God Helmet, and VR goggles on his head and hooking them up, she quickly prepared and inserted the IV syringe into his arm. Moving to her monitoring station outside the observation window, she activated the audio-video feeds as the last step before launch.

Again, grasping the same two seer crystals, Josh steadied his mind by chanting at 111Hz to reach a meditative trance. Nodding to Màiri thru

the window, she opened the valve on the drip bag from her computer using a newly installed remote actuator. In seconds he could feel the warm Gandharva solution enter his bloodstream.

With a sudden shift of awareness, he was swept out of his body and into an iridescent fog of hot pinks and shimmering chartreuse. Floating slowly forward, he figured the colors were probably due to the Ganzfeld effect, but the fog itself was more than just a visual. It felt like a cool, tingling mist around his body that was accompanied by a light tinkling sound like small wind chimes. This must be the sound of etheric materialization, he figured.

Stepping out of the fog, he found himself in the middle of what appeared to be a bustling carnival. On either side were a series of red and white stripe tents and a series of goofy sideshows right out of a Saturday morning cartoon. There was a punk fairy transforming a green frog into a hip-hop leprechaun; a fluttering sprite drawing 19<sup>th</sup>-century caricatures in the air with her luminescent body; a band of cherubic minstrels dressed in Baroque costumes playing hoedown music; and a dragon dressed in drag roasting marshmallows with his breath—all to the riotous laughter and applause of small gnome-like creatures gathered in circles. It was nothing less than a psychedelic geek show.

As for the audience, they were a mix of every fairytale creature imaginable. Each one was a visual pun on some folk tale, altogether creating a garish and absurd mash-up of familiar children's stories. To Josh, everything seemed like a satire on the naïve and infantile state of human consciousness—more specifically, his own consciousness.

All the fairy tales, he felt, were clearly staged for his benefit. Someone was poking fun at his total ignorance of elves and other non-physical realms, presumably to embarrass him. Perhaps the machine elves were trying to get under his skin to diminish his self-confidence and shatter his ego. But it was even more humiliating than this.

Their little sideshows were an indictment of all humanity and its total blindness to the deeper dimensions. It was all so mean spirited and unfair that Josh wanted to stop everything and scream out in defense of his people, his world. But in the end, all he could do was admit to himself the truth of what they were showing him and laugh helplessly at

the spiritual emptiness that had plagued his world now for nearly two millennia.

Winding his way through the crowd, a path began to clear toward the largest red and white circus tent. Entering through the grinning mouth of a one-eyed joker-face, he found himself inside an enormous cavern of organic material. The domed ceiling was interlaced with transparent tubes pumping a red bioluminescent fluid thru an elaborate glowing network of veins and capillaries. He was inside some kind of stylized human skull, perhaps the archetype of his own head as seen from an inner dimension.

In the center was a large circus ring. And inside this sat an improbably complex machine operated by what looked like dozens of bouncing luminous balls. The machine had the appearance of a Rube Goldberg machine, only infinitely more elaborate—a tourbillon complication of the grandest scale. Bristling with gears, levers, cables, chutes, ladders, and pulleys, the balls of light were working feverishly to prepare the silly contraption for operation. This must be the archetype for his brain, he figured.

Looking closer, he could see that the machine operated according to some kind of recursive fractal logic. Paisley gears nested inward, turning other gears at different scales, presumably with the purpose of manufacturing something. Some of the luminous balls were bouncing in and out of the semi-translucent machine, reaching levers and switches buried deep inside the contraption. To him the whole thing was like a comic cartoon with parts bending and swaying under the force of its own operation as whistles stretched to blow off a little steam. Perhaps, he imagined, animators like Fritz Freleng and Tex Avery received their animation ideas from their own youthful visits here, if only in a dream.

Straining to see inside the nearest luminous ball, he could make out the figure of a short pale entity. It was clearly multi-dimensional, formed in some way by strands of visible language—a programming language made of musical symbols, it seemed—one that was continually changing and rewriting itself.

“McKenna’s self-transforming machine elves,” he realized. “The Vedic Gandharva and machine elves really are one and the same.”



But as he concentrated to try and understand their process of self-modification, the elf he was staring at suddenly jerked his head around. Sneering threateningly, the creature spoke with biting sarcasm.

“Does little Joshie like the big circus?”

The creature’s condescending comment caught Josh by surprise, causing him to lose his balance and trip sideways. A wave of giggles rippled through the crowd. To celebrate their success in throwing him off-balance, the luminous balls began to dribble themselves around the ring like a team of miniature Harlem Globetrotters. Once again, he had become the butt of the joke. They knew how to get under his skin.

“Is that supposed to be an insult?” Josh shot back defensively. “You look more like a little boy than I do.”

But instead of stopping their assault, his reply only irritated them. Their mood changed in an instant to become more menacing. Turning on him with a vengeance, they rushed forward like they were going to rip him apart. But rather than attack him in any traditional style, they did something quite startling. The luminous balls began to hurl themselves into his chest, sometimes bouncing off and other times flying completely through the luminous egg of his light body before hurling themselves back inward. The elves’ attack was utterly terrifying. That is, until he realized what was going on.

To his surprise, none of their efforts were actually hurting him. It seemed to Josh as if he were porous to their attacks; as if he were the nucleus of an atom being interpenetrated by a cloud of electrons. All the while he could feel no pain whatsoever—only a little discomfort from sharing his personal space with these angry luminescent beings. Their attack was really more embarrassing than anything else; like standing naked before a crowd.

“So, these are the gremlins and goblins of European folklore,” Josh told himself as the assault began to diminish and the Gandharva returned to their work. “The little bullies don’t take kindly to someone who disrespects them.”

He was beginning to understand what this world was all about. Everything was an archetype, this much was certain. The circus tent was an archetypal cranium, *his* cranium to be specific. The circus ring

represented the elves' psychedelic mushroom portal. The elves themselves were probably archetypal electrons, bouncing around inside his brain's neural net. But the machine—this was the archetype for consciousness and creative intent, the same infinitely recursive process described by fractal mathematics.

Fairy tales like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* or *Cinderella* must be the long-forgotten stories of these elven archetypes, Josh reasoned, as were Vedic stories about the Gandharva ability to construct realities from music. Humanity must have a very ancient relationship with this mushroom kingdom, perhaps the very catalyst behind human self-awareness. Folklore and myth are all that is left of those early days, he lamented.

But this place was certainly no fairytale. The Gandharva were very real and must play an important role in the cosmos. Their job, he figured, was to introduce novelty and unexpected change into an otherwise stagnant and predictable reality. They were like the irritating grain of sand in an oyster that self-transforms into a beautiful pearl. The machine elves were nothing less than the archetype for quantum uncertainty.

In this light, Josh could now see the elven carnival for what it was—the font of creativity operating at every scale of reality. The absurd machine was their tool of improbability, a projection device used to close the spiral of infinity into a closed-loop system. Under the control of the elves, the machine could collapse the quantum wave function millions of times a second to create something new out of something old. Everything, it seemed, depended on the elves and their silly regurgitation machine. The only question now was whom exactly did they work for.

“What is your question, self-indulgent boy?” demanded one of the machine elves.

“Who said I had a question,” Josh shot back.

“Then I shall ask YOU a question,” taunted another in a mocking voice. “Have you been naughty or nice?”

To this the crowd roared. The elves were well aware of European folklore and its mischaracterization of their domain. By referring to the Santa myth, they had insulted him in the most cutting way they knew how. Human beings had regressed to mere infants.

In another round of charivari celebration, the elves again dribbled around the ring. This time they dunked themselves one by one into the machine only to be spit out through a rubbery cartoon mouth at the end. The whole thing looked to Josh like a comic gumball dispenser except instead of gum it dispensed luminous balls.

“I think he has been a very naughty boy,” needled a third, “and deserves no presents.”

More laughter, more dribbling, and more dunking; the machine elves were certainly having a field day at his expense. But now, he decided, something should be done to stop the madness.

“I wish you no harm. I have been sent by the Phoenician to speak with Rambha.”

To his surprise, the elves stopped their celebration the moment he said this. This gave him an idea.

Willing himself into the ring, he took three long steps into the bright spotlight. Like a ringmaster, he grabbed the microphone that had magically descended from the darkness above. Clearing his throat, a slight ring of feedback reverberated inside the Big Top.

“Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages” he began in a deep booming voice. “I have journeyed here thru the roaring abyss at great peril to myself to seek your help. The Phoenician tells me you are the keepers of a remedy known as ‘the Sequence’. Is this something you can teach me?”

His plea seemed to have some effect. The elves immediately returned to their positions on the machine, pushing buttons and pulling levers. Their performance would be his answer.

Suddenly, circus music filled the dome as a late 19<sup>th</sup> century steam calliope rose out of the center of the machine complete with its own puffy cloud. He recognized the song the organ was playing. It was a song he had learned on the piano as a boy. Entitled *Under The Double Eagle*, he recalled his piano teacher telling him it was a musical symbolism for royalty and purification—something called the Divine Androgyny. But why a song about royalty, he wondered.

The spotlight that had been aimed at him was now shifted to an acrobat perched high above in a latticework of platforms and cables.

Leading the high wire act was a funambulist in a red striped stovepipe hat who was performing a precarious crossing of the high wire without benefit of a safety net. Several acrobatic clowns followed, swinging to and fro on a trapeze directly above the machine. Then, in the grand comedic style of ole Slapstick Joey, each stumbled or hilariously missed their grips to fall headlong into the heaving machine below. Blurring into luminous balls with long squiggly tails on the way down, the jokesters fell directly into the heaving pipes of the Great Organ.

One piece hit another that lifted another which set in motion yet another—again and again; enfolding into itself as it expanded—to create a spectacle P.T. Barnum would surely have agreed was the *Greatest Show NOT On Earth*. But just as he thought the vision could not become any more absurd, the machine began to reshape itself. Transforming into what could only be described as a rotating mechanical Christmas tree, the steaming calliope began to lift up higher and higher inside the Big Top as the machine extended like a telescope.

Perhaps this was the archetype for the Cosmic Tree of Life, Josh mused. If so, what was its purpose and why in the world are the machine elves showing him this?

Then, with a magnificent burst of light, an array of ascending diminished chords spewed colorful musical notes like fireworks from the calliope's smoking pipes. As the elven machine shuddered and moaned, the contraption slowly opened up from the center like a flower, a lotus perhaps. Twisting and stretching itself side-to-side, a single large jewel-encrusted egg was finally ejected from the center. The entire performance, it seemed to him, was a birthing process of sorts—a demonstration of what must have been a massively complex and recursive process of procreation.

Yet the circus show seemed more than just a nonsensical demonstration of organic reproduction—much more. Perhaps the time-prompting elves were demonstrating how they generate new dimensions and new possibilities. Maybe the Fabergé egg was some kind of a trans-dimensional archetype for cosmic fertilization and regeneration—an underlying model for life-borne eggs in the physical world. Whatever it was, Josh could only hope the answer to his question was inside.

At first, the elves rushed in to adore the bejeweled shell and stroke its sensual shape. But after huddling around the object to welcome the newborn, they suddenly assembled themselves into a military formation. Marching slowly toward Josh with great pomp and circumstance, they carried the lopsided orb on a purple velvet pillow like a papal tiara. Reaching Josh, the egg rose slightly to float mid-air under its own power. With the presentation ceremony complete, the elves backed away in perfect military precision, bowing deeply in grand Baroque style before finishing with a flourish.

What happened next, however, was even more puzzling. In a sudden departure from their courtly demeanor, the elves began to hurl themselves against the egg with incredible force, apparently in an effort to smash the thing open. Cracking under the vicious onslaught, the eggshell finally exploded into a million pieces, scattering glittering jewels in every direction. Bouncing across the circus floor, the gems twirled into a layer of multi-colored vortices, leaving a pattern of shimmering spirals in the dust. The whole thing reminded him of the particle traces produced by an atom smasher.

Inside the egg was a yolk—a yellow luminiferous ball. And inside this glowing ball was another elf. But this one was different. From what he could tell, it was a female elf—an Apsara, the Queen of Elphame perhaps—whom the elves now greeted first with a heraldry of trumpets; a hail of confetti; and a hearty chorus of cheers. Executed again with military precision and impeccable timing, the royal spectacle must have been rehearsed many times. How else could such a magnificently choreographed show been otherwise possible?

Floating nearer, he strained to see her face through the yellow aura. But try as he may, all he could see was the faint outline of a slender elven figure with something on her back. There were translucent wings protruding from her shoulders, or at least the Gaussian archetype of wings. With these she looked more like an angel or a fairy than an elf.

“Who, may I ask, are you?” he inquired, breaking the worshipful silence that had befallen the crowd. “And where might I find the Sequence?”

To this the queen replied, but in song rather than spoken word. The melody, from what he could tell, was composed of seven tones sung in different meters with different lyrics and in seven different languages. It sounded to him like a Bach fugue performed by a single voice. The entire dome resonated with the resplendent sound of her airy voice, reflected from every surface to create a rippling geometric pattern in the misty atmosphere above. And as she sang, something began to emerge from inside her open mouth.

The object was a scroll. Suspended between two large wooden spindles, it resembled a Jewish Torah. Floating to a stop in front of Josh, the scroll unfurled. Looking the relic over, the writing appeared to be Mandaic, annotated with colorful illustrations.

“What am I to do with this?” he asked.

But this time the queen did not answer. She simply turned and walked away. Why did she not answer, he wondered, and why would she not reveal her face? Then, just as the queen had faded from sight, he felt a presence from behind.

“Surely you must remember!” the Apsara whispered hoarsely into his ear. “You know me as Rambha of Devaloka, Queen of Elphame, but I am only one of three. Here before you is the musical Sequence you seek. It holds the seven resonances that open the Path.”

Was this a reference to the Seven Heavens of the Talmud? Josh wondered. Or was it the seven ladder rungs up the yupa pole? Was it an explanation of the seven steps of the Meru stupa Māiri had described or the seven chakras of the Buddha body? Or was it the Biblical Revelation of the Seven Seals? What is so special about the number seven?

“Play this musical scale to open the seven worlds in the octave just above yours. The harmony you bring to them shall reflect manifold in your world. Remember it well for this is your only chance,” she warned, her voice fading away, “—your world’s last chance.”

Looking over the scroll, Josh found he could understand the meaning even while the language itself looked like gibberish. The focusing effect of the God Helmet apparently went well beyond enhanced comprehension and memory. Everything on the scroll could be

easily understood and retained as if it were a photograph. If only he had this memory superpower back in grad school, he mused.

Examining the ornate drawings on the scroll, they were similar to those of the Eadwine Psalter. But as he struggled to understand the symbolisms, the largest illustration suddenly lifted up to animate midair above the page as if to better demonstrate the meaning. Identifying seven specific sound frequencies marked with colored dots positioned along a resonating string, the animation appeared to him like some kind of elven music notation.

Next to each frequency were a series of scientific symbols for organic compounds accompanied by a set of alchemical symbols he recognized as the seven planets. This was further annotated with a sequence of pictograms identifying ancient Earth cultures to which each compound belonged—Canaanite, Nordic, Mayan, Sumerian, Chinese, Indian, and Anatolian. According to the scroll, these were the seven heavens—the dimensions held *En Sequentia*.

With the scroll now committed to memory, Josh felt a tugging in the pit of his stomach. Something invisible had locked onto him and was drawing him back. Glancing down, a thin bluish cord at the center of his etheric body was pulling him upward toward the pulsating ceiling of the Big Top.

Passing through the center of the domed ceiling, he found himself back at the nexus between worlds. Suspended now before the inter-dimensional card stack, he was again drawn downward through one of the portals. This time he was aware of several entities helping to ease him back into his body. They were female elves with fluttering wings, more Apsaras like Rambha, patting and whispering reassurances like a mother would calm a child. It was all so comforting. He felt completely safe without the slightest sense of fear. This must be what it was like to be born, he thought—or to die.

Looking into the faces of the angelic beings, their skin was translucent and covered in white scales that reflected an iridescent sheen like mother of pearl. Their auric ‘wings’ flapped and fluttered like pages in a phonebook as they hovered above him. Yet, when he looked closer he could see these too were but archetypes for something deeper.

Surrounding the angels was a Gaussian field of energy responsible for the odd fluttering effect he perceived as wings. This energy field must help them, he reasoned, to ferry travelers to and from their destination.

Pushing him down, down, down into his physical body, the angelic fairy elves cooed like babies. Everything would be okay, they whispered in his ear. Soon he would be home.

Reentering his body was not as easy as before. This time he bounced wildly between dimensions. One moment he was in the lab, the next surrounded by etheric beings. Accelerating like frames in a stop action film, the beings were literally dribbling him back into his physical body. As the dribbling became continuous, his perception stabilized and he found himself back home in the lab's psychonautic chamber. Above him hovered Mairi looking very worried.

"Are you with me? Are you okay?" she asked, her voice wavering near panic.

"Yes...I think I'm back now," Josh replied, still not entirely sure he had completely escaped the vision. It felt like he had left something back in the Big Top, some part of himself. "What time is it?"

"It's 1:11. You've been gone for about forty-five minutes. Did you find it?"

"I met McKenna's self-modifying machine elves," Josh said, looking past the Maori patterns on her face into the shining green orbs of her eyes. "What I am about to say will sound like a childish fairytale or cartoon, I know, but I swear it was real."

Inspecting his hands to make sure he was really back in his body, he continued.

"I landed in this absurd carnival...where I was led by a crowd of munchkins into a circus tent, which was actually the inside of my head, containing this enormous Rube Goldberg machine. Working on the machine were spherical balls of light that turned out to be elves. Their bodies seemed to be made out of a self-modifying programming language. Their behavior was alien and totally unpredictable...hilarious and deceitful at the same time. Just like you said, they're dangerous jokesters who can't be trusted. The bastards certainly made a complete fool out of me, but I still managed to ask for the Sequence."



“Their answer came in the form of an elaborate circus show. They began by performing a high wire act where they seemed to, um, inseminate the machine, which then gave birth to an egg...a Fabergé egg...that...uh...hatched their queen. Okay, so I know it sounds like I’ve lost my mind but the queen started singing the Sequence to me. The lyrics were also written on a Torah scroll...that came out her mouth...” his voice trailing off as he noticed Màiri’s eyebrows rise a little.

“Now, don’t look at me like that,” he said embarrassed and a little irritated, struggling to appear coherent. “I’m okay...or at least I think I will be. The important thing is I remember everything on the scroll. And, I know exactly what we need to do next.”



## Chapter 7

### *Coding the Sequence*

*R*eaching for his laptop next to the Barco lounge, Josh flipped open the screen. An explosion of white light swamped the candlelit room to reveal a matrix of iridescent patterns seething back and forth on the chamber's walls. Impish faces in the patterns were a reminder the machine elves were never far away. He knew now they were always there watching, toying with him from somewhere deep inside the framework of reality. Fumbling to control his rubbery fingers on the computer keyboard, he was determined to power through the aftereffects of the psychedelic serum.

"Okay, we need to...let's see...design an automated sequencing experiment that can carry me through the dimensions I saw listed on the scroll," Josh explained to Màiri as he struggled to construct a flowchart diagram for the seven-step sequencing algorithm. "It needs to administer each entheogenic serum in a timed sequence while synchronously tuning the God Helmet to the frequencies on the scroll. Màiri, we need to find a really hot programmer who can code this thing up."

Retrieving her own laptop, Màiri pulled up a stool next to Josh to begin her search through online employment listings.

"Craig's List is totally hoachin' with programmer types, but they all look like pretty standard fare to me," she commented while scrolling through the listings.

"We need someone who has real-time programming experience and can handle the project mostly on their own," Josh added.

"Wait a sec...here's a cannie lad who fancies himself a 'code slinger'. Listen to this."

Best code slinger in Jersey. Been hacking since I was ten and know every legit programming language on the planet,

including real-time assembly. Email Jude Simonson after 11AM at codeslinger33@gmail.com. No headhunters.

“Sounds like this might be our man, Màiri. Why don’t you email him and see if he can meet me at the Starbucks on Nassau Street.”

Arriving at the coffee shop later that morning, Josh ordered his usual Espresso Macchiato and took a seat to wait for his interviewee to arrive. He did not wait long before a young bearded man in his late twenties swaggered through the door. He had medium long black hair, was a little overweight, and had tattoos down both arms and neck. Wearing all black with a collection of piercings, he was about as Goth as it gets. Knowing this must be his code slinger, Josh waved him over and stood to greet him.

“Grab yourself a cup of java, Mr. Simonson,” Josh suggested, shaking his hand.

“That’s okay—and call me Jude,” he said taking a seat. “I was cranked up all night coding and just downed another Red Bull so I’m good.”

“Fair enough,” Josh replied. “Maybe you could tell me a little about your software experience before I explain my project to you.”

“Yeah, okay,” Jude said, clearly eager to talk about himself. “I’ve been coding since I was ten years old. No joke—I can code anything—Java and JavaScript, all flavors of C/ C++, PHP, Python, Ruby, SQL, and even assembly for real-time systems. Of course, I’m also damn good at HTML 5 and CSS, along with pretty much any web-authoring tool you like. My undergrad is in Comp-Sci, but most of what I know I taught myself.”

Can’t judge a book by its cover, Josh reminded himself. This kid is experienced beyond his years and certainly isn’t lacking in confidence.

“What was your last project?”

“I designed and coded a dynamic content engine with four other guys. Before that, I was a game developer at id Software,” the code slinger boasted. “My favorite project was a first-person shooter game called DOOM, the 2016 remake. Maybe you’ve heard of it.”

“Yes, of course. Sounds pretty impressive and, I think, your virtual reality gaming background is relevant to my project,” Josh replied with a big smile. “I’ve been developing a series of experiments to measure the effect of electromagnetic fields and psychoactive compounds on human consciousness. Right now I’m designing an algorithm to sequence through several different mind altering states. I call it *The Sequence*.”

“Dude! Are you talkin’ about psychedelics? I’m totally down with that. I’ve tripped on ‘shrooms and X before. They were awesome—most fun I ever had.”

“Well Jude, this is more of a scientific study than a party. I’ll need you to create the sequencing software that administers specific compounds intravenously while simultaneously triggering the corresponding EM and audio-visual stimuli. The goal is to induce out-of-body visions while increasing lucidity at the same time. Does this sound like something you can handle?”

“Hell yeah! I’ll need the specs for your sequencer, of course, and the protocol manual for whatever remote actuators you want to use. Shouldn’t be a problem.”

“Excellent. I’ll pay you \$75 an hour. Can you start tomorrow?”

“Hmmm...I was hoping for a little more than that, I won’t lie to ya,” Jude moaned, pausing to see if the professor would up his offer. “But...this is such a killer gig. I’ll do it anyway just for grins.”

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Jude seemed to be the ideal choice. He had made astounding progress on the sequencer in just the first week. In two weeks, the first step of the Sequence had already been prototyped and was being used to clone the next six steps. At this rate, Jude figured the alpha test version of the Sequence would be ready for a trial run in just a few more weeks.

But even though Josh was impressed with the programmer’s progress, he was dismayed to learn his code slinger was a doomsday prepper in his off time. Normally, an employee’s outside interests and hobbies would be of no concern to him. But in this case, the one person he was trusting to develop his mind control system had turned out to be a

conspiracy nut who was convinced a globalist Illuminati cabal was plotting some kind of false flag event to start World War III. Jude was totally convinced this would be the final step in establishing a New World Order led by the anti-Christ.

“If you haven’t set up a provisions room for the collapse, better do it now,” Jude warned.

Màiri was hard at work distilling a new mescaline compound from a batch of fresh peyote buttons. So far, she had been very tolerant of Jude’s cynical comments by silently nodding or leaving the room whenever he went off the deep end. But his incessant ramblings had become distracting and were affecting her ability to concentrate. More importantly, his nihilism was making it impossible for her to stay positive and balanced.

“Please, Jude, can we not talk about your doolally theories right now? I need to focus on my work.”

“Okay, but you’ll be sorry when it all goes down,” Jude shot back with a smirk. “As for me, I’ve got plenty of food and water to make it through the first several months. I’ve also collected an arsenal of pistols and semi-automatics for protection. No one’s going to fuck with me. I’ll hunt for my own food and live off the land if I have to, no problem. I’m telling you now—you’ll be knocking on my door for help one day.”

“Knocking on your door for help?” Josh asked as he walked into the lab. “What for?”

“Hey, you’re invited too, Dr. Savin,” Jude replied. “You and Dr. Winegard should both come to my house when the government collapses.”

“Jude, we’ve talked about your conspiracy theories before and I thought we had agreed not to discuss it at work. We already have a mission and that’s to create a technology that could help keep something like that from ever happening. From what I saw in my last vision, the program you’re working on can do this. Maybe the world war and New World Order you think is inevitable can be prevented. What we need right now is to spend less time on conspiracies and more time coding so we can find out. Right?”

“Don’t get bent out of shape,” Jude grouched, swinging back around to his workstation. “I’m working on it.”

“While we’re on the subject of work,” Josh added. “Dr. Winegard and I will be leaving on a field trip tomorrow. We’re going to be spending some time with several remote tribes to learn first-hand about their communion practices and recipes. We will also be trying to negotiate supplier agreements for botanical ingredients when possible. Anyway, we’ll be gone for about three weeks and you’ll be in charge of the lab until we get back. This should give you plenty of quiet time to work on the Sequence, so I expect a lot of progress when we get back.”

Jude heaved a huge sigh of relief when the two finally left for the evening. Switching on a dim LED light on his desk and turning off the lab’s bright florescent lights, he settled in for a long night of conspiracy forums and junk food.

Infowars, Rense, Above Top Secret, and Conspiracysite.net were his favorite haunts, but he was always stumbling across other sites that had a few more pieces of the puzzle. Convinced that a world war and economic collapse were just around the corner, he was going to be ready when it came.

“It’s obvious 9/11 was an inside job. The only question is how does it play into the Rothschild-Rockefeller plan for a New World Order?” Jude asked himself, clicking into a thread about Armageddon.

“This post says the real power behind the New World Order is Satan and his fallen angels,” he mumbled. “They’re the ones who will enslave us using our own government’s security forces. Then they’ll implement curfews, raise our taxes, and finally trash the U.S. Constitution so they can implement marshal law. Fucking Illuminati!”

According to juggler666, a blogger he had come to trust, the Bible calls these fallen angels the rulers of Earth both in Psalms and Revelation.

The kings of the earth worked with the fallen angels to prepare the way for the rule of one they call The Beast—half man, half fallen angel. But, as Jesus told us, Satan’s kingdom is divided and in civil war. The seventy fallen angels who God put in

charge over the Gentile nations of the earth at Babel continue to fight these kings of the earth under the leadership of the Prince of Persia. Descendants of the kings who took control of the earth after the last One World Government under Nimrod are today trying to create the New World Order, even as Persia and all other Muslims are standing in their way.

According to ancient Jewish and occult writings, the only person who had the knowledge to control the seventy angels was Solomon using his ring and seal. This same seal is now the flag of the nation of Israel, which was placed there by the Rothschilds. The U.S. needs Israel in order to control the angels and rule the world.

“That makes total sense,” Jude remarked to the computer screen as he opened a box of chocolate Pop-Tarts. “The only place in the Bible where the number 666 is mentioned apart from Revelation is when they talk about Solomon. Nimrod is also linked to the beast in Revelation. Today Israel and America have replaced Solomon and Nimrod as pawns of the Satanist Illuminati. Together, they are trying to defeat the Muslim nations and reinstate Nimrod’s One World Government.”

Stuffing half a Pop-Tart into his mouth, Jude read on. He learned that seven shepherds, eight princes, and a mixture of fallen angels would rise up behind one man, uniting Satan’s kingdom against the Kingdom of Heaven. According to juggler666, there is an entrance to the land of Nimrod mentioned in the Book of Micah 5:6 which is associated with the Tower of Babel and functions as a metaphysical wormhole to Heaven.

The entrance to Babel is a star gate through which the Antichrist and his demonic angel army can enter into the spiritual realms, previously forbidden to them. Through it, they can reach the very throne room of God where Satan’s army could defeat god and rule the world. This was what the Anti-Christ Nimrod was trying to do—fulfill Satan’s plan to ascend into the place of the Most High.



“These goddamn Satanists have got to be stopped,” Jude complained to his computer screen. “They took down the World Trade Towers in 2001 to make us invade Iraq and Afghanistan. Then came the Arab Spring. And now the Sons of ISIS is rolling up all the radical organizations into one badass Muslim jihad. It’s all going according to Satan’s evil little plan.”

His brain was racing now trying to figure out where it was all leading. He had already read about how the American Illuminati, working in league with the Black Nobility of Europe, planned the stock market crash in 2008 to bankrupt the world while making untold billions off banking and petroleum stocks. The inequity of it all was staggering and nearly unbearable for him.

“The average Joe always gets it in the ass,” he grouched.

But a post from yet another forum had him worried even more. These rich oligarchs were all bound together through blood and Masonic vows. Some had even infiltrated into certain U.S. intelligence programs, giving them access to NSA metadata files where they could find out anything about anyone.

“They’ve got to be pretty damn close now to staging a false flag to trigger the final war,” the code slinger said glumly.

His frowning face was pale from the screen’s sickly glow. Its blue cocoon cut a lonely silhouette in the inky blackness of the lab. He needed to do something to stop this madness, but what...and how?

Shaking his head in disgust, Jude reached into a small pocket on his backpack. Taking out a baggie and holding it to the light, he was relieved to see he still had about thirty small off-white tablets imprinted with a crown logo. Picking two, he tossed them to the back of his throat and grabbed a Red Bull from the desk drawer. Downing the entire can in a single long chug the tablets were washed away to their final destination.

“Bet these babies help me figure out something tonight to stop those assholes,” he mumbled, “...or at least slow them down.” He hadn’t slept a wink in two days and this would be his third. Shedding his dirty t-shirt and kicking off his tennis shoes, the code slinger slumped back into his chair to continue his search for an answer.

Clicking and scrolling through post after post, site after site; the silhouette surfed into the night looking for clues. Everything was part of a bigger picture, he told himself. But no matter which conspiracy forums or alternative news sites he visited, they all seemed to confirm his own theory that the Illuminati were up to something big...and soon.

One thread he found explained how everything was under the control of an advanced race of evil aliens living in another dimension. They were Satan's army it said—a trans-dimensional alien intelligence, sometimes visible in out-of-body experiences or drug-induced trances. These were the same gray aliens who operate the UFOs and abduct people in their sleep.

"Shit, man! I wonder if Savin and Winegard are mixed up with these aliens? Could the professor have been hired by the Illuminati to find a way to open the entrance to Heaven? And...could the Sequence I'm giving them be the key they need to unlock access to the Throne of God?"

Facing a global conspiracy like this always ended up making him feel helpless and frustrated. It was times like this that the tattoos on his arms could always make him feel better. They were like his own personal comic book reminding him of everything he had to overcome in his life.

One tattoo marked the first time he hacked into his school's website to change one of his grades. Another celebrated the day he left home to escape the abuse of his alcoholic father. Yet another symbolized that glorious day he was saved to become a born-again Christian. He was proud of these tattoos—especially the large crucifix emblazoned down the middle of his back. He often went shirtless for maximum effect. With tats like these, no one ever doubted his street cred. He was the real deal, a true wild child of the street.

Just then, a cold shot ran up his spine and with it an uncontrollable shiver. For some reason everything had become a little jittery now. Tiny stars were fizzing around him in the darkness of the lab. Even the walls had come alive with ghostly images.

"Maybe it's the X," he told himself. "That and the Red Bull having a little fun with my sleep deprivation. That's all."

But then out of the darkness a figure appeared—something he had never seen before on any kind of drug. There in the emptiness of the lab, something, or rather someone, was visible inside a faint oval of light. Whether angel or demon, he could not tell.

“Who’s that?” the programmer called out nervously, leaning forward to squint up at the being.

Suddenly it reached out, causing him to jerk backward in his chair. It was a monster all right—a Hindoo demon perhaps—hatching out of an egg-shaped portal from some hellish-looking world. With multiple arms and a terrifying expression, the specter was truly the most frightening thing he had ever seen.

“O Ye who seeks to know the evils of man,” the demon said, his voice resonating inside Jude’s head, “—to know and examine the dark mysteries, know first the nigromantic science of the propylene realm. For herein lies the path to the Seven Hells.”

“Propylene realm? You mean di-propyl?” Jude asked, recalling something Dr. Winegard once mentioned to Dr. Savin. She had told him that di-Propyl tryptamine was a compound preferred by the Temple of the True Inner Light because it opened the path opposite the methyl dimensions. This was a direction she wanted to explore.

But there was no answer. The demon was gone.

“Wait! What would you have me do?”

Pausing to see if the creature would return, he finally slumped back in his chair and reached for another Red Bull.

“Well, shit. I guess I’ve slipped a gear now. I’m talking to fucking demons,” he said with disgust, pushing his dirty hair away from his face. “But at least he gave me a good idea. Like I always say—when in doubt build yourself an Easter egg.”

Wide-eyed from the adrenaline and drugs, the code slinger’s fingers had become a blur over the keyboard. Typing furiously as if conjuring a spell, code now poured from his hands into the Emacs editor—channeled, it seemed, by the specter himself. It was all part of a new C++ class he was writing entitled *Underworld*.



## Chapter 8

### *Enter the Vegetalismo*

“I met Mosiah at an ethnopharmacology conference in 2016,” Màiri explained as they approached Baggage Carousel #2 inside the Salt Lake City International Airport. Sitting apart during their flight from Newark, she was just now able to brief Josh for their meeting with her American vegetalismo.

“It was during a lunch break that I introduced myself and we began chatting about how we first became interested in entheogens and their use in religious rites. As the conversation became a little more personal, he shared some rather startling information about himself and his role in the Mormon Church.”

“He said his full name was Mosiah Smith and that he was the great-great grandson of Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of the Church of the Latter Day Saints. In fact, he was one of the twelve living apostles of the LDS Church and acted as their official vegetalismo. Needless to say, I was gobsmacked by this because that is precisely the role of the High Priest in the Hebrew temple, the one allowed to eat the manna and commune with God.”

Stopping to retrieve her bags from the airport carousel and place them onto a luggage cart, Màiri continued her briefing as they waited for Josh’s luggage to appear.

“Anyway, he told me that Mormon founders Joseph Smith, Jr., brother Hyrum Smith, and Brigham Young were all members of a Masonic Lodge in New York before escaping legal troubles to settle in Illinois. By the early 1840’s, the three had established a Masonic lodge of their own in Nauvoo, Illinois, ultimately blending many of the Mosaic traditions and Masonic rituals of Solomon’s Temple into what became the Mormon religion. This included Masonic symbolisms, signs,

vocabulary, handshakes, ritualistic raising of the arms, clothing, etcetera, etcetera.”

“For instance, the protective underwear worn by Mormons all have the Masonic square and compass symbols sewn over each breast. They believe these temple undergarments protect them from accidents and evil forces. This practice, Mosiah explained, originated in the white robe, green apron, and hoshen breastplate worn by the Hebrew High Priest to protect him during visionary encounters with God.”

“After he told me all this, I decided to do a little more research myself on the link between Masonry and Mormonism. Reading Brigham Young’s *Temple and Salvation for the Dead*, I found a quote about Solomon’s Temple relating directly to the story of Hiram Abiff, a named builder of the temple and a central figure in Masonic lore. Turns out Masonic lodges and Mormon temples are both designed according to the same basic floor plan of the ancient temple of Solomon, which is a rectangle in the proportions of a double-square.”

“Solomon’s double-square floor plan is actually very ancient, found even in the King’s Chamber of the Great Pyramid. Psychoacoustical studies have suggested it was used for sacred spaces because the diagonal creates an ideal acoustical space due to the golden ratio damping effect. You see, the diagonal of a 1 x 2 rectangle has the hypotenuse  $\sqrt{5}$ , which creates the triangular representation of the golden ratio as  $(1 + \sqrt{5}) / 2 \approx 1.618$ . Ancient architects somehow knew that the double-square design based on this triangle had the ability to suppress echoes while helping to amplify chant and music inside stone temples. Both the Mormon and Masonic Temples in Salt Lake City are designed using Solomon’s double-square.”

“This link to Solomon’s Temple is also found in the aprons worn by both Masons and Mormons. Although most Mormons and Masons don’t know it, the apron identifies the wearers as Hebrew vegetalismo priests whose job it is to cook psychoactive teacher plants into communion breads and wine. Founded on ancient Mosaic traditions, Mormonism is actually a Christianized form of Freemasonry, which itself descends from the ancient Hebrew and Egyptian mystery schools and their entheogenic

rites. For example, one of the prime symbols of Masonry is the acacia branch, which as you know, is rich with DMT.”

Grabbing his backpack and satchel from the carousel, Josh pushed Màiri’s luggage cart to the taxi stand as he concentrated on remembering everything Màiri was saying.

“But Josh, something else Mosiah told me was even more surprising. He claimed certain psychoactive communions are still used to this day in the special Masonic orders beyond 32 degrees. Given that Joseph Smith and his father had been high ranking Freemasons, I shouldn’t have been so surprised to learn they incorporated secret Masonic rituals into their new religion, including ancient entheogenic communions.”

Pausing to hand their bags to the taxi driver, Màiri waited until the two were settled in the cab before continuing her briefing.

“But now get this. Mosiah told me that Joseph Smith preferred the *Datura* flower, known as Angel’s Trumpet, in both communion wine and anointing oil to bestow religious visions upon his followers. He said these ceremonies were described in detail in Smith’s personal diaries, explaining how he and his brethren would lay down when visions of heaven overcame them. To be honest, I was pretty skeptical about all this until I did the research to convince myself.”

“According to LaMar Petersen in his 1975 book *Hearts Made Glad*, a sacramental wine was used to induce a visionary experience at the very first conference of the Church in 1830, I think it was, at Fayette, New York. One excerpt from Smith’s diary went something like this:”

We partook together of the emblems of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ...and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon us in a miraculous manner...many of our members prophesied, while others had the heavens opened to their view, and were so overcome that we had to lay them on beds, or other convenient places.

Turning east onto Interstate-80, the taxi was now headed into downtown Salt Lake City. They could already see the Salt Lake Temple towering over the downtown skyline.

“Petersen went on to describe an afternoon a few years later where brother Frederick Williams partook of the bread and wine communion, saying afterward that a holy angel of God came and sat between him and Joseph Smith, Sr. Then later in 1836, I think it was, Smith the younger used an anointing oil on himself and several of his Brethren. His diary entry clearly describes *Datura* exposure through the skin when he said:”

The heavens were opened upon us and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell.

“In fact, many of the Brethren reported seeing ‘glorious visions’ like this, Màiri added. “I couldn’t help but conclude that the roots of Mormonism and Masonry were both founded in the same secret communion rites of Solomon’s Temple, which, as I came to learn, descended from even more ancient Vedic Soma ascension rites. Mosiah was adamant that such rituals continue in some form even to this day in both organizations, requiring a continuous and fresh supply of entheogenic botanicals which he provides.”

“Are you serious?” Josh interrupted. “How could both of these organizations keep such a huge secret? Wouldn’t it leak out somehow?”

“I don’t know, Josh, but this is what Mosiah told me. We know the inner circles are sworn to secrecy under pain of death. And beyond this, the social stigma and legal penalties of using controlled substances is a pretty good deterrent against spilling the beans,” she suggested. “It’s certainly possible that a tight knit cult of any kind can keep a secret.”

“As the official vegetalismo for the LDS Church, Mosiah has a long-standing agreement with certain Native American tribes for sacred plants, in particular the Ute tribe from which Utah gets its name. Other than *Datura stramonium*, also known as Jimson weed or Toloachi, Mosiah told me the Church receives regular supplies of purple *Psilocybe Cubensis* mushrooms, *Acacia Confusa*, Peyote cactus, *Salvia Divinorum*,



Cannabis and other sacred plants native to North and Central America. He has provided me with small amounts of a few of these but my hope is he will agree to sell us other ingredients we need for the Sequence.”

“Okay then,” Josh added, “if the Mormon Church uses psychedelic botanicals to induce religious visions, why are they doing it? To what purpose?”

“Who knows? Maybe they have regular meetings with their angel Moroni who supposedly led Joseph Smith to the golden plates that became the Book of Mormon,” Màiri speculated. “Just like your meetings with Iesous and the scroll you received from Rambha, they might be channeling information from this Moroni character or even trying to influence world affairs.”

Josh had to stop and ponder this a minute. He had always thought of the Mormons as a bunch of religious nuts but now he wasn’t so sure. Maybe they really were interacting with non-physical beings and possibly even manipulating world events. Or maybe he was just becoming as crazy as they were.

Approaching Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City, the Wasatch mountain range made a magnificent backdrop for the skyline. Màiri took this opportunity to share what she had learned about the city’s history.

“So, this town was settled by Brigham Young and 147 other pioneers in 1847. These so-called Latter-day Saints fled west from Nauvoo, Illinois after trying to establish a theocratic government and being charged with rioting and treason. Joseph Smith was subsequently attacked and his brother Hyrum killed by a large mob. When they reached Utah they were free to found Salt Lake City as a religious theocracy, but it gradually grew into the secular metropolitan area it is today with only about half of the residents identifying as Mormon. Nonetheless, the LDS Church is still the largest landowner in the city with its main temple located in the center of downtown surrounded by other LDS buildings that together dominate the skyline.”

Josh marveled at the Salt Lake Temple with its tall pyramidal steeples and triple towers built into the facade. From what Màiri had explained about ancient temple architecture, he could now easily

recognize this building as a reproduction of the triple tower or ‘triptych’ design found in ancient temple complexes around the world. At the apex of the central steeple was a golden statue of the angel Moroni playing a trumpet—a personification of the Datura Angel’s Trumpet flower, he presumed.

“Most people don’t know this temple was constructed in alignment with Jerusalem,” Màiri continued, pointing to the east. “It’s the only Mormon temple with a Holy of Holies initiation room behind the high altar like Solomon’s Temple. Inside is a baptismal font mounted on the backs of twelve oxen, a design described in the Book of Kings. It’s no accident that oxen, which are castrated bulls, were used as a symbol for the baptism ceremony of rebirth. It comes from a time when the Taurus constellation represented birth and resurrection due to an association with the Venus transit across the Sun. As a symbol of celestial intercourse, this transit takes place between the horns of Taurus known anciently as the Tau Cross and associated with the Vedic yupa ascension pole that became the Christian cross. So, you see, the Mormon’s baptismal font is more about celestial fertility than it is emulating the baptism of Christ.”

Shaking his head after such a detailed explanation, Josh was again impressed by the depth and breadth of Màiri’s religious history knowledge. It was ironic indeed, he thought, that they should be driving through the holiest Christian city of the New World while discussing its origins in the ancient astrotheologies and entheogenic rituals of the Old World.

“Seems to me like the castrated oxen symbolized the denial of physical union in favor of celestial rebirth.” Josh remarked.

“Good point. That or a symbol of control and submission for how the faithful should act after initiation,” Màiri added with a wink. “Okay laddie, here we are,” she said as the taxi pulled into the building’s parking lot.

Paying the driver, they grabbed their bags and headed to the Church Office Building in the Temple Square complex. Taking an elevator to the 28<sup>th</sup> floor, they checked their bags with the receptionist before being ushered into a large conference room overlooking the Farmington Bay

portion of the Great Salt Lake. Stepping to the panoramic windows, they gasped at the majestic view of the Wasatch Mountains along the northern side of the lake. The location of the city and this building conveyed in no uncertain terms the tremendous power and influence of the LDS Church in Utah, the United States, and indeed the entire world.

Suddenly a man about six feet tall with short dark hair wearing a dark blue business suit walked into the room. Shaking hands, Josh could sense the charisma and presence of a holy man. No one would ever suspect this conservative businessman to be a Mormon shaman. Taking their seats around a rustic 19<sup>th</sup> century conference table, Mosiah held a relaxed smile as he leaned back in his black leather chair across the table.

“So, how can I be of service, Dr. Winegard?”

“First, thank you for seeing us today, Mosiah,” Màiri replied. “Dr. Savin and I are on a field trip to learn more about entheogenic communion practices. Frankly, we were hoping you could share with us the procedures and rites concerning your use of psychoactive plants and communions.”

“Of course, you know I am not at liberty to discuss specifics about our recipes or even acknowledge that we use any psychoactive ingredients in our sacrament. But confidentially—and this can never be repeated to anyone—I will be happy to discuss my personal botanical collection,” Mosiah replied. “Wait here and I will retrieve some samples.”

After a brisk walk down the hall, Mosiah returned carrying a beautiful wooden humidor decorated with gold hardware and an inlaid image of a beehive.

“Ah, the beehive symbol—state emblem of Utah revered by Mormons and Masons alike,” Màiri pointed out. “Bonny wee treasure chest that one is!”

Placing the box on the table, Mosiah opened it with great respect. Removing first a Mormon standard-issue green apron, he unfolded the cloth flat on the table. Onto this he carefully removed and placed the humidor’s contents for his guests’ inspection. The reverence and care with which he handled the sacred botanicals was readily apparent.

“Hypothetically speaking, different plants can be used by practitioners in different rituals depending on which celestial alignments are being honored,” Mosiah explained. “I acquire them through my shaman friends in the Northern Shoshone and mountain Ute tribes, both descendants of the noble Aztecs.”

Pointing to one of the specimens, Mosiah described it for Josh.

“There are some thirty psychoactive compounds in this one peyote button, the main one being mescaline. Somewhere between six and fifteen of these little quarter-sized buttons is enough to transport your consciousness deep into what we call the Celestial Kingdom. Eating them raw will make you sick, so it must first be cored and then the psychoactive compounds extracted in the right proportions to eliminate negative side effects.”

“This one’s a rare one,” Màiri said, flashing her winsome smile at Mosiah. “If I’m not mistaken, it’s the *Sofksi Mirabilis multiflora* of the Four-o’clock family. Your Ute mountain friends must have given these to you, Mosiah, because they only grow in the higher elevations. I believe they’re used for diagnostic or health divination. Isn’t that right?”

“That’s right,” the vegetalismo replied. “They grow at higher elevations and are hunted by the Ute.

“How much would all of these specimen cost, for example?” Josh inquired.

“Well, let’s see. This little collection would probably cost upwards of \$2,500 from my sources,” Mosiah estimated. “It’s not cheap by any means. But, it may not matter because I can’t sell them to you anyway.”

“Why is that, Mosiah?” Màiri asked, clearly concerned at the thought of trying to find another trustworthy source for these particular plants and mushrooms. “You’ve sold to me many times before.”

“If the Church Fathers were to ever learn I have sold any teacher plants to you, they would excommunicate me. Just your knowing I have these is danger enough. I simply cannot afford to risk my immortal soul any longer on something not sanctioned by the Church.”

Josh was unfazed. He had come prepared to make an offer they could not refuse.

“Mr. Smith, I believe Màiri has told you a little about our project and how our proprietary technology represents a major breakthrough in enhancing lucidity and memory retention during altered states of consciousness. Let me add some detail.”

“We have developed an electromagnetic apparatus that fits over the head called a God Helmet. To this we have added other technologies that further improve lucidity and memory to a degree well beyond what is possible in the normal waking state.”

“Sounds impressive, Dr. Savin,” Mosiah replied, leaning in further.

“But there is something else I am not at liberty to disclose fully at this time. Suffice it to say we have been in contact with certain, shall we say, folkloric beings who have given us a specific sequence of dimensions to explore.”

Pausing for dramatic effect, Josh leaned forward to lock eyes with Mosiah.

“What if we partnered with you and the Church on this project? What if we invited you to work directly with Màiri and me at Princeton? The LDS Church would then have access to everything we discover during our trials, which you could then use to enhance your own astral travels. Hypothetically speaking, of course.”

“I don’t know...” Mosiah replied slowly, clearly conflicted about the idea. The Church had always been closed to outsiders to prevent leaks that could bring a rain of negative publicity and even legal action. At the same time, accelerating the Church’s mission within the Celestial Kingdom could be a significant opportunity.

“Better yet, Mosiah, we will license our God Helmet to you in exchange for your communion recipes and a continuous supply of botanicals. We will, of course, reimburse you for whatever costs you incur to procure them. Do you think the Church Fathers would consider such a strategic and confidential partnership with my research group at Princeton?”

“Maybe,” Mosiah replied, pausing a moment to mull it over. “Here is the best I can do. I will propose it at the next Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to see if the others would be willing. Personally, I think it makes a lot of sense and I will do my best to convince them, but who

knows. They are very conservative men. I will be in touch with you once I have their answer.”

“This is all we can ask,” Màiri said, “and look forward to hearing of their decision.”

## Chapter 9

### *The Entheotech Theory*

**I**t had been a long, arduous field trip and both scientists were eager to return home. Màiri had not slept a wink during their flight from Tehran. She was far too excited so instead set to work finishing her field notes before they landed. It was amazing how much they had learned in just three weeks.

Day 1-3:

After meeting with Mosiah Smith in Salt Lake City, we flew to Brazil where we spent seven days in the Brazilian rain forest with the Santo Daime brotherhood. Hiking through the jungle then taking a boat down the Amazon, we arrived at a small village where we were greeted by the local curandero (medicine man).

Day 4-6:

After participating in congregational singing of hymns and ecstatic dancing for two days, we were finally allowed to accompany the curandero into the forest to retrieve ingredients used to make the entheogenic Ayahuasca communion.

Hacking our way through the jungle, it didn't take long to find the Banisteriopsis caapi vine, which the locals call Jagube. Filling a couple of baskets with vine sections, we turned our attention toward finding the Psychotria viridis shrub needed to blend with the Jagube. Note: the Psychotria, a plant rich in DMT, would have little effect without the monoamine oxidase inhibitor contained in the Jagube vine.

When Josh asked the curandero how his tribe had learned to combine these particular plants to create the Ayahuasca juice, he told us

instructions for how to make “The Wine of the Souls” had been received directly from the plant spirit itself. “It was a messenger from another realm,” he said.

#### Day 7-9:

Over the next three days, Josh and I received increasingly larger doses of the Ayahuasca communion in small cups. Between periods of stomach pains and retching, we both experienced intense visions that were directly related to our lives.

I was able to face a long-suppressed rape from when I was twelve that the potion helped me purge (between intermittent periods of vomiting). Josh, on the other hand, had several visions of a flying serpent and an Indian goddess who spoke to him. She apparently addressed him as the leader of the Inca.

In his final vision, Josh was flown to a large mountain between two bodies of water where a great pyramidal temple stood. What exactly the vision meant, he could not say. The curandero suggested the goddess was Ixchel who had recognized him as a tribal chief—perhaps Túpac Amaru, a famous leader of the Inca, or perhaps some mythical god.

#### Day 10-12:

After Brazil, we flew to southern Siberia where we visited a shaman of the Evenki reindeer herding tribe. Flying through Moscow to the Irkutsk Airport near Lake Baikal, we stayed overnight in the Courtyard Irkutsk before boarding a small plane bound for the small town of Vanavara in the southernmost region of Evenkia on the Tunguska River. There we met our female “utagen” or shaman named Natalia. She picked us up at the airport in a dilapidated pickup and we drove three hours down a series of dirt roads to reach her remote Evenki village.

#### Days 13-17:

For five days we were immersed in the tribe’s daily routine and religious rituals. Theirs is a tripartite universe where beneficent spirits occupy the



upper world, humans the middle, and deceased ancestors together with evil spirits in the lower realm. We were very fortunate to be invited to attend the tribal ascension ceremony in the communal yurt, which was absolutely fascinating. It began with the sharing of a large cup of the sacred mushroom communion.

To our surprise (and disgust!) the Evenki communion was made with Natalia's urine, which was infused with DMT from large baskets of Amanita mushrooms that she eats before peeing into a jar. This is used by the Evenki to avoid unpleasant side effects from the mushrooms. We had no choice but to drink her piss if we were to establish trust with the tribe and learn firsthand the effectiveness of their methods. Needless to say, I am already thinking about how to reproduce it in the laboratory, without needing to filter the Amanita through my own kidney, of course.

The Turu communion ceremony:

In what was the most important Evenki ritual of the year, the tribe had mounted a larch pine in the center of the communal yurt. Representing the World Tree in Evenki cosmology, they placed the tree's roots in the central hearth so that its branches extended upward through the smoke hole. Called a Turu by the Evenki, the tree represents a ladder between worlds for the shaman.

Sitting on a white fur rug in the most honored part of the yurt, Natalia wore a headdress comprising a red skullcap with curved metal antlers coming out the crown, sleigh bells dangling at the ends, and a beaded veil hanging over her eyes. Already in a trance from eating so many mushrooms, she began to dance around the Turu to the rhythm of her tambourine. Soon she was in an ecstatic state and ready to ascend.

Climbing branch by branch up the trunk of the tree, Natalia sang to Seveki, the guardian spirit of the plant and animal world, imploring her to open the door to the upper realm. As a translator explained to us, her spirit would be transported on the back of a flying reindeer, later

returning to be reborn on Earth. Climbing down the Turu, she repeated this again and again over the course of three days, during which time there were plenty of pee breaks so Natalia could make more mushroom juice for the tribe.

We both experienced a number of other visions during the ordeal. In particular, we had occasional glimpses of the machine elves, although they appeared only in vague forms without the God Helmet. Beyond this, our consciousness seemed to drift in and out of the tribal yurt, visiting different worlds and strange beings.

Note: The Evenki solstice ritual is the likely origin for Nordic mythology of Odin, the Allfather of Asgard, which evolved into the story of Saint Nicholas and the winter solstice celebration we know as Christmas. What follows is a summary of my correlation theory linking Evenki religion to the Christmas Story.

Correlation of *A Visit from Saint Nicholas* with Evenki rite:

Santa's bag of gifts is the Evenki shaman's Amanitas, hung outside to dry on the branches of native larch pines. His Christmas tree is the Turu ladder of ascension and resurrection to heaven, encircled by gifts of love like an elf ring of Amanitas around a pine tree. His flying reindeer, the ones who carry him into the sky and beyond the limits of time, are the Evenki's own reindeer who leap repeatedly into the air after eating the Amanita mushrooms (witnessed this myself). Climbing down the chimney to deliver his gifts, Santa is the reindeer shaman lowering himself down the larch tree through the tribal yurt smoke hole. The jolly elf's costume mimics the ceremonial dress of an Evenki shaman who honors the red and white spotted Amanita. With the characteristic twinkle in his eye and finger aside his nose the elven Allfather knows a great secret—the secret that milk and cookies are but a poor substitute for the original psychedelic Evenki mushroom juice.

Day 18-20:

Left Siberia today for Yazd, Iran by way of Tehran. Yazd is an ancient center for Zoroastrianism in the middle of the Iranian desert. I have arranged for us to meet a well-respected zaotar named Amir in Yazd, who will take us to a small village in the countryside called Pir-e Sabz, meaning “The Green Pir”. It is nicknamed Chak Chak, meaning Drip-Drip, after a fresh water spring located there. It is considered the most sacred of all Zoroastrian mountain shrines.

Located on the side of a mountain next to a towering cliff, the village centers on an ancient fire temple honoring the goddess Anahita. She is associated with the planet Venus through a cognate identity with the Semitic Ishtar and Hebrew Asherah. The fire temple is located in a rock grotto sheltered by two large bronze doors. Inside are marble floors and an eternal fire they keep burning in the sanctuary. Here we participated in the Zoroastrian ceremony known as Yasna (see Vedic Yajna).

Amir wore the white robes and cap of a zaotar to conduct our Yasna service. First reciting the Yasna texts, Amir performed the Ab-Zohr or “offering to the waters” ritual to honor Anahita. As part of the offering, the Haoma communion was served from a silver chalice shaped like a bird. Each of us took turns drinking what was a very bitter wine.

Correlation of Zoroastrian Yasna to Vedic Yajna rite:

For one, the Yasna uses water instead of fire to invoke the water goddess Anahita rather than the Vedic fire god Agni. For another, Amir told me the Persian Haoma elixir differs from the Vedic Soma recipe in that it uses a blend of Ephedra, Peganum harmala, and acacia instead of the Amanita mushrooms used by the Indo-Aryans in the north. Reason being mushrooms are not available in the desert.

Ephedra is known to the Persians as “hum” or “homa” and is an indigenous plant. Effect in the bloodstream is as a stimulant, speeding the heart and increasing blood pressure. It is blended

with *Peganum harmala* seeds, as a Monoamine Oxidase A Inhibitor, or MAOI, and DMT-rich acacia bark. We learned this Haoma recipe is used today only in secret by Zoroastrian priests and produces a more intense psychoactive experience than either the Evenki mushroom drink or Ayahuasca. In particular, we noticed a strong sensation of floating (about three feet off the ground).

By the time Amir had finished his excerpt from the Visperad text to conclude the service, the temple walls and floor had become semitransparent to us with open, geometric forms. Josh said he recognized this as an archetype of the machine elves. Then, as we stared into the eternal flame that burned on the hourglass-shaped altar, the room fell away completely leaving only a large winged eye.

Appearing to both of us as a shared vision, it was a match for the winged solar symbol of Zoroastrianism known as the Faravahar, which means ‘guardian angel’. My impression was it was a distinctly feminine eye similar to the winged Egyptian Eye of Ra or Wadjet. Josh and I agree it was probably the Great Lady herself—the golden mother Anahita, wife of sun god Ahura Mazda. Apparently, the Ephedra in the Haoma tunes a totally different entity than the mushrooms.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we are about thirty minutes away from our landing at Newark Liberty International Airport,” the flight attendant announced. “Please bring your seat to an upright and locked position and stow all electronic devices for landing.”

Finishing the review of her field notes, Màiri was pleased they had managed to convince each vegetalismo, curandero, shaman, or zaotar to share their most sacred communion recipes and, more importantly, demonstrate their method of preparation. And while it was anything but easy, they were successful in negotiating regular shipments of botanical supplies from each group.

After participating in the different communion ceremonies, the two had begun to formulate a theory for how the different recipes must have

guided the development of religious thought throughout human history. Putting away her notes in preparation for landing at Newark, there was still a little time to discuss the theory with Josh.

“Have you had any additional thoughts on our...what did you call it...entheotech theory?”

“Yes, but I’m still working through how exactly each communion recipe is able to tune different dimensions and visionary beings,” he replied, sliding his notebook into the backpack under the seat in front of him. “It’s as if each communion recipe opens a perceptual passageway into a different resonant frequency of space-time.”

“Sounds right, Josh. Each religion in human history appears to have evolved from the visions tuned in by whatever teacher plants were locally available. Over time, it was the local sourced communion recipe that determined the appearance and personalities of their gods along with their idea of heaven. Of course, proving this hypothesis scientifically would mean cataloging the effects of each psychoactive compound—whether an ergoline, tryptamine, or phenethylamine—along with their corresponding religion and use set theory to identify how the different recipes blend to excite or inhibit specific regions of neuroreceptors. It is in these different regions where I believe we will find the doorway constructs for each dimension or ‘heaven’. Wouldn’t you agree?”

“Probably so,” he replied. “But I’d add that each dimension probably corresponds to a specific harmonic of the brain’s Beta fundamental, which can vary between fourteen and thirty hertz. If this correlation is correct, then Huxley’s so-called ‘doors of perception’ are actually harmonic nodes relative to a given individual’s brainwave and, more broadly, to the genetic makeup of the local tribe and regional culture. In this way, the communion compounds act something like chemical keys to unlock and open different non-physical worlds for conscious exploration, which in time evolve into tribal religious rites, deities, and mythologies.”

“In musical terms,” Màiri added, handing a last item of trash to the flight attendant, “the Sequence could be described as an inter-dimensional melody derived from the harmonic series. For instance, the first seven overtones of the cosmic fundamental, anciently named the

Bardo or Svarga loka, would consist of an octave, a perfect fifth, a perfect fourth, a major third, a minor third, a sub-minor third, and a super-major second—together spanning three octaves. According to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, our earthly dimension occupies the fundamental or tonic frequency of this series. The teacher plants listed in the scroll are then blended into different communion recipes to resonate specific areas of the brain at these same harmonic intervals to enable penetration and travel to other dimensions. Music and chants tuned to the communion would then further amplify and focus the effect.”

“Of course, this series of harmonic dimensions would continue into the higher, rarified realms known as Moksha or Nirvana, which we have discussed,” she continued. “This then corresponds to the upper harmonic series above the third octave. There is a well-known gap between a stack of four justly tuned perfect fifths and two octaves plus a major third known as a syntonic comma. I have often thought this gap, equal to the ratio 81:80, might act as a kind of harmonic barrier or *schisma* above the first harmonic in the multiverse to separate the lower seven heavens from the upper Nirvanic heavens. After all, the reciprocal of this ratio produces a fraction composed of the natural number sequence 0.98765432...”

“Okay, that makes sense,” Josh interrupted, straining to talk over the flight attendant’s gate connection announcement in Newark. “But what about the Seven Hells of the Underworld. If the multiverse really is harmonically organized as you suggest, then there must be a symmetrical counterpart to the upper realm.”

“You mean like Naraka in Jain cosmology?” she replied. “In Jainist cosmology, the transcendental Mount Meru is described as an hourglass shape for this very reason. Like the Seven Heavens, the Seven Hells of Naraka is also populated by disincarnate beings. However, in these realms it is said there are only demons and suffering souls. As I’ve explained before, my theory is the Naraka corresponds to the subharmonic or undertone series—a mirror of the harmonic series. I think these undertones could correspond to a sequence of seven propyl dimensions in opposition to the seven upper methyl dimensions. I’m already working on a propyl serum to test this theory.”

“Then, what you’re saying, Màiri, is that all the elemental spirits, religious deities, and demons—entire pantheons of mythical gods—might be tuned in through harmonically spaced frequencies and that these frequencies would correspond to specific psychoactive compounds and sonic frequencies to create a dimensional sequence. And by combining the right organic compounds with the right sound and electromagnetic frequencies, our—”

“Our *entheotech* system?” she suggested.

“Yes, our *entheotech* system should be able to open up each of these dimensional frequencies in the mind for lucid exploration. If we are to believe what I was told by Iesous and Rambha, visiting each dimension in the Sequence to make friends and seek support should have a harmonizing effect on the collective consciousness back on Earth.”

“Seems plausible to me,” Màiri agreed, pausing for a minute to watch as their airliner touched down and begin its taxi to the gate.

“As I’ve said before, Josh, when you travel through the Sequence, you will meet the gods worshipped in ancient cultures, summoned by whatever psychoactive plants and mushrooms were indigenous to that part of the world. Although their religions may have originated in a common Proto-Indo-European cosmology and cosmogony, the dimensions each culture envisioned and the appearance of their gods must have differed according to the kind of local botanicals they used in their communions.”

“Take, for instance, the Mayan deities Quetzalcoatl and Ixchel that you yourself saw during our time with Santo Daime. The local ingredients used in their Ayahuasca tuned in an entirely different set of deities than the Persian Haoma used by our Zoroastrian zaotar. The same must be true for other cultures according to available *entheogens*.”

“Deities such as Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva would have been tuned in by the Amanita mushroom just as the Egyptian Ennead of gods were tuned in through the immortalizing drink of their Tree of Life, the Acacia Nilotica tree. The Greek Olympians would then be visible only thru the Anatolian communion blend of Sant Acacia and Psilocybe cyanescens, a recipe passed down from the pastoral Arcadians migrating southward from Armenia.”

“My hypothesis then is each dimension or world of the Sequence represents a harmonic of Earth tuned in according to the psychoactive plants and fungi found in different geographical regions. Each plant and dimensional world would then have its own harmonic series that tunes in specific intelligent deities within that world. In effect, the organization of the multiverse is a lot like music harmony where each resonant frequency harmonizes with the whole to be co-resident and self-sustainable. As things are now, Earth and its seven closest harmonic dimensions appear to be in a state of imbalance where destructive interference is making them all dissonant and unsustainable. Anything we can do to reduce dissonance and restore harmony throughout the Sequence could have a stabilizing effect on the fundamental dimension which is our world.”

“I couldn’t agree more,” Josh nodded. “This is becoming a much bigger project than I imagined. We need to find a way to calm things in each dimension and convince the entities we find there to help us restore order. If we don’t, I fear the entire multiverse will eventually reach a tipping point and self-destruct, taking Earth and every other dimension of the universe down with it.”



## Chapter 10

### *Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Inside the council room of the Salt Lake Temple, eleven men in suits chatted as they waited for the twelfth man to arrive. As governing members of the Melchizedek high priesthood and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, these were the living prophets of the LDS Church with the power to control the beliefs and actions of more than 15 million people worldwide.

At precisely 8:00 AM, Mosiah Smith arrived, greeting each of the other apostles around the table before taking his seat to the right of the President. After the usual assortment of Church business, the President asked Mosiah to discuss the proposed partnership with Princeton University.

“Gentlemen, I met with Dr. Savin and his colleague Dr. Winegard on Monday to discuss an extraordinary technology they have developed,” Mosiah explained. “An apparatus they call the God Helmet applies electromagnetic stimulation to the brain, altering consciousness and inducing mild visions. Other technologies are used to further enhance the experience. In any case, Dr. Savin claims to have found a way to use teacher plants in combination with this helmet to enable fully lucid travel through the Celestial Kingdom. Formal trials of the system begin next month.”

“After carefully reviewing his proposal and confirming his experimental results, I am convinced we need this technology to improve our communication with the Brotherhood and to accelerate our mission. For this reason, I am requesting this Quorum’s blessing to enter into a confidential partnership with Savin’s Group at Princeton University. He asks that we provide our sacraments, which they will pay for, in exchange for licensed use of their God Helmet technology. As part of this agreement, I would work with Dr. Savin and Dr. Winegard in their

laboratory at Princeton and learn everything they discover during the trials and apply that to our own missions.”

The apostles listened intently as Mosiah spoke. As the descendant of Joseph Smith and Revelator of the LDS Church, he was held in the highest regard. He was the one who usually communicated with the Great White Brotherhood of Ascended Masters, a group of discarnate beings known in esoteric circles as the Masters of the Ancient Wisdom, Secret Chiefs, Council of Light, Angelic Choir, and the Mahatmas. Mosiah’s meetings with the Ascended Masters had many times provided valuable guidance for the Church. With the right communion, he could sometimes even summon the angel Moroni, the one who had led his great-great grandfather to the Golden Plates. But they knew these visions were sporadic and often fuzzy. It could be difficult for him to understand and remember the messages. This is why everyone in the room immediately understood how important the God Helmet could be and what it could do for their sacred mission.

As an extension of the Brotherhood on Earth, the Apostles relied heavily on Mosiah’s expertise and advice. Mosiah was the only one who knew how to prepare the secret communions, administer the sacrament, and interpret the visions. For these reasons, he was a critical council member and the Quorum seldom ignored his advice. Still the question remained whether Savin could be trusted in such a sensitive and secretive partnership.

“Does he know of our dealings with the Ascended Masters?” the President asked.

“No, Mr. President, he does not appear to,” replied Mosiah. “But there is something else that concerns me in this regard. He claims to have been in communication with folkloric beings, which I assume to be the Alfar, who have given him instructions on how to travel through a dimensional sequence of some kind.”

“What is the purpose of this sequence,” asked one of the other apostles.

“He didn’t say, but I believe it may be a control sequence to influence events in this world. At the very least, he could use it to persuade the Mahatmas to help him instead of us.”

“We simply cannot allow him to go against God’s will and gain control of the Kingdom,” the President warned.

“I agree,” added another apostle, with murmurs of agreement all around. “We must have this technology to ensure the building of the Third Temple.”

“So...then do I have your approval to work with these scientists? Do you agree that we should share with them our sacrament in exchange for their technology?” Mosiah urged.

“I don’t think we have a choice,” the President finally replied. “But do whatever you can to stop him once you’ve secured his technology. We will await your report, Revelator.”

After the closing prayer and the Quorum was adjourned, Mosiah returned to his office. He had an endowment ceremony scheduled later that afternoon with very little time to prepare. Opening his personal safe, he retrieved the humidor of sacraments he had nicknamed the Ark. Placing the box into a leather satchel with his priestly robes, he headed to the Temple a few blocks away. Arriving an hour before the new inductees were scheduled to arrive, his routine was to perform a special anointing ceremony on himself so that he might attain the Christ Consciousness necessary to properly endow others.

Stripping naked in one of the endowment dressing rooms, the apostle stood before a full-length mirror for the anointing ceremony. Removing a vial from the Ark, it held the Chrism oil made from an ancient recipe of honey, long peppers, and fruit of the thorn apple, commonly known as *Datura stramonium*. Pouring this into a small bowl, he dipped his middle finger into the oil between each application to his body in accordance with the order and symbolism of Church tradition.

The proper order of anointment was forehead; ears; above each eyelid; at the bridge of the nose; around his lips; on the nape of the neck; on each shoulder; at the lower back; at the center of his chest; along the length of each arm; on each side of the bowel; along the front of the penis; and finally down the rear length of both legs from the knee anterior to ankle.

Placing the vial back into the box, the apostle proceeded next with the sacrament ritual. Removing his green apron from the Ark, he

carefully unfolded it onto the table. Removing a slice of bread, this he placed on the apron. Different from the ordinary ‘wonderbread’ given to Church members during sacrament meetings, this bread was a special shewbread he had infused with extracts of selected teacher plants. It was an old family recipe developed by his great-great grandfather that had remained unchanged in the family for more than one hundred sixty years. Closing his eyes, he began to recite the sacrament prayer from memory.

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it; that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he has given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.”

Eating now the shewbread, the apostle kneeled before the mirror. Retrieving another vial from the Ark, he poured a small amount of a dark red liquid into a small goblet. Ordinary water was usually used for this part of the ceremony, but today he would drink the “living water” containing one last entheogenic ingredient. Bowing his head and closing his eyes once again, he continued the communion prayer.

“O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee, in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.”

Drinking the potion from the Holy Chalice, he stood up to gaze upon himself in the mirror. Naked before God, he could feel Heavenly Father’s presence come upon him. The points he had anointed had begun

to burn as chills ran up his spine. He smiled as the Holy Spirit worked its magic inside him. Soon he felt as if he were floating, a liberation of his soul from the body's weight. Again, he smiled to himself as he felt the presence of wings preparing him for flight into the Celestial Kingdom.

Placing all the items back into the Ark and returning it to his satchel, he steadied himself before proceeding down a connecting hall to the baptismal chamber. Reaching the chamber, he marveled, as he always did, at the baptismal font—a small tub of water supported by statues of the twelve oxen symbolic of the Zodiac. Walking around the upper deck, he stepped slowly down the steps into the warm water. Standing there in the pool at the center of the twelve oxen, he was ready.

Glancing down, the serpents of the Mount swam round his feet, some with the heads of other creatures. This was his naga escort to the heavenly realm and he welcomed them. The oxen had also come alive, another sign his spirit would soon be drawn up through the Tau-Ru into the Celestial Kingdom. Finally, the time had come, as it always does.

The room burst open as a radiant light shone down from above. And though blinding to look upon it, Mosiah could ne'er look away. For the blessed Messenger—the blessed angel Moroni himself—had this time descended upon him. As the room fell away and the baptismal floated in a glorious white mist, the angel did speak to him in a magnificent and most powerful voice.

“Now I, Moroni, speak unto you, my brother; and I would that you should know another of your world hath entered the Kingdom of Christ seeking the way and the light. Be warned for this one threatens the Throne of the Eternal Father; and exhort you, O my brother, to deny further entrance.

Behold, the will of God is great; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in the Christ our Lord, he will manifest unto you and deliver the power of the Holy Ghost to defeat this enemy and those who would so follow.

And woe unto them who shall enter without me, for they will die in their sins, and they will not be saved in the Kingdom of God; and I speak it according to the words of Christ; and I lie not.

And Awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.

And now I bid you, farewell. I go to rest again in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.”

Then with a flash, the angel was gone and the baptismal room restored. Stepping out of the pure waters of the font, he was renewed, born again into the earthly realm. Once more he was reminded by Moroni of the importance of Zion and the Church’s mission to rebuild Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem according to End Times prophecy. But this time, he was also commanded to stop an intruder, presumably Dr. Savin, from entering again into the Kingdom of God. It seemed undeniable that Moroni had delivered this message directly from Heavenly Father himself as a call to arms to deny Satan’s intrusion to the Throne of God.

Drying himself off, the apostle extracted his clothes from the satchel. Dressing first in the protective temple undergarments, he paused to admire the Masonic square and compass embroidered over each breast. Evil could never penetrate these sacred garments of the Temple; this he knew and it gave him comfort. Over this he donned the white robes of the High Priest, complete with girdle, apron, and mitre.

As a final adornment, he placed a six-inch square pendant made of gold and twelve colorful gems around his neck. Representing the twelve tribes of Israel, the gold and bejeweled ‘hoshen’ signified his status as High Priest of the LDS Church. To this he added his own secret tool of divination—the original pair of Joseph Smith’s red and green divining spectacles known as the Urim and Thummim. These he placed into an inner shirt pocket closest to his heart. Only then did he feel properly dressed for the afternoon ceremony.





## Chapter 11

### *Receiving the Vajra-kīla*

Arriving at the lab from their field trip, a voicemail was waiting. It was Mosiah saying the LDS Church had accepted Josh's partnership offer and he was ready to come to Princeton with a sizeable supply of botanicals. Replying by email, Josh expressed his appreciation for the Church's acceptance of his offer and hoped he could come to Princeton immediately. They could really use his help.

Màiri had already begun serum preparations for the Sequence using botanicals already received from some of her new tribal sources. By the time Mosiah arrived, his supply would provide the last ingredients necessary to complete the Sequence. She would put him to work prepping raw materials while she distilled and blended them according to the scroll recipes. Much work lay ahead to finish designing and assembling the apparatus needed to produce and administer the seven serums of the Sequence.

Jude had also made progress while the two scientists were away. After three weeks of all-nighters without a break, Jude had completed an alpha release of the sequencer software to administer the seven entheogenic compounds synchronously with seven electromagnetic and sonic frequencies in the God Helmet. Once Màiri had all the serums prepared, the entheotech system would be ready for integration testing before release into beta. The beta test phase would then require a live run-through with a human subject. It was very important that the platform be as bug-free as possible by then.

"I hope you realize this isn't going to be easy on you Josh," Màiri warned. "We have no idea how your body is going to respond to the sudden switches between serums. And we also don't have any idea what kind of perceptual experience you will have—how your mind will react

to completely different psychedelics strung together in a sequence like this.”

“Màiri, you worry too much,” Josh smiled, easing back into the lounge. “I’m a big boy and am fully aware of the risks.”

“Okay, laddie,” she replied dubiously, gently inserting the hypodermic into his left arm. “But, I can’t help but feel a little worried, you know,” she said, glancing at his powder blue T-shirt and how it accented his sky-blue eyes.

“Last chance...sure you want to go through with this?” she whispered.

Josh could feel her concern as they locked eyes. He could also feel something else that concerned him even more. They had developed a much deeper connection over the past few months, more than just professional. Once this trial was over he would need to tell her how he really felt about her.

“Yes, I’m ready,” he replied with a nod. “We’re too far in now to stop.”

Plugging in the God Helmet, VR goggles, and headphones, the sound of Màiri’s calming Hindu mantras was all he could hear. Dimming the lights, she checked the leads one last time before turning to leave. Looking back, as she always did, he seemed more helpless than usual. Lying there with his head completely shrouded and his body bristling with tubes, sensors, and wires, he looked like a pathetic laboratory rat.

As before, the helmet was wired into the monitoring station outside the observation window. This time, though, the helmet frequencies and A/V feeds were entirely under the control of Jude’s sequencing program, which also triggered the valve actuators on seven different drip bags filled with Màiri’s entheogenic serums. In this way, the frequencies in the God Helmet could be automatically synchronized with a timed sequential release of the seven psychedelic compounds into Josh’s bloodstream.

Starting the Ganzfeld white noise in his goggles and headphones, Màiri clicked the button to begin the automated sequence. In just seconds, Josh could see the familiar undulating fractal patterns forming in the white noise of the Ganzfeld display. Breathing in and out, the

patterns throbbed in time with the blood coursing through his body. Then as the effects of the first serum whooshed in, he felt himself floating upward, liberated again from the oppressive pull of gravity.

Any sense of being enclosed in the lab had disappeared as Josh found himself transitioning into another world. The first thing he saw was a golden stream of light beaming down from an aquamarine sky. It reminded him of a late summer sunset in the Rockies. As his vision began to stabilize, he noticed dozens of luminous spheres ascending and descending through a bank of puffy clouds above.

The spheres seemed to be traveling along a latticework structure into the sky, itself part of a larger construct that could only be likened to an enormous electrical tower or oil derrick. But as he struggled to focus his attention on analyzing its structure, something like a giant hand suddenly grabbed him around the torso, lifting him swiftly up the lattice. It was not until he had broken through the clouds that he could see what had actually happened.

The “hand” was the same group of fluttering beings that had helped him back into his body before, the female Apsaras. This time they were helping him out of his physical body and into another dimension. Floating free in the sky now, a face began to form in a circular nimbus of clouds just above and in front of his field of view. It looked like the stereotypical sky god, the one thing Josh never expected to actually encounter.

But the face was not so much that of a solid creature, but rather a pareidolia face like Jesus toast that was constantly changing and reforming in the clouds. It was a saintly face, that of an elderly man as one might expect, with puffs of white hair and a beard. His eyes even sparkled with life, especially whenever the sunlight peeked through.

“Is this some kind of joke?” Josh muttered disappointed at what was either a cliché Biblical scene or a children’s fairy tale. “I’ve either arrived in Jacob’s Dream or climbed Jack’s beanstalk,” he said sardonically. “I can’t tell which.”

To this the sky god’s face changed to surprise, then disapproval. Inhaling to speak, the vapor puffs that were his mouth and cheeks rearranged themselves into words.

“Why are you here?” the sky god thundered, apparently surprised by the intrusion of a visitor still tethered to the material realm. “You remain incarnate.”

“I am a living explorer seeking knowledge of incorporeal worlds,” Josh replied in disbelief, looking around for any sign of the pearly gates. This must be the vision that inspired the Biblical entrance to heaven, he whispered to himself.

“And who, may I ask, are you?” Josh added incredulously. “Saint Peter? Jew-Peter? Jupiter? The Father and Rock of the Roman Church?” he inquired of the old man. “Are you Jove, Yehovah, or Yahu? Or are you the Greek thunder god Zeus, old man Dyeus Pita? Which storm god are you?”

“I am the one you know,” the sky god sighed. “But now your world is calling—*quod vocet*. You can go no further. *Hoc est in ore Emphyreum!*”

“I travel the Sequence under the guidance of one Rambha of Elphame,” Josh replied, feigning a bow. “May that I could pass on her behalf?”

Staring into the cloud face, it struck him as some kind of an automaton under the control of a remote intelligence. The whole thing seemed oddly similar to the scene in *The Wizard of Oz* where Dorothy Gale discovers the evil wizard is just a projected image operated by Professor Marvel sitting behind a curtain. This is the way it felt to him—an avatar for something else. The question then was: who, or what, was at the controls behind the clouds.

“Another holy man seeking the thunderbolt, I see,” the sky god echoed.

“I am no holy man, but yes—the vajra-kīla,” Josh replied.

“Then you must complete the *sequential trinus* to reach the *key resonare*. Everything will be clear once you have done so. Now go...*Ite—salvum facies orbis!*” the sky god commanded, as the vision slipped away. “But beware those who would stop you at the Eighth Gate...”

Free now, Josh was able to continue his traversal of the Sequence. But with only fifteen minutes allotted per step in the beta sequencer, he

had no time to explore. All he could do was observe as he passed helplessly through a series of psychedelic transitions followed by wildly different landscapes.

Reaching the last step, he encountered one other being. It was a Hindu deity emanating from inside a blurry light source. He was humanoid yet multi-faced with three heads, six arms, and four legs. In two of his three right hands were five-pronged and nine-pronged vajras; in his left a flaming trident made of gold and sparkling jewels. He wore a tiger skin loincloth with a belt of severed heads that dangled by their hair. To this were added trinkets of serpent vertebrae and fangs—naga necklaces, bracelets, hair braids, and earrings. But in his third right hand was a gold dagger, which he now moved forward to display as the other arms retreated.

“I am the one you seek, the Vajrakīlaya and Yamantaka Heruka who transmutes and transcends all obstacles and obscurations,” the visionary being proclaimed, brandishing the dagger in his hand. “Nothing can remain unchanged before me and nothing can resist.”

The dagger had a round ornamental pommel and quillon cross guard on the handle, a pattern similar to the ritual Dorje on the *vedi* back home. Holding the weapon in the palm of his right hand, it began to resonate until it reached an extraordinarily high frequency. And as it did, a fractal pattern formed in the space around it. The pattern he recognized was the famous Mandlebrot Set, a pattern balanced between perfect order and pure chaos.

“He whosoever holds the *kīla* receives the thunderbolt; that which delivers the immortal food of the gods, that which fertilizes the body, and that which opens the sun door. Emblazoned upon it is the divine sound of Indra—the Vajra thought form and template of life. It has the power to unlock the path of light. But be warned. Wield it for evil and Shiva shall have his revenge. Now, take it and dream your world as you wish it to be!” the being demanded, reaching forward as if to hand the dagger to Josh.

But rather than hand over the vajra-*kīla*, the entity lunged forward to thrust it deep into the center of Josh’s light body, releasing a powerful electrical shock that shot through him like a bolt of lightning. The impact

sent him flying backward, away from the entity and somehow into another world, another dimension. Yet, through it all he had remained conscious and fully aware.

Wherever he was now, it was placid and peaceful. Unlike the other dimensions, this one felt lighter and more transparent, as if he had fallen asleep only to wake up inside an early morning dream.

From deep inside his body now came the voice of the Vajrakīlaya.

“Gaze upon the island at the center of your world. The vajra-kīla has brought you to Jambudvīpa, the place of perfect balance. This it can do for others.”

Before him stretched a pale blue lake, overarched by rainbows and surrounded by a circular mountain range. This must surely be the archetype for an ideal and harmonious world for he knew of nothing on Earth that could compare to this.

“The cool waters of Anavatapta will soothe the fires that torment beings, removing all sins,” the voice continued. “It is with the aid of the Bodhisattva of the lake, the Anavatapta dragon, that such distress may be released.”

At one end, the greatest mountain rose upward to the sky, disappearing into space. Floating to its summit, he reached the outer edge of his dream, the furthest edge of his vision. There, dancing gods filled the sky.

“This is the land of Brahma, the first and eternal,” said the voice within. “Eight cities now surround you—one the Svarga of Lord Indra and seven others for the remaining Devatas.”

“Dear God!” Josh exclaimed, his arms rising in the air. “Am I in heaven?”

Engulfed in celestial music now, inside an aureole of light, he looked upon his world with new eyes. Beautiful and peaceful, the godhead must be near.

“Is this not the ecstasy of the noble ones?” he said drifting over the kingdom of Shambhala. “For here is your greatest love, O My God. It is more than I can bear; yet, neither can I turn away. Never do I wish to leave this place, for this is my truest home,” he echoed to the gods. “And never do I wish to leave you, my perfect sirs!”

For within him now was the irresistible light of the gods. Inside was the *key resonare* and *axis mundi* where the Rod of Asclepius and Staff of Hermes slowed to shape the world of intent. There resonated the celestial monochord, the standing wave archetype of coherence.

Surging again, the vajra-kīla sent shivers up his spine. Stretching his arms in exultation, the ether crackled around him. Bolts of blue plasma rippled through his hands and out into the ether.

“Am I god?” he asked, as the flickering flames danced around his clenched right fist.

Gripping the flow of plasma harder, the thunderbolt sizzled in his hands. Difficult to grasp for long, the vajra-kīla was like a cutting laser in his hand, a golden sphere turning round it. Growing brighter with the force of his will, the diamantine dagger distorted the holonomic projection, forming elaborate geometries in the local ether.

“I sought the fearsome thunderbolt only to find a weapon of peace and transformation,” he laughed aloud, gazing with disbelief at the vajra dagger in hand. “If it can change the skeptic in me, it can surely transform a cynical world.”

Harmonic patterns lit the ether around him, brightening him. Reaching the first tetrahedral harmonic, the vajra-kīla took the shape of the mighty trident of Neptune and Zeus.

“Behold your new superhero!” he said half in jest, twirling around to face the dancing gods. Waving the trident like a magic wand, bright blue fingers of plasma shot out from the trident, striking the light beings. But rather than hurting them, it made them dance only faster and more joyously, spinning elaborate geometries across the sky. The more he squeezed, the more passionate and beautiful was their performance.

“That’s it then! Persuasion shall be my superpower,” he declared. “How ironic a scientist should cast spells on mythical gods. And how ironic a scientist should become a god himself. Only within a dream wrapped in a vision inside an illusion could something this improbable happen.”

“All obstacles shall I overcome to defeat those who would enslave the world in hatred and fear,” he proclaimed to the delight of those watching from the mountain.

His inner voice spoke again.

“But never shall the kīla kill an enemy,” the Vajrakīlaya explained. “For the diamantine dagger is but a transceiver of the dharma and perfect intent. As music moves the hearts of men so too does the vajra play the song of persuasion. None can resist its siren call.”

“Am I to become a minstrel, too,” he laughed aloud, strumming his scepter of light like an air guitar, “...the one to deliver the message? But O Vajrakīlaya please tell me: how am I to do this?”



## Chapter 12

### The Key Resonare

Josh shielded his eyes from the bright fluorescent lights, quickly scanning the room to make certain he was really back in the lab. Màiri had just removed his helmet, headphones, and goggles, and was already fast at work extracting the monitor leads and intravenous line.

“How are you feeling, laddie?” she asked softly.

“I feel fine, energized actually! The Sequence worked perfectly, but was way too short. Just having a little residual patterning now...and a little naus—”

Noticing his stomach about to heave, Màiri grabbed the puke bucket against the wall and shoved it under his chin just in time. Yet even after emptying his stomach his mood remained bright.

“Màiri, I was given the *key resonare*.” Josh said wiping his forehead and mouth with the cold washcloth she handed him.

“Tell me all about it,” she urged, picking up the God Helmet to place it on a table against the wall. Setting it on an 18th-century French display pillow, made of sky-blue velvet with gold brocade, she took a step back to admire it. Such a fitting pride of place for a God Helmet, she thought.

“I remember right after I passed through this fog layer, the same fluttering angels as before lifted me up this tower structure into the clouds. There I spoke with an old man whose face was being projected into a cloud vapor from some kind of coherent light source. He was like a puppet, it seemed to me, controlled by an invisible intelligence who was trying to keep me from proceeding through the Sequence.”

“Sounds like a vision right out of the Bible to me,” Màiri interjected, “You know, the story of Jacob’s ladder when he laid his head on a rock, the so-called ‘pillow’ where God sleeps, and dreamed of angels ascending and descending from heaven. Some scholars interpret

this as an allegory for the Vajapeya ascension ceremony. But from what you're telling me, the story of Jacob's ladder and even the Vedic ascension rite itself may well have its origin in an entheogenic vision like the one you just experienced."

"That's exactly what I was thinking," he agreed. "This sky god character also reminded me of the Biblical Saint Peter story and the entrance to heaven. He had white hair and a beard just like the stereotypical sky god. Anyway, he wouldn't release me until I explained Rambha had sent me for the vajra-kīla. That's when he told me I would find the *key resonare* at the end of the Sequence and then released me without further questions."

"Fascinating," Mairi replied thoughtfully, draping the tubes and wires over the IV hanger apparatus, "especially when you realize the statue of Saint Peter in the high altar of the Vatican Basilica holds the key to heaven, a symbol repeated on the papal seal as a pair of crossed skeleton keys. Scholars have identified this key as a Christianized version of the vajra—one also found in older Roman statues of Jupiter."

"Okay, so I continued through the Sequence, which was just a series of landscapes, until I reached the end where I was met by a Hindu deity identifying himself as the Vajrakilaya. He offered me a gold vajra-kīla dagger. But instead of handing it to me, he stabbed me with it, sending me into a separate dream world."

"With the dagger now inside me, the Vajrakilaya spoke thru my heart to tell me I was in a place called Jambudvipa. I swear it must have been heaven because the sky was filled with gods and they were dancing to a fluid kind of Hindu music. That's when I accidentally discovered the resonant vajra-kīla inside me could be focused through my hand to influence the deities around me. I could affect their mood by actually shooting bolts of blue plasma out of my hand. I know it sounds like something a comic superhero would do in an animated action movie, but that's what I saw in my vision."

"Josh, in Vedic lore the Vajrakilaya is a personified archetype for the vajra-kīla dagger itself. Remember when I told you how the kīla dagger represents an electrical thunderbolt wielded in countless mythical tales by storm and lightning gods like Indra, Zeus, Thor, and Jupiter? See

laddie, this lightning power was anciently believed to provide a bridge or ladder between heaven and earth, allowing the gods to influence earthly events.”

“The same symbolism is found in Roman Catholicism,” Māiri continued. “The thunderbolt of Jupiter, otherwise known as Saint Peter, was actually the founding principle for Christianity. This is why Saint Peter holds a *key resonare* and is described as the foundation of the Roman Church. He is a personification of the vajra-kīla or so-called ‘key to heaven’ just like the Vajrakīlaya.”

“Nice correlations there, Māiri,” Josh replied, sitting up slowly from his recliner. “I didn’t realize the Roman Church was *that* Vedic.”

“Aye, it is! The Etruscans who lived around Rome before the Romans were essentially Vedic and worshipped Shiva. Their rites were a big influence on the Romans, especially the Vajapeya ascension ceremony and its Soma communion rite.”

“But there’s one more thing I think might explain your vision,” Māiri explained, helping Josh to his feet. “The vajra-kīla was considered the axis mundi or world axis between heaven and earth in the same way the spine represents the body’s axis between the reproductive organs and brain. This is probably why he stabbed you—he was activating the dormant kundalini wave of energy that runs along your inner axis. The Vedic view is we are an enfoldment of the universe; so, the inner axis of the body is directly analogous to the outer axis of the world and entire cosmos. Ascending the inner axis up through the head was to ascend the outer axis into heaven.”

“I think I’ve already mentioned it,” she continued, “but Vedic priests always built their temples where lightning had struck, marking the ‘ladder’ to heaven with a vajra-kīla dagger in the ground. Around this they designed and positioned temple buildings according to the proportions of a human body. Identifying the vajra-kīla as the penis, they replaced it with a tall wooden yupa pole believed to be the optimum fertility point of ascension and rebirth into heaven. Performing the ascension ceremony up the yupa pole was thus a rite of spiritual fertilization to activate the inner kundalini energy. This activation was described as a serpent rising up the spine and out the forehead or crown.

You've probably seen this symbolized before as the serpent wrapped around a Christian cross."

"Got it!" Josh replied. "So, once he had activated my inner kundalini with the vajra-kīla, I suddenly had this power to influence others in my vision—like a key that could unlock pure bliss for any being I wish. It was as if I was now able to activate others kundalini energy to raise them to a higher state of consciousness."

"That matches what has been written about the vajra-kīla," Mairi nodded. "Aye."

Leaning over to blow out the vedi candle as Josh made his way into the lab, Mairi paused to admire the ritual objects. The two seer crystals he had been holding were instruments of resonance. The Sri Yantra represented the transcendental mountain of Meru and process of spiritual transcendence. The little statue of goddess Shukra symbolized the Brahmanical feminine power of birth and resurrection, an astrotheological symbolism long identified with the Morning Star of Venus. But the vajra...well...it represented the force of dharma, the irresistible and indestructible founding principle of cosmic order.

Each of these meditation relics had always brought her such feelings of joy and liberation. Yet now they seemed so much more than just symbols. They were actually playing a tangible role in guiding Josh's visionary experiences—like psychic navigation controls.

Returning to the lab, something else struck her about his vision.

"Josh, remember what I said before about the doorknob shape of the vajra being an electromagnetic resonance field inside every living organism? How it could be the fundamental structuring principle of space-time? What if its irresistible force also includes the power to influence human consciousness and even events on Earth?"

"That's what both Iesous and Rambha seemed to imply," he agreed as he headed for the coffee machine. "If the vajra pattern has the power to persuade energy to organize into organic mushroom-like shapes, it only makes sense the vajra-kīla could affect people's thoughts and emotions here on Earth."

Pouring himself a beaker of Blue Mountain, he desperately needed to clear away the last effects of the serums so he could think more

clearly. Little flashes of Jambudvīpa were making it very difficult to concentrate.

“Māiri, when I gripped the vajra-kīla it resonated into geometrical patterns that rippled outward,” he said, taking a sip. “Just as you said, the vajra seems to tap into the ether substrate to resonate anything nearby into natural alignment. It doesn’t exactly force things into place—it just guides them sympathetically toward coherence with the template of order already present in the ether. It seemed to work the same way on those deities—”

“You know,” Māiri interrupted, “that is exactly what dharma is—the natural template of order and balance. In fact, this is the principle behind the Path of Righteousness concept in the Rīg-Veda. Can you recall what the pattern looked like? Any defining features?”

Josh nodded as he poured creamer into the black Jamaican liquid. Thanks to the God Helmet he could remember every detail.

“Yes. I noticed an inner field that was shaped like the Mandelbrot Set around the dagger. But surrounding this was an auric interference pattern of light that looked something like a ball of resonating spherical harmonics,” Josh explained, stirring the creamer into a spiral. “The intriguing thing to me was how the harmonic pattern inside the sphere formed not one but two vajra patterns that intersected at a right angle...just like the two keys in the papal seal.”

“Josh, that’s called a double vajra or viśvavajra. In the Vedic cosmological description of Mount Meru, a vast double vajra is said to support and underlie the entire physical universe. It is said to represent the unshakable ground of reality of the Buddha’s enlightenment and his all-accomplishing wisdom. Some refer to it as the Throne of God, again correlating back to the throne of St. Peter in the Vatican Basilica.”

“Okay, now things are beginning to make more sense,” he said excitedly. “If the vajra-kīla is an axis for the so-called Throne of God where the Buddha sits, the vajra must actually represent our seat of consciousness or godhead—the foundational source for all human intent, experience, and memory. If we can find a way to amplify this effect for my next run through the—”

Josh’s mouth suddenly fell open and his eyes widened.

“Màiri, I’ve got it!” he blurted out, taking a quick gulp of java before scrambling over to his desk. “We need to find a way to add the vajra resonance pattern I saw emanating from the dagger into the entheotech system. I’d bet it would have the same harmonious influence in every dimension. If I’m not mistaken, this effect would ripple back into the collective consciousness of Earth to gradually calm things down.”

Retrieving one of his old math books and a pen, he began to feverishly scribble notes while explaining his idea.

“My theory is this. Nonlinear standing waves in the atoms of my body’s biophotonic field can be entrained to the vajra resonance pattern according to the quadratic function  $z_{n+1} = z_n^2$ . Since the vajra pattern is so closely related to the Mandelbrot Set of  $z_{n+1} = z_n^2 + c$ , a pattern described by Benoit Mandelbrot as balancing order against chaos, my astral body should be able to act as a carrier, an amplifier, and transmitter of the vajra pattern to positively influence consciousness.”

“So, from what you’re suggesting laddie, the vajra-kīla might be used to synchronize consciousness across all dimensions of the Sequence—in effect a *Vajra Sequence*,” Màiri added. “If I’m understanding you, the *key resonare* would then cause the collective consciousness of the multiverse to resonate together sympathetically, bringing everyone here on Earth together in collective consciousness.”

“Yes!”

“Okay, if you’re right then, how do you propose we encode the vajra pattern into the entheotech system?”

“There is this new technology I’ve read about called Adaptive Rectangular Decomposition, or ARD, that can simulate a 3D acoustical space. It works by using the known analytical solution of the quantum wave equation in rectangular domains to reproduce a fully 3D soundscape. My hunch is we can generate a resonating harmonic series according to the vajra’s quadratic function and encode that with ARD to recreate the vajra’s pattern in 3-space. Mixing this into the Ganzfeld audio feed in my headphones and duplicating it in the EM phase modulation of the God Helmet should cause my astral body to emanate the same vajra pattern into the ether around me. In other words, I would

become a living vajra-kīla,” he explained with a devilish grin, “—the new Vajrakīlaya.”

“There’s something more we need to do however to help me focus and amplify that energy in my visions. Māiri, can you find another solid iron vajra like the one on the vedi?”

“I don’t have one exactly like it, but I do have an iron vajra dagger,” she smiled. “I can bring it from home.”

“That’s even better! Okay, here’s what we need to do. We’ll wrap the two iron vajra with wire to turn them into dipole electromagnets—then, connect and synchronize them with the vajra ARD pattern in the God Helmet. Holding onto these while traversing the Sequence should help me control and direct the emanations wherever—”

Suddenly, a loud burp sounded from just outside the doorway. It was the young code slinger finally arriving for work. From the looks of it, he had again been up all night surfing conspiracy forums, not bothering to change his clothes, much less take a shower before coming in.

“An electromagnetic vajra?” Jude repeated with a smirk, slinging himself down into his chair. “What kind of crazy hijinks are you two up to now?”

“Never mind that,” Josh replied, ignoring the programmer’s sarcasm. “I need you to make some modifications to the sequencer. The first thing I’d like you to do is lengthen the time between steps—say twenty-four hours per step. This should give me plenty of time to explore each dimension and meet the inhabitants.”

“After that, we need to encode spherical harmonics into the Ganzfeld audio feed and add a new electromagnetic modulator using something called the ARD system. Don’t worry—I’ll help you with that one,” Josh explained to the bewildered hacker.

“Once we’re done with all that, I will need your help wrapping heavy gauge wire around a couple of Māiri’s iron vajra and hooking them into the EM modulator. I believe this will provide some protection while traveling the Sequence and, with any luck, allow me to positively influence the entities I meet.”

Picking up the notes he scribbled down, he stepped over to Jude's desk.

"Here are the equations and a rough algorithm for the spherical harmonics," Josh explained, handing the notes to Jude. "Let me know when you finish this and we'll work on the encoding."

Glancing at the papers before tossing them on his desk, the tattooed man swung around in his chair to squint suspiciously at Josh and Màiri.

"You know," Jude began, "this project is beginning to look more and more like some kind of occult video game. You use virtual reality and psychedelic drugs to enter a trance where you meet up with elemental spirits like elves and demons. And now you want to construct a game controller that gives you the power to control these malevolent spirits. Looks to me like you're conspiring with some kind of evil group, like maybe the Illuminati...or maybe ole Beelzebub himself."

"Lookie here, Mister Codeslinger," Màiri replied in her stern Scottish brogue. "Ye stay up all night eating junk food and surfen' conspiracy forums; then you come to work in dirty clothes without the common courtesy of a shower. You buy semi-automatic weapons and stock months of food and water out of some paranoid delusion that the world is going to end at the hands of the mythical Illuminati who, you insist, are in league with Satan. Sounds to me like you're the one possessed."

"Sister, don't come running to me when all hell breaks loose." Jude replied angrily. "I'm just trying to protect myself from the inevitable. You're the one playing with fire with what you're doing here. I just don't wanna be the one to blame for helping Satan defeat God, that's all."

"Come on now!" Josh said chuckling, shaking his head in disbelief. "We're not in cahoots with the Devil or trying to rule the world or anything like that. On the contrary, I want to bring peace to the world through science and psychonautic exploration. The entheotech system we're building has the potential to reduce—not increase—the negative forces that have afflicted mankind for millennia. And you, Mr. Simonson, are helping to make that possible. Don't give up on us now."

Pausing to consider what Dr. Savin had said, it was certainly true that no one had been hurt so far by these experiments. Maybe they really



did want to help the world. And maybe all his work really could prevent Armageddon.

“Okay...here’s the deal,” Jude replied hesitantly. “I’ll do what you need me to do. But if I see anything that looks like it’s against God’s will, I’m done. Capeesh?”

“Fair enough,” Josh replied. “Now I’m exhausted from the beta trial and need to go home to sleep it off. Màiri, can you drive me?”

Turning back to his desk as the two scientists departed, Jude paged through his source file directory until he came to a file named Underworld.cpp. Opening the file, he scrolled through the code, mulling over his next steps.

“Just in case...I’d better go ahead and hook this class into the sequencer logic,” he told himself. “But I need the right keystroke to activate this Easter egg. Let’s see...what to use...”

Smiling deviously, it finally dawned on him.

“If things get out of hand, I’ll just give ‘em the old Control-Alt-Delete and send the bastards into the land of fire and brimstone.”

Grinning widely as his fingers flew across the keyboard; he could only imagine what that moment of supreme justice might be like.

“What could be more fitting than using the Grand Illuminati Chief’s own ‘Three Finger Salute’ to boot up the Gates of Hell? The Bill Gates of Hell, that is,” he said with a hoot.



## Chapter 13

### Rising Tensions

“*W*hat the hell is that?” Josh mumbled, wiping the sleep from his eyes. “Is that bacon I smell?”

Dragging himself out of bed, he fumbled to put on a pair of shorts and house shoes. Following the scent to the kitchen, he was surprised to find Màiri standing over the stove in one of his white dress shirts poking at the skillet with a granny fork.

“Don’t tell me...you spent the night,” he said, squinting from the bright sunlight. It was hangover days like this when he regretted having floor-to-ceiling windows in his loft condo.

“Aye, I slept on the couch after putting you to bed,” she smiled, pouring a thick green liquid from the blender into a large glass. “I was a wee bit worried about you and thought someone should be here in case you woke up and had to boak again. Anyway, I knew you could use a healthy breakfast after the beta run. I made you some scrambled tofu, fakin’ bacon, wheat toast, and some of my signature sweet potato fries.”

Walking into the kitchen to peer into the frying pan, Josh grimaced. This whole vegan thing was still a little too healthy for his liking. The tempeh bacon looked nasty.

“And see? I also made you a vegetable protein smoothie,” she said, handing him a tumbler full of the thick green concoction. “Drink it—all of it. I promise it will cure your hangover. *Air do sláinte*...on your health!”

This certainly was not the country breakfast Josh would have preferred, but he was famished and ready to eat pretty much anything. Màiri had been working hard to convert him into a vegan like herself, but he could barely stand being a part-time vegetarian much less giving up meat altogether.

“Gawd, this smoothie is rank!” Josh burbled after sucking in a mouthful of the green slime.

“You’ll get used to it,” Màiri chuckled, smirking at her vegetarian newbie. “Say, I have something to tell you,” she said, placing their breakfast on the table. “I had one of my lucid dreams last night where I visited a place that looked like the Library of Alexandria with scrolls and clay tablets—the whole Egyptian thing. And this right bonnie woman in a white toga motioned for me to look at a large illustrated map laying on one of the tables. Well, I’ll be damned if it wasn’t the Biblical story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale.”

“Ha—that’s a good one! What do you think it means?” Josh asked, sitting down at the table to inspect the food on his plate. Tasting each item first to be sure it was edible, he was soon devouring the vegan breakfast she had prepared for him.

“For one, I know that Jonah is a variation on the story of Noah and the flood,” she replied, picking at her food, “which in turn is associated with the Babylonian fish god Oannes. Each of these characters is identified with the Vedic god Vishnu. In the Hari Purana, Vishnu is depicted as a fish with a human head. In fact, Vishnu is where we get the English word for ‘fish’. Vedic scholars suggest these fish-god stories are actually a reclamation of the original Vedas lost after the deluge, but I think it’s more than this.”

“I read a fascinating article recently,” he continued, “about the Sumerian fish-god Dagon or Dagnu described in the Mari texts, dating from around 2500 BCE. Since the Semitic word ‘dag’ means fish, you just replace the ‘dag’ with ‘vish’ and you get Vishnu in place of Dagnu. Anyway, this article went on to explain that Vishnu, Dagon, Dagnu, Oannes, and even Noah were all considered solar gods resurrected from the sea because the Sun appeared to be born from the ocean’s horizon, later dying back into the sea at night. As a result, these solar fish gods were believed to have the power to resurrect the human spirit after death. Not surprisingly, this same article identified the myth of Jesus the Fisherman as a later variation of the Vishnu dying-resurrecting archetype.

“Maybe the librarian woman was trying to warn me...or maybe even you...about one of these fish gods.”

“Sounds plausible, I guess,” Josh replied slowly, tearing off a piece of tempeh bacon. Turning the chunk of brown soy over to inspect it, he decided the stuff was really not all that bad after all. “Guess I’ll just have to learn how to breathe underwater when I’m out of body next time,” he chuckled.

“But it’s what the librarian said next that really puzzled me,” Mairi continued, pausing briefly to take a bite of her scrambled tofu. “She indicated that I would need to lead someone called ‘the Messenger’ to a red pagoda on an island, which was marked on the map with a swastika next to a drawing of a red pagoda. She said my world depended on it. That’s when I woke up.”

Shaking his head, Josh replied, “Well, maybe all of this will make more sense later, but right now I’m pretty foggy and need to concentrate on this vegan feast you so kindly made for me.”

Turning on the kitchen television, the two took a break from the world of dreams for a sobering dose of reality. Flipping through the channels, the news was always the same—American drones killing Islamic jihadists; Arab uprisings and terrorist attacks; threats of war from Western powers; and always, always politicians accusing one another of some kind of scandal or conspiracy.

Ever since the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2010, Western nations had been arming and training resistance fighters in an effort to promote democracy and bring Arab nations under the Western umbrella. And just as it had been for thousands of years, outside meddling in the Mideast was only making matters worse, leaving behind resentment and fueling the fires of Islamic extremism.

The current threat was a terror organization in the Mideast called the Sons of ISIS, or ISIS 2.0 as it was sometimes called. After U.S. and Iraqi forces pushed the original ISIS out of Iraq and back into Syria in 2016, they had melted into the population. But several years later they reconstituted into a coalition of different terror groups known as the Sons of ISIS with allies inside the governments and militaries of Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Egypt, Somalia, Libya, and even Turkey.

Màiri recalled the first time she had heard the name of the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis used to describe the Islamic State death cult. She was horrified at such an unfortunate choice of name after a goddess she had always idolized. Yet the name seemed to hold a deeper synchronistic meaning than just an acronym for the Islamic State In Syria. As resurrector of the sun god Osiris, the Venusian goddess Isis was believed to bestow new life after death. Given this, she thought the second coming of ISIS in the Middle East might be a dark omen that the world must somehow end before it could be reborn in peace.

This morning, several cable news analysts were discussing the Western military strategy to combat the Sons of ISIS.

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Let me get this straight. You think this could lead to an all-out world war?”

Lisa Lebut, CNN: “Without question—it’s already happening. This reconstituted ISIS, a blend of the original DA’ESH cult, the al-Nusra Front, several factions of Al Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood, and now the Taliban, are more powerful than ever. Just like an organized crime syndicate, ISIS sympathizers have infiltrated or bribed officials in virtually every government in the region. Their stated goal is to first unite the Middle East into a single Islamic Caliphate and then extend their reach into Western nations, especially the U.K., Belgium, Switzerland, and France. Even now their attacks are growing more frequent in the U.S.”

Maj. Gen. Gerry Smith, CNN: “I concur. It seems unavoidable to me that a major Mideast war is on the horizon, especially if the Sons overtake Saudi Arabia or Egypt. If this happens, NATO nations led by the United States will be forced to wage full-scale war against ISIS. And when they do, it will have a destabilizing effect on the global economy like the world has never known.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Lisa, most agree this is a cultural conflict between Western democracy and Islamic theocratic rule. But wouldn’t you say it’s also a war between religions.”

Lisa Lebut, CNN: “Yes, to some degree. I would not discount the role of Christianity and Judaism as a uniting force behind the Western alliance. We all remember George Bush’s comments some years back about the Biblical battle with Gog and Magog in the End Times. Many Christians and Jews believe in a final war between good and evil just as Muslims do.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Yes, I think we all remember that (laughing). But don’t Biblical scholars identify Magog as Russia and Gog as the ruler of Russia? Does anyone really think Russia will side with ISIS after bombing them in Syria years ago?”

Lisa Lebut, CNN: “It’s not out of the question, Rolf. I don’t particularly believe in the End Times prophecy, but Russia may secretly support this new ISIS coalition as a distraction to push their own agenda in Europe, namely reuniting with Ukraine.”

Maj. Gen. Gerry Smith, CNN: “With the West’s resources and will to fight depleted in a long and costly war with ISIS 1.0 and now ISIS 2.0, Russia could reconsolidate their satellite nations into a new Soviet Union. This would put them in a position to once again become a superpower.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “But where would this leave Israel?”

Lisa Lebut, CNN: “Who knows? If ISIS captured control of missiles in Egypt or Saudi Arabia, they might try to blackmail Israel into establishing a separate Palestinian state. They might

even attack Israeli cities in an effort to force a modern-day exodus of Jews from the Holy Land to allow an ISIS takeover.”

Finishing her breakfast, Màiri muted the TV and sat back in her chair. She usually avoided watching the news because it only made her upset. But the world now seemed to be spiraling out of control and the importance of their entheotech project never greater.

“Simply dreadful, isn’t it Josh? I don’t think we have much time.”

“Yes, and I for one intend to do something about it,” he proclaimed, raking up the last bits of yellow tofu onto his fork. “The tensions in the world, I think, are a manifestation of an imbalance in other dimensions. That and a universal amnesia that other dimensions even exist or how they might influence events on Earth.”

“After the beta test run,” Josh continued, “I am convinced adding the vajra resonance pattern to the Sequence is the key to influencing the collective consciousness and avoiding another world war. But I don’t think one time through the Sequence will be enough to fix things.”

“What do you mean?” Màiri asked as she began clearing the table.

“Here, I’ll show you,” Josh replied, walking over to the refrigerator.

Removing one of the magnets stuck on the door, he stepped over to the kitchen desk. Retrieving a screwdriver from the top drawer, he held up both for Màiri to see.

“To magnetize this screwdriver, I have to drag it across the magnet ten or twenty times to cause the iron atoms to spin in the same direction. This is what it takes to create a magnetic field. Magnetizing metal is a lot like persuading a person—it takes time and repetition to get things working together in the same direction. Doing it once will start the ball rolling, but it won’t keep it rolling.”

Dragging the shaft of the screwdriver repeatedly over the magnet, he then reached over to the desk and picked up a paper clip with the screwdriver. Holding it up to Màiri, he concluded the analogy.

“This is how I see the Vajra Sequence working. Dragging the vajra pattern through the seven dimensions may need to be repeated many times—maybe hundreds of times; maybe forever—to persuade the



people of Earth to cooperate with one another and psychically spin in the same direction.”

“But how are you going to do that?” Màiri asked skeptically, returning to her seat at the table to face Josh. “You’re just one person and you certainly can’t stay inside the Sequence forever. Not more than a couple of cycles at most, I would think, before you collapse from exhaustion or simply lose your mind.”

“You’re right about that, Màiri. We need to expand this project into a much bigger operation. Right now, we need to finish implementing the Vajra Sequence and prove that it works. But once this is done it’ll need to be scaled up into a self-sustaining and continuous psychonautic program to have any lasting effect.”

Reaching across the table, Màiri put her hand on his.

“Josh, we need to talk. I’m worried about you,” she said quietly. “You can’t keep going like this. The human mind and body wasn’t made to handle so many different entheogens back-to-back without a lengthy period of recovery.”

He was a little surprised by her deepening concern. Their professional relationship as colleagues in science had always kept them apart, but now she seemed to be having personal feelings for him just as he was for her. Turning his hand over, he cupped her hand.

“Don’t worry, Màiri. I’ll be okay. Like you said, we don’t have much time. If the Vajra Sequence can help even a little to defuse a major war, we have the moral obligation to do everything we can to use it.”

“We’ve become very close over the past few months,” she continued, “and I don’t want to lose you. This is dangerous business, what we’re doing here.”

“You and I are pretty close now, aren’t we,” he admitted, “—closer than academic colleagues ought to be, I suppose. But I don’t want to lose you either. When I look into your eyes, you feel so familiar...like I’ve known you before. I don’t think it’s pure chance that we both became interested in mind altering technologies or met one another when we did.”

“Me neither,” Màiri said smiling. She was relieved to hear he was feeling the same way. “I believe that you and I have been together in past

lives. This time though is different. We're caught up in something much bigger than ourselves and I don't want you to get hurt. It would just be devastating for me, Josh...A'd feel totally responsible."

"As long as you're there with me, Màiri, I'll be fine. You and I, my dear, are going to change the world."

## Chapter 14

### *The Great Work*

Mosiah entered the Celestial Room of the Salt Lake Temple like a king. Still basking in the Christ Consciousness of his self-anointing ceremony, he was now in the proper state of mind to preside over the endowment ceremony for new families. The room sparkled like a jewel.

Wearing the robes of a High Priest, the Revelator apostle for the Mormon Church had been transformed from an ordinary businessman into the appearance of a very wise and holy figure. His eyes were wide and his face glowed with joy. It was as if he had just witnessed the glory of heaven. The Mormon initiates were clearly impressed by such a regal sight in this extravagant and palatial chamber.

Following tradition, the initiate families were also clothed in temple garments, including a robe, apron, and sash topped with a cap for men and veil for the women. Everything was white except for the green apron, which Mosiah had always admired as a shamanic symbol of the plant kingdom, especially as it pertained to his vegetalismo role in preparing the Holy Communion. The entire wardrobe was modeled after the robes of Aaron, the first High Priest of the Israelites dating back over 3,200 years.

Beneath the outer garb, the initiates wore the same protective undergarments as Mosiah, identically embroidered with Masonic symbols. That morning they had been taught many of the Mormon rites borrowed from Freemasonry, including secret handshakes, hand signs, numerous symbolisms, and rituals. Stepping into a central location in the room, Mosiah was ready to complete their endowment as priests in the LDS Church.

“Welcome brothers and sisters!” Mosiah began, raising his arms triumphantly. “As High Priest and Revelator of the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints I have come to officiate your endowment as priests and priestesses of the Church. My name is Mosiah Smith, one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, and I am here to officially induct you and your families into our sacred hive.”

“Look around you! This Celestial Room symbolizes the exalted and peaceful state that all may achieve through living the gospel of Jesus Christ. This room represents the contentment, inner harmony, and peace available to our eternal families in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Blessed Son, Jesus Christ.”

“Today you have learned of the Marks on the Veil and their meaning. You have witnessed the Dialogue at the Veil and learned of the Tokens of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods. You were cleansed and anointed in preparation to pass through the Veil into this very room, symbolizing your eventual resurrection from the Telestial World into the Celestial Kingdom. Now you stand before me as Adam and Eve in the robes of the Melchizedek Priesthood.”

“I admonish you to study the Bible and Book of Mormon every day and always wear your undergarments for your spiritual and physical protection. If you do this and properly prepare yourself and your family, you will indeed ascend into the Celestial Kingdom of our Heavenly Father and his Son to rule forever in your own world. Now bow your head in prayer.”

Stepping off the podium at the end of the prayer, Mosiah shook hands with each initiate using the First Token grip of the Aaronic Priesthood. Finally, walking over to the feast table, the apostle picked up a bejeweled golden chalice symbolic of the Christ communion. As the initiates filed past the altar table to receive their thimble-sized cup of water and so-called wonderbread, Mosiah offered the same Sacrament prayer that he himself had repeated only a short time earlier.

“...Amen. Now, will just the initiates please join hands and form a circle around me here at the altar for final confirmation.”

Walking clockwise around the inside of the circle, Mosiah placed his hand over the head of each initiate while administering the ordinance of confirmation.

“In the name of Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the holy Melchizedek Priesthood, I confirm you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and say unto you, receive the Holy Ghost...the Spirit of the Lord blesses each of you, bring unto you His divine guidance, comfort, admonition, instruction, and promise...through these sacred gifts you can discern right from wrong...His Spirit will be, as it were, a lamp at your feet...Amen.”

Dismissing the initiates to the changing room, Mosiah turned to approach a small group that had appeared near one of the doors. It was four of his fellow apostles anxious to hear of his progress on the Princeton project.

“Brethren, thank you for coming,” he said softly with a triumphant smile, “I have good news. An agreement has been reached with Savin to partner on his entheotech project as we discussed. My plan is to leave for Princeton once I have collected all the necessary botanicals. I must drive the entire way as I cannot take the chance of shipping this much material directly to them.”

“The Secret Chiefs will be very pleased,” replied Brother Jenkins. “Dr. Savin’s technology should make it easier to understand their wishes and do their bidding.”

“Not only that,” Mosiah added, “but this morning I was visited by the angel of the Lord himself.”

“You were visited by Moroni?” Brother Smoot asked in astonishment.

“Yes. First, he confirmed to me that someone else had entered the Kingdom, which I can only assume was Savin. But then he warned me that this one threatens the Throne of our Heavenly Father and commanded me to prevent him from entering again.

“So, it is confirmed from on high,” said Brother Smoot. “We must not allow Savin or anyone else to stand in the way of our Great Work to destroy the blasphemous Muslim Dome and rebuild the Third Temple on the Foundation Stone of Israel, blessed be the Pillow of Jacob.”

“Here’s what we need to do,” whispered Mosiah, looking around to be certain no one was listening. “Once I am settled in Princeton, I will fly back to oversee construction of three Mithraic incubation tanks. I will

also prepare the Eucharistic serums and God Helmets based on Savin's specifications, enhanced of course with our own nagual traditions. I will then lead a team into the Celestial Kingdom to intercept Savin and deny him entrance."

"Brother Jenkins, I need your help in recruiting two of our most experienced brothers from the Masonic Lodge to travel with me into our Father's House. As you may recall, I have traveled before with Brothers Gunderson and Merkley who have progressed well beyond the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree. Björn Gunderson is the York Rite Illustrious Master in the Knights Templar Order of the Temple and "Wolf" Merkley their York Rite High Priest, a Royal Arch Mason. Both are as practiced with the nagual body as I and will be fierce adversaries against Savin in the Celestial Kingdom. You must do everything possible to convince them to join with us in protecting the Celestial Kingdom from this naïve and dangerous intrusion. They must see it as our common mission as Knights of the Temple."

"Also, see if they would agree to host the floatation tanks and entheotech system in one of their secret lodges...say one of the private rooms of the No. 1 York Rite. We simply cannot afford to have this mission discovered by anyone, much less associated with the LDS Church. The York Rite is best equipped to handle secret communion ceremonies like this, especially the Templars who regularly commune with the Secret Chiefs. With the help of the Masons, we will easily overpower Savin—this I promise you, my brothers."

"Bless you, Prophet Mosiah, bless you!" said Brother Jenkins smiling. "I will do as you say and let you know their decision. We look forward to your successful journey and glorious victory."

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It had been three long days of cross-country driving before Mosiah finally pulled up to the Neuroscience Institute in Princeton. While it would have been easier to fly, driving was the only way he could minimize the risk of transporting so many different illegal substances

across the country. He was lucky to have made it all the way without being stopped.

Walking into the building foyer, he signed in at the front desk to receive a visitor badge. Asking for someone to help him unload his supplies, the attendant called the lab for an escort.

“Hey there—I’m Jude,” the young tattooed man said as he walked into the reception area.

“And I am Mosiah Smith,” he replied, “here to see Dr. Savin.”

“Sorry to tell ya but they’re not here,” Jude replied. “He and Dr. Winegard are in a meeting over at Nassau Hall.”

“That’s okay, but I sure could use some help carrying my botanical supplies up to the lab? Can you give me a hand?”

“Oh, you’re that dude with the LSD Church that’s going to be working with us,” Jude smiled. “Sure, I’ll help ya.”

“That’s LDS,” Mosiah said curtly, turning to head back to the parking lot. “Do you know anything about the Mormon Church?”

“Sure, I Googled it,” he replied, peering suspiciously at Mosiah. “I know that Mormonism is just Freemasonry for Christians.”

Laughing off the young man’s insolence, Mosiah opened the rear hatch of his white Land Rover.

“Well, we have no official affiliation with Freemasonry,” Mosiah said flatly, handing one of the boxes to Jude. “But, you are essentially correct that my great-great grandfather Joseph Smith modeled the LDS Church after many of the traditions of Masonry. This is because Joseph, his brother Hyrum, and Brigham Young were all Masons in New York before going west to....”

“Yeah, yeah,” Jude interrupted, picking up a box Mosiah pointed to. “I know. So why are you telling me all of this? Are you trying to convert me or something?”

“No, I’m not trying to convert you, my brother. Just making small talk and thought you might like to know why we sometimes use these plants in our rites.”

“Okay, so I didn’t mean to—,” Jude replied, turning around to back through the front door of the building with his box. “Go ahead. Spill the beans, Mosey. Why do you Illuminati types like to use psychedelics?”

“We are in communication with and being guided by wise spiritual beings known as the Brotherhood of Ascended Masters, but we call them the Secret Chiefs. They are great teachers who once lived here on Earth and chose to remain near us in spiritual form to help people learn and become wiser. Right now, they are helping us save our world from the rise of the anti-Christ.”

“How’s that,” Jude asked, as the two set their boxes in a corner of the lab before heading back out to the Rover for more. “How are you going to save the world by tripping balls?”

“Simple, my brother. We are going to share the light of Jesus Christ with everyone and demonstrate how the Solomonic rites of the Temple of Jerusalem offer the only Path to Righteousness. The Freemason Brotherhood are our allies in this noble cause.”

“It’s not like that hasn’t been tried before, you know,” Jude replied skeptically, “But how exactly do psychedelics help you do this?”

“Our blessed angel Moroni—the one who gave us the Golden Plates and seer stones—is the one I commune with while traveling in the Celestial Kingdom. The teacher plants summon him, just as Dr. Savin summons other beings during his journeys.”

Mosiah handed Jude another box filled with bundles of green plants, tree bark, cacti, and a variety of mushrooms. It had taken a great deal of persuading and money to collect this quality and quantity of botanical supplies, so he made sure Jude had a good grip before he let go.

“During these communions,” Mosiah continued in a hushed tone, “I receive advanced knowledge of world events. Sometimes I can even influence them with the help of Moroni.”

“That sounds pretty whacked,” Jude replied with a chuckle. “Then why do Freemasons use psychedelics?”

“They use the burning bush to seek the advice of Saturn and the Crone,” Mosiah replied. “The acacia tree is their teacher while ours is Datura, the Angel’s Trumpet. Yet, we both share a common goal. Mormons and Masons alike seek to rebuild Solomon’s Temple over the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.”

Placing their boxes next to the others, Mosiah removed one of the lids.



“See that one there?” he said, pointing to a bundle of acacia bark. “That is the sacred shittum wood of the Hebrews the Masons favor. These beautiful white flowers over here are our favorite, but they must be prepared very carefully. We blend them in exact proportions with other ingredients to reduce the possibility of certain unsavory side effects...like death.”

Leaning the lid against the wall, Mosiah headed back to the Rover. Just as he turned, Jude snatched a small purple mushroom from the open box. Popping the fungus into his mouth, it was just as he remembered—a little musty and very slimy. Damn thing could gag a maggot, he thought as he swallowed hard.

“Of course, rebuilding the Temple would first require the destruction of the Islamic Dome of the Rock now standing over Jacob’s Pillow on the Temple Mount. And since tearing down such a sacred Islamic shrine would first require the defeat of Islam in the Middle East—especially the Palestinians, Iran, and now ISIS—a final war in the Middle East is an unfortunate necessity.”

“Dude, are you bat-shit crazy?” Jude replied incredulous, stopping abruptly to face the Mormon apostle. “That would start World War III. Why would any sane person want to do that, much less a good Christian organization?”

“It is true. This would usher in Armageddon, as the Bible foretells,” Mosiah replied without emotion. “But how else can we prepare the path for the return of our Heavenly Father’s Son? How else can we hope to ascend forever into the Celestial Kingdom as kings of our own worlds?”

“I have absolutely no idea what you’re talking about,” Jude said, picking up the last box from the rear of the SUV. “I just know what I read on the Internet.”

“Jude, I must now swear you to secrecy for what I am about to tell you. Do you promise to never repeat any of this?”

“I don’t make promises like that, Mosey, but I’ll do my best to keep it zipped. What’s your big secret?”

Closing the rear hatch of the Rover and locking it, Mosiah walked more slowly this time back toward the lab as Jude listened closely.

“Masons and Mormons are now working together as brothers to bring this holy war to fruition,” he said softly. “We can no longer wait—the time is now. The Muslim warriors are mustering their forces and will soon have the power to make the Holy Land theirs. Together, we Temple Knights have infiltrated into the highest ranks of the United States, Israel, and other NATO countries, to do everything possible to defeat ISIS and, along with it, the abomination of Islam wherever it exists. Our goal is to bring down the Islamic Dome of the Rock so that the Temple of Jerusalem can be rebuilt in its rightful place.”

Stopping outside the front door of the lab, Mosiah stopped and turned. Looking him in the eye, Jude could clearly see the religious fervor burning inside the man. There was no doubt Mosiah believed every word he was saying.

“You can help us win this war, my brother,” Mosiah pleaded. “Soon we will receive Savin’s entheotech system as part of our agreement. But we also need copies of your computer programs and apparatus design so we can extend it to accommodate our own methods. Doing this, we can journey more easily into the Celestial Kingdom to finish our Great Work. With the Temple rebuilt, prophecy tells us the world will enter into a golden age of peace that will last a thousand years. You, Jude, can help us make this happen. Can I count on you?”

“Hold on there, Mosey. I’m going to have to ponder on that one,” Jude replied warily, “From what you’re telling me, it sounds more like you’re working for Satan than God?”

“Jude, it’s not at all what you think,” the apostle bristled, clearly upset by the Young Turk’s accusation of him conspiring with the Devil. “Moroni’s white trumpet is a call to awaken and ascend into the light. I have heard it many times and it is the sound of truth and everlasting life that summons us into our Father’s House—not the lies and deceit of the Fallen One. You will see, my brother, you will see.”

## Chapter 15

### Stasis Biotech

“Hey Doc, I finished coding the vajra pattern and wrapped your vajra controllers like you wanted,” the code slinger announced, sidling up to Savin’s desk. “It’s all hooked up now.”

“You’re a coding monster, Jude!” Josh replied. “You finished in record time. Can I take a look at the controllers?”

Stepping across the lab to the electronics workbench, Josh picked up the new electromagnetic vajras. Just as he had asked, the iron relics had been neatly wrapped in a heavy gauge wire around their grips. The barbell shaped Dorje was wrapped in red wire while the vajra-kīla dagger was wrapped in green. He loved how the two vajras were now the same red and green colors used in the Ganzfeld effect, though admittedly it was just for show.

Picking up the controllers, Josh held the barbell in his left hand and the vajra dagger in his right as the wires draped over to an electronics board on the workbench. As he had hoped, his hands gripped perfectly over the wrappings leaving the vajra pommels and triangular blade of the kīla exposed. He was very pleased with the result.

“Can you turn them on?” Josh asked excitedly. “I want to see if I can feel anything.”

“Yeah, give me a second,” Jude replied, fiddling with his computer. “There...it’s on now. Does that do anything for ya?”

“Yes...I’m beginning to feel something.” Josh replied wide-eyed. “There’s a tingling in my hands...wait... my hands and arms feel like they’re glowing now. The magnetic field shouldn’t be strong enough for me to feel anything, but I can definitely sense a flow of energy running down my arms and into my fingers. And now...I can even feel it coming out of my hands and back up into to my neck and shoulders. Very weird.”

Moving his arms around, he could feel the two magnetic fields interacting with one another even when they were far apart. At times, he could detect a slight zinging sensation when they were positioned at certain angles. It was like he was able to manipulate the interference pattern between the two magnetic fields.

But as he moved into different positions to test the edges of the pattern, he felt a shiver run up his spine. That's when the room seemed to loosen up a bit. Looking at the wall closest to him, he could now see patterns seething in and out like those he usually saw when tripping.

"I think I'm having a flashback, Jude. I'm seeing patterns."

The vajras seemed to be reactivating his last vision. An aura of blue plasma was forming around his hands and the room had begun to throb to the beat of psychedelic Hindu music playing inside his head. Holding the vajras in front of him, he was dumbfounded as blue fingers of plasma suddenly shot out between his hands like little lightning bolts, licking outward into the lab. Focusing his will, he made the plasma jump out at least thirty feet into the room.

"Jude, did you see that? The electromagnetic vajras...they're shooting blue lighting into the room. Can you see it?"

But Jude could only shake his head as his boss swung his arms around in the air like a madman. There were no colors, no magic. It was all in the good doctor's head like the Hindu demon he himself had witnessed a few months ago.

"Doc, I think you need to lay down and get some rest," Jude suggested, putting his arm on his shoulder.

"Don't worry Jude...wait a minute...okay, there. I think the effect is beginning to fade now. But I'm telling you these controllers are definitely going to do the trick inside the Sequence. I was able to throw lightning across the lab just by thinking about it," Josh said excitedly, placing the two vajras back onto the workbench.

"Well, I didn't see a thing," Jude scoffed, as he sat down on a stool. "If you ask me Doc, even if they do shoot lightning bolts, which I seriously doubt, I don't think it's going to change anything. The Illuminati and Satanists are already in control of everything."

“Don’t be so cynical,” Josh replied patiently. “I was able to confirm in our last experiment the vajra does have an effect on consciousness. Now with the controllers acting as lenses to amplify and focus the vajra resonance pattern, I might just be able to have an impact on the collective consciousness back here on Earth.”

“Jude, consider this. The vajra is one of humanity’s oldest symbols of divinity. It was used to symbolize a bridge to heaven and mark the Throne of God in ancient temples. Virtually every major sky god in history is depicted holding it as a symbol of power. Doesn’t it stand to reason that it could help me influence behavior in other dimensions and, in so doing, positively influence behavior here in the physical world?”

“Not really,” Jude replied skeptically. “But, even if it does have an effect, which again I doubt, I don’t think a single mortal human being will be able to outgun the powerful demonic beings who have been around at least as long as this universe. Just seems like a hopeless mission to me,” Jude grumbled. “More likely, you’ll open up a worm hole and make the Throne of God vulnerable to Satan himself.”

With that, the young conspiracy theorist snatched a thumb drive from his computer’s USB port and headed out the door. Stopping by Mosiah’s office on his way to lunch, he laid the 64-gigabyte flash drive on his desk and gave it a little push toward the Mormon.

“This and the God Helmet specs you received from Dr. Savin yesterday should get you started,” he whispered hoarsely. “But, I still don’t think it’ll do you any good, Mosey. Do you really think I’d give you something like this if I thought it actually worked? The last thing I would ever want to do is help the New World Order, especially one controlled by Mormons and Masons.”

Backing away, Jude spun around on one heel and swaggered out the door. As far as he was concerned, these clowns did not have a clue what they were dealing with.

Shrugging off the young man’s insult, Mosiah inserted the thumb drive into his laptop and scanned through the files. Satisfied with what he saw, he made the call to Salt Lake City.

“Revelator, good to hear your voice. How are things in Princeton?”

“Brother Jenkins,” Mosiah replied with urgency, “I have just received the entheotech source code and God Helmet specifications we need. Have you spoken with our brother Masons as we discussed?”

“Yes, I talked with both Gunderson and Merkley several days ago. They just met with their High Council and have come to a decision. Good news! The Council has voted to join us and are ready to fight.”

“As I expected,” Mosiah replied pleased. “Do we have a secure room to use in their temple?”

“Yes. You will recall there is a private lodge room in the third sub-basement reserved for special ceremonies. They have a private incubation cave there we can use. Our brother Masons realize the importance of this mission and pledge to do whatever they can to assist you.”

“Excellent! I will be returning in two weeks to begin work and will email you a list of items we need by the time I arrive.”

“I am at your service, Revelator, and look forward to your return.”

“Until then, faithful brother.”

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With the Vajra Sequence now implemented and debugged, the entheotech system was ready to go. But to enable multiple passes through the Sequence, Josh knew they would need a much bigger supply of refined entheogens than what Mosiah and their tribal sources could provide. They would also need trained psychonauts to relieve him in shifts and, if it was even possible, to accompany him as part of a crew. But above all, they would need a way to feed and remove waste for at least a week at a time while he was in trance.

Launching into Google on his laptop, Josh typed “isolation chamber” into the search box. After an hour of surfing, he finally stumbled onto something that might do the trick. It was a PR Web press release out of Moscow announcing the development of a revolutionary new stasis chamber designed for “deep meditation”. At the bottom was a link to a photo of an egg-shaped container, partly opened to reveal a

bikini-clad woman lying inside. She looked to be in pure bliss enjoying a quiet moment of reflection.

“Hey Màiri, listen to this,” Josh shouted across the lab. “I found a recent press release for an acoustically perfect isolation chamber capable of, and I quote, ‘slowing the heart rate to 20 BPM while maintaining a constant level of nutrition, oxygen, and toxin removal via a revolutionary recirculating synthetic blood transfusion system’, end quote. It goes on to say the chamber features the latest Zero-G airbed for elimination of pressure points over the body and can be fully customized to include a surround sound system and other types of connections to an outside source. I think this chamber may be exactly what we need for extended missions through the Vajra Sequence.”

“What’s the name of the company and where are they located?”

“Hmmm...it says the chamber is manufactured by Stasis Biotech Systems or SBS, a bioengineering company located in the Republic of Armenia thirty minutes south of the capital of Yerevan. But the PR contact, it says, is with an investment company named INTERRUS located in Moscow.”

“Armenia, huh? Now that’s interesting,”

“Seems like a pretty unlikely place for a biotech company who manufactures isolation chambers, don’t you think.”

“Actually, quite the contrary,” Màiri replied. “You will recall I mentioned Armenia and the Ararat Valley in our very first meeting as the likely birthplace of the First Religion. The story of Noah’s Ark landing on Mount Ararat is a reference to this ancient civilization that emerged after the last Ice Age some 12,500 years ago. Sounds to me like someone in Russia is interested in doing the same thing we are.”

“You mean create a sustained psychonautic program? What makes you think that?” Josh asked, standing up from his desk and stepping over to Màiri’s workspace.

“Because the idea of using plants in communion potions originated in Armenia as part of the world’s first organized religious rite. Ararat Valley in southern Armenia is considered the origination point for winemaking and, according to Indo-Aryan tradition, the use of more powerful psychoactives in communion. I would bet this Russian-owned

Armenian project was designed for the entheogenic exploration of non-physical dimensions just like our project. Does it say in which city SBS is located?”

“Let’s see...yes, but you’re not going to believe this. It says the SBS plant is located near the old Vedi-Alco winery next to the Vedi River. The town is actually named Vedi.”

“Unbelievable—a town that was once an altar to the mountain gods. It’s probably located somewhere near that famous Christian monastery overlooking Mount Ararat.” Màiri replied, recalling a picture she had once seen. “Why don’t we give them a call?”



## Chapter 16

### *The God Pod*

*E*ncouraged by what they heard on the call with the Managing Director of the SBS lab, they caught a flight the next day to Yerevan, Armenia by way of Dubai. When they arrived, they would be dining with the SBS Director and two INTERRUS executives flying in from Moscow.

Arriving in the late afternoon, the two took a taxi to the Royal Tulip Grand Hotel in Yerevan. Checking in at the front desk, they headed to their rooms for a brief rest before dinner. On the way, Màiri paused to admire an unusual painting in the lobby. She had read about the hotel's collection of symbolic Armenian artwork and had been looking forward to seeing it in person.

"Would you look at this," she said, pointing at a red and gold painting. "It's a sitting bull with wings like those worshipped in the ancient kingdoms of Urartu and Van. The same thing with a human head is called a Lamassu, found as far south as ancient Sumer and Assyria. It shows just how far these people migrated from where we are now."

"Hey Màiri, there's another winged bull over there with a human head," Josh added, pointing to a fresco on the opposite wall down the hall. "It's inside a border of alternating fire cauldrons and bulls ...seems purposely placed under that wall torchère as a symbol of fire. Reminds me of the fire ceremony and the Faravahar solar eye we both envisioned in Yazd."

"You nailed it, laddie! They are the same symbol," she replied. "The Lamassu seems like a blending of the Haoma vision we saw and the astrotheological concept of solar resurrection between the horns of Taurus. This blending of plants and planets in ancient fertility rites is, I think, key to understanding the ancient sciences."

“And here’s another one with two bulls either side of a round swirl,” he said, walking a little further down the hall.

“Josh, that swirl is the national symbol of Armenia. It’s actually a stylized swastika,” Màiri explained. “It symbolizes the Sun and is believed to have originated with the Nakh or Vainakh peoples of the Caucasus some 12,000 years ago. As a matter of fact, the word ‘nakh’ in Armenian means ‘first’. The Vainakh religion may be our best candidate for the First Religion and the source from which Vedic rites descended.”

“That makes sense. But what about these little stepped pyramids aligned horizontally above and below the swastika? Are those an Egyptian reference?”

“Those are depictions of medieval Vainakh towers, I believe, which are found in Chechnya and Ingushetia north of the Caucasus Mountains. They symbolize the sacred mountain of Ararat as a stairway to heaven,” she explained. “It corresponds to the transcendental Mount Meru in the Rig-Veda where the gods are said to live in ascending tiers with the highest gods dancing on its summit.”

“Well, that’s exactly what I saw in my dream vision of the Vajrakilaya!” he replied. “I flew up a huge stepped mountain after I received the kīla dagger. And, just as you say, there was singing and dancing at the top. It was the most beautiful thing you could ever imagine. I’d wager the stepped pyramid is a symbol for this same vision—a vision seen by Vainakh shaman during their Soma rites.”

“It does seem rather likely, doesn’t it?” she agreed, stepping toward the elevator.

Pondering the stepped pyramid symbol as he followed her to the lift, he pressed the up button to take them to their floor.

“Okay, how about this,” Josh speculated. “Maybe the flying Lamassu is a symbol of the Sacrificer in the Soma communion rite. The angel getting his wings, so to speak.”

“Aye, I see what you mean—a personification of ego death and the ascension to unity consciousness,” Màiri added as the doors slid open.

After only an hour’s rest, the two scientists met in the lobby for a short walk to the restaurant. They would be dining at the famous Dolmamas restaurant that night, a charming little place specializing in

authentic Armenian food and décor. Turning right from Abovyan Street onto Pushkin, the image of Ararat to their south provided an exotic backdrop behind the capital city of Yerevan at dusk.

“In Armenia, Mount Ararat is known as Aryarat,” Màiri explained as they walked, pointing to the huge snowcapped mountain. “This small difference in spelling reveals its etymological origin in the Sanskrit word ‘arya’, meaning noble. The Aryans who worshipped the sun god Ara were native to the Armenian Highlands and neighboring regions of Anatolia. Today, Aryans are referred to more generally as Indo-European to avoid the unfortunate association with Adolf Hitler’s eugenics program. Nonetheless, their namesake is still with us in the word ‘Iran’, as well as the nickname ‘Aryan’ many Indian women give to their husbands. English words like arrow, archer, army, and art all have their origin in the name of the Armenian god Ara.”

Arriving at the restaurant, the others had already arrived and were waiting at a table in the center of the main dining room. After exchanging the obligatory greetings, the five ordered cocktails and quickly got down to business.

“Gentlemen, my colleague Dr. Winegard and I are quite curious as to why you chose Armenia for the location of a biotech company—especially in Vedi,” Josh began. “It’s such a small town and so isolated.”

“It can seem strange v’ithout full picture,” the Director replied with a thick Armenian accent. “SBS is more d’an just isolation chamber. V’ee grow also certain plants for experiments with chamber. Climate is good for many things; not just grapevine.”

“What kind of experiments?” Màiri inquired innocently.

“Experiments in human consciousness,” the Director replied with a knowing smile. “INTERRUS invest very big in d’is project.”

“Our esteemed Director is correct,” added the Russian introduced as Vladimir Volkov. “As you must already know, INTERRUS is private investment company v’ith diverse holdings. Two year ago, in cooperation v’ith Russian government, INTERRUS builds laboratory in Vedi for exploration of mind. Mother Russia long has been leader in psychic research, leading to our glorious venture.”

“V’ee v’ant unleash full potential of human species,” added the other Russian, Ivan Zolnerowich. “...and potential for money, of course. V’at is it you are seeking, Dr. Savin?”

“As you know, Dr. Winegard and I are researchers at Princeton University in the United States. We have developed an entheogenic technology we call the ‘entheotech system’ for psychonautic exploration. You can find it described in recent press coverage as the God Helmet, a nickname for an electromagnetic cranial stimulator in the helmet.”

“Yes, v’ee hear even in Armenia of your work,” replied the Director.

“We have since enhanced and extended the technology with outstanding results and are now seeking an isolation and stasis chamber like yours for use in our experiments.”

“Tell me, Dr. Savin,” the Director asked cautiously. “What effect does God Helmet have on consciousness?”

“It induces mild visions when used alone. However, given the purpose of your project, you will not be surprised to learn that we too have incorporated certain plants and fungi into our experiments to produce much stronger visions.”

“You use God Helmet and psychotropic plants together?” the Director inquired, taking a long sip of his cocktail as he glanced over to see the Russians’ reaction.

“Yes, but we have also integrated several different technologies into a proprietary computerized system that controls and focuses attention during altered states of consciousness,” Josh explained. “You see, our software automates the administration of a specific sequence of entheogenic compounds and electromagnetic frequencies tuned to certain brain harmonics. Not only does it make the visions more lucid, it can have a, shall we say, powerful effect on the nature of the visions. We have found a way to influence the entities we encounter.”

“How is d’is?” asked Mr. Volkov, fidgeting with his glass of *Dzirani oghi*, his favorite Armenian apricot vodka.

“Not entirely sure yet,” Mairi replied, “but our technology seems to have a calming effect on the extra-dimensional worlds and entities encountered during such visionary experiences.”

“I have experienced this myself,” Josh continued, “and I can attest to the immense power it provides during altered states. It is as if one is fully awake in other dimensions, taking a tour through alien landscapes inhabited by what the ancients would call gods.”

“You have my attention, to say least,” Mr. Volkov said, clearly intrigued by the Americans. “I think INTERRUS Board v’ll be very interested to hear of d’is.”

Mr. Zolnerowich raised his hand with his index finger pointing up.

“Da! Your technology could accelerate SBS mission, Dr. Savin. Tomorrow, you visit laboratory in Vedi. Our engineers and scientists will demonstrate our incubation chamber. Then v’ee talk more.”

Seizing the opportunity, Josh proposed a toast.

“Gentlemen and lady, tomorrow Americans and Russians will venture together as brothers into the valley of Ara to visit the ancient home of winemaking. In honor of the grapevine and garden, let us raise a toast now to the brilliant future of Armenia and to our most gracious host, Director Hayk Hakobyan.”

“And to sweet nectar of Fructus Armenicus!” Mr. Zolnerowich added as he emptied his glass in a single gulp.

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Finishing their breakfast by 8:30 AM sharp, Josh and Màiri were whisked away from their hotel into the countryside. Director Hakobyan had picked them up in his rickety Lada Riva automobile, a relic of Soviet times. Behind them followed the Russians in a much more luxurious white Opel Astra they had rented at the airport.

The more they drove, the larger Mount Ararat became. It was magnificent, with its large snowcapped rocky peak and smaller pointed peak to the left. Josh could see how ancient peoples would believe it to be a place of origin and a stairway bridging heaven and earth. Director Hakobyan made the most of their driving time by describing the historical significance of the countryside.

“V’ee take M-15 along ancient road of Ararat Valley,” Hakobyan explained. “Many villages on road are from Bronze Age over 4,500 years

ago; some settlements north over 8,000 years. First name for Armenia was Hayk—just like my first name—and later Hayastan, meaning land of Haya. D’is ancient god Haya, first Armenian goddess and later male fish-god in Mesopotamia named Enki. I have theory—maybe you like.”

“Ancient people make visionary drink with *sunk*—what you say mushroom. Some visionary mushrooms grow in gomaghb...uh; you say cow dung. So, cow believed very holy like Egyptian dung beetle. But cows eat grass of goddess Haya, so mushroom must come from hay. Now you see? Vedic Soma drink made of holy cow milk with mushroom grown in cow dung.”

“In ancient rite, Soma v’as sacrificed in fire altar to Haya. Sanskrit word for altar is *vedi*, meaning ‘vision’. V’ee go there now. Soma sacrifice on river VEDI to mountain gods is now old v’inery in VEDI village. Now v’ee make Soma again using ancient Vainakh recipe,” the Armenian chuckled.

Màiri looked at Josh and smiled. This was exactly what they were looking for—a partner who wanted the same thing they did. More importantly, SBS seemed to have real money behind them with state-of-the-art infrastructure that could scale quickly.

“Now v’ee pass road to famous Khor Virap monastery in small village Pokr VEDI, early Christian outpost built on ancient altar near village Lusarat, means ‘mountain of light’. D’is area also ancient capital of Armenia named Artashat.”

“Why didn’t you build your laboratory there—near the most famous VEDI?” Màiri asked.

“Government refuse us near famous monastery,” the Director replied. “Big tourist attraction and archeology site, you see. So v’ee build upstream on VEDI River near v’inery. Now, v’ee turn left on H10 to VEDI village; just five minutes now to SBS laboratory.”

Driving into VEDI village, Josh immediately spotted the laboratory on the right. It was the only modern multi-story building in the town. Besides that, the entire structure was enclosed in a huge blue-glass dome, which looked very futuristic and totally out of place in a rugged landscape next to such a humble village. Turning right just past the stone

monument marking the entrance to Vedi, the caravan approached the SBS laboratory next to the river.

“That is a gorgeous facility, Director Hakobyan,” Màiri remarked.

“Yes, and the building inside the dome looks like...like...why, it’s a stepped pyramid!” Josh exclaimed, shocked to see such a building out here.

“You are correct Dr. Savin. It is designed like Vedic stupa with pyramid inside Cosmic Egg. See steeple sticking through top of dome? This means...how do I say...cosmic tree on mountain temple.”

“This lab is absolutely breathtaking!” Màiri gushed as the cars pulled into the visitor parking. “What a perfect facility for the study of the psychonautic sciences.”

Exiting the car, the Americans were overwhelmed by the view. Mount Ararat occupied the entire southwestern sky while the slow flowing Vedi River and surrounding fields were dotted with wild grasses. That is, except for a large grow house on the north side of the main building. Beyond this, the village itself was nestled into a U-shaped valley surrounded by low-lying foothills. Màiri and Josh both felt a strong sense of isolation here from the rest of the world.

Ascending two short flights of steps then through the front doors, the glass dome formed an expansive atrium inside to enclose the stepped pyramid and large reception area. The pyramid itself was five stories tall with slanted sides and a stepped white limestone facade. Blue reflective windows were spaced around each tier, making the structure sparkle like a sapphire in the morning sunlight. A four-story vertical cutaway down the center opening into a cylindrical inner atrium completed the design to give the laboratory a decidedly futuristic appearance.

Checking in at the front desk for badges, the group proceeded toward the central atrium. At the center of the atrium was a stunning four-story waterfall flowing straight down from a circular opening on the bottom of the fifth floor into a deeply sunken pool surrounded by a ring of fire. It created the illusion of water splashing into fire as vapor from the pool was swept upward by thermal currents like smoke. Together, the waterfall and ring of fire provided an impressive and dynamic central axis for the entire facility.

Around the waterfall twisted a marble spiral staircase that provided foot access between the five floors. Judging from the number of people on the stairs, most preferred the stairs to the elevators. But for Mairi the most impressive feature by far were five circular 10-foot overhanging gardens around each floor. Instead of the tropical plants normally found in hotel atriums, this vertical garden held the largest variety of living psychotropic plants she had ever seen.

“In the name of the wee man, would you look at that? It’s like the Hanging Gardens of Babylon!” Mairi said in astonishment. “The waterfall flows out the top floor creating a mist that keeps the air humidified. Just feel the cool spray mixed with the warm radiation of the fire—the elements are in perfect harmony in here. It’s an ideal ecosystem for a wide variety of psychotropic plants and mushrooms.”

“Yes, the whole design reminds me of the Vedic ascension ceremony,” Josh commented, pointing upward. “The waterfall seems to represent the yupa pole and the stairs the ladder.”

“The Vajapeya ritual...yes it does, doesn’t it,” Mairi replied, grinning widely. “And, the fire and water combination seem like a blending of the Vedic Soma and Zoroastrian Haoma traditions honoring both the fire god Agni and water goddess Anahita.”

Locking eyes, the two smiled at the possibilities. Without saying a word, they both knew this would be the perfect place to recreate the ancient Vajapeya ascension rite, but only if a deal could be struck. Seeing that his guests had become distracted, Hakobyan quickly resumed the tour.

“See above...ring of powerful grow lights around top of v’aterfall provide UV light like Sun. V’ater come from VEDI River,” he explained, pointing in the direction of the river and making a spiraling movement with his right hand. “Ancient belief is river is sacred v’ater of Ara the Beautiful. Ashes of Soma fire sacrifice are said carried to top of mountain by sacred water. This is reason VEDI River so important. Ara’s v’ater feed grapes used for Soma.”

As the group entered one of the glass elevator tubes, Hakobyan turned to describe the botanical capabilities of the laboratory to the Americans.



“Here v’ee grow plants of jungle like *Banisteriopsis caapi* vine, *Psychotria*, and *Datura* mixed with many fungi species. Plants of desert, like acacia and peyote, grow in hothouse outside. Here at SBS v’ee now have capacity for large-scale grow operation of any psychoactive plant or fungus. Maybe supply all of v’orld someday.”

Arriving at the fifth floor, the elevator doors slid open into a small rectangular room. Dark red curtains hung along the opposite side with a heavily secured door on the left and a door accessing the spiral staircase to their right. Stepping over to push a button on the wall, the curtains opened onto a stunning sight.

“This is unbelievable...very impressive!” Josh remarked, awestruck by what was before him.

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” Màiri added.

There in a dimly lit room were five white eggs arranged in the shape of a pentagon. In the center was a ten-foot diameter circular glass window built into the floor directly above a whirlpool of water, the apparent source for the four-story waterfall below. It reminded Màiri of the holy water fonts she had seen in several medieval Roman Catholic Churches.

The white eggs were all positioned vertically with hatches opened upward to reveal beds made from a semi-transparent, pale-aquamarine foam material. Mounted around the headrests were white MRI rings to monitor brain activity. Six speakers were also installed at cardinal points inside the eggs for music and to provide acoustical resonance.

The room itself was in the shape of a pyramid, which was the tip or ‘pyramidion’ of the building. Painted gold and decorated with ancient Armenian symbols, the room appeared to swirl counterclockwise from the blue-green light rippling up through the central vortex window. This water feature gave a hypnotic flickering effect to the room, like liquid candlelight, that made the symbols on the walls seem to dance around the room. For Josh, the overall impression was that of an alien spaceship, only one built to travel into inner space rather than outer.

“If this isn’t a God Pod nothing is,” Josh said.

“Each egg has helium Aerogel bed,” the Director explained, floating his hands in the air, “similar to Lawrence Livermore SEAgel, only

stronger to hold body v'eightless like outer space. Chamber very much superior to floatation tank—no saltwater on skin; no pressure points; and body temperature always same.”

“Each chamber has also MRI for monitor brain. Egg design make ideal acoustic chamber for music. Very important to resonate all of body, not just brain. Below is control room. Come please...follow me.”

## Chapter 17

### *The Partnership*

*C*ontinuing their tour, Josh and Màiri were increasingly impressed with the SBS facility's technological sophistication and rigorous attention to detail. It went far beyond any laboratory they had ever seen.

The fourth floor Control Center was like a futuristic version of the famous NASA Mission Control Center. A series of large display screens were mounted along a curved wall facing three similarly curved rows of built-in workstations. Each station had the latest curved OLED monitors displaying mission critical information aggregated through a server room located two floors below. Mission specialists would use these to monitor and operate individual feeds connected to the stasis chambers in the God Pod, including video monitoring, vital signs, brain activity, chamber environment, and audio-visual feeds. Josh could easily imagine their entheotech system integrated into what was already a state-of-the-art psychonautic infrastructure.

Directly below on the third floor was a botanical lab where entheogenic plants and fungi from the hanging gardens were harvested, reduced, and distilled for ingestion. It included three complete chemistry apparatus and various analytical devices. Even so, Màiri envisioned a more sophisticated distillation and dispensary system to support the Sequence. Intravenous tubes would need to be run from storage tanks on this floor, up the walls, and through wall-mounted valves hooked into each stasis egg in the God Pod. The remote actuators that controlled serum flow would then be tied into the computer sequencer for activation and monitoring from the Control Center. All of this could be easily added, she was sure.

On the second floor was the engineering center. Filled with an assortment of software, hardware, and mechanical engineers, it was

arranged like a beehive around a central glass-enclosed server room that looked out into the inner atrium. Data feeds from the God Pod were sent here first for processing and storage; then to the Control Center for display. Josh figured the entheotech servers would fit in quite nicely here with minimal disruption. But they would need to add a new sound lab on this floor for audio recording and dynamic encoding of the vajra pattern.

Reaching the ground floor, the group was led through the employee cafeteria and recreation room where views of both the inner atrium and outside landscape made it feel like a science fiction set. On the northeast side of the building, the cafeteria opened into an atrium area overlooking the VEDI River where employees could dine alfresco under the climate-controlled dome year-round—all serviced by a fully automated kitchen where robotic arms cooked up customized meals on demand.

Arriving in the main conference room located in the ground floor executive and administration suite, the view was no less dazzling. Reminiscent of the view of the Wasatch Range from the LDS boardroom in Salt Lake City, this room had an unimpeded view of the Ararat mountain range. Just yards away, the river flowed leisurely alongside the complex into the Ararat valley below, merging and turning left into the Aras River.

“Everything about this place seems special and sacred,” Mairi remarked wistfully as she stepped back from the window to take a seat. “But at the same time, it’s the most technically advanced and integrated facility of its kind on Earth. Josh, our work is calling us here.”

“Could not agree more!” he replied enthusiastically, taking a seat with the rest of the group. “I too am impressed with everything we have seen here today. I commend you on the laboratory design and organization. It is indeed the best place I can imagine for the study of psychonautic science.”

During the course of the tour, the two Russians had been stoic and noncommittal. Now they seemed genuinely interested in what the Americans had to say—especially what they had to offer.

“Dr. Savin. V’at is it you v’ish to propose?” Mr. Volkov asked.

“Sirs, I would like to propose an R&D partnership between INTERRUS, SBS, and my lab at Princeton,” Josh replied, pushing a

prepared proposal and technical paper across the table to the Russians. “We would be interested in a residency here in your facility with access to your staff and use of your equipment in exchange for licensed use and full integration of our entheotech system. Together, we could quickly build out the system needed for advanced psychonautic exploration and discovery. I would have only one requirement.”

“And v’at is d’is?” replied Mr. Zolnerowich, leaning forward.

“The entheotech system may only be used for peaceful purposes. I believe it has the power to elevate social consciousness on a global scale and bring an age of peace to humanity if used with the right intentions. Any use of our technology to negatively affect world affairs would not be permitted. Would INTERRUS be willing to agree to this in writing?”

“Da, of course—if partners agree,” Mr. Volkov replied, smiling widely. “V’ee are pleased to be discussing with Moscow d’is afternoon. Until then, Director Hakobyan v’ill take you on tour of countryside. V’ee reconvene upon your return.”

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In their afternoon videoconference, the two Russians reviewed the American’s proposal with the INTERRUS board, detailing how it could be integrated into the SBS stasis chambers and laboratory operations. Mr. Volkov led the conversation.

“Gentlemen, Dr. Josh Savin and colleague Dr. Màiri Winegard from Princeton University make interesting proposal to us. They explain for us function and effect of entheotech technology having unique capabilities to focus visions perception and memory in Noosphere.”

“How can this help mission, Vlad?” asked a voice in Moscow.

“It v’ill accelerate mission by years, Chief Petrovich. Americans propose partnership with INTERRUS—exchange of entheo-technology for use of SBS laboratory. I emailed proposal for your review.”

“V’ee have it here,” the Chief replied in a deep monotone voice, “and already discuss. I v’ill agree to terms, but only if Americans agree to live in Vedi and lead project with Hakobyan. Savin and Winegard have unique knowledge and must be there always to supervise project.”

“V’ise decision, Chief Petrovich,” Mr. Volkov replied happily.

“But remember Vlad,” the Chief added in a darker, more serious tone. “INTERRUS plan stays same. Crew follows my order only—not Americans. Have Hakobyan reverse engineer d’is—v’at is name—entheo-technology system and report back to Moscow. Then v’ee make new plan.”

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Returning from their tour, Director Hakobyan led the Americans back to the conference room where the Russians were waiting.

“Ah, Dr. Savin and Dr. Winegard. How v’as visit to Aryarat Valley?” Mr. Volkov inquired as they all took their seats.

“Very educational,” Josh replied. “We visited Khor Virap and the ruins of Artashat. It was interesting to learn this region was once a worship-center for deities like the fertility goddess Anahit, Artemis, and Tir, the god of wisdom. Such a fitting legacy for our new venture, don’t you think?”

“Of course,” replied Mr. Volkov. “Great sun god Aramazd, also. All religion begins in Armenia from Soma fire ritual and vision of other worlds. Now v’ee follow same path v’ith help of Science...and especially v’ith help from you, Dr. Savin.”

“INTERRUS board agree to proposal according to stated condition. But v’ee go step further. V’ee propose to integrate entheo-technology into all SBS systems from your requirements; all expense covered by INTERRUS. In return, v’ee v’ant you and Dr. Winegard to v’erk here at laboratory with Operating Director Hakobyan to oversee operations. Dr. Savin, you v’ill lead engineering and experiment teams. Dr. Winegard, you v’ill direct botanical laboratory and mission control center with Hakobyan.”

“Is d’is agreeable?” asked Mr. Zolnerowich.

“Yes...why yes, of course it’s agreeable!” Josh replied, practically speechless from their quick decision and kind offer. “We are honored to accept your proposal and agree to help lead the project here in Vedi.”

“Your trust in us is humbling,” Màiri added, smiling graciously. “Our Princeton team will be pleased to partner with INTERRUS to build this facility into the world’s foremost psychonautic research center.”

With that, the Russians and Director Hakobyan stood to formally shake hands with their new business partners. Retrieving the Dzirani Oghi and five glasses from a credenza in the wall, the party shared a celebratory toast.

“To beautiful Ara and new Golden Age!” Mr. Volkov boomed.

“And to our Lady Anahit, whom we beseech for fertile crops and enlightened minds,” Màiri concluded joyfully.

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By the time Josh and Màiri had tendered their request for a six-month sabbatical and returned to VEDI with Jude, the entheogen storage tanks had already arrived and were being installed. A new patch bay of lines running up to the God Pod would support continuous intravenous feeds to each of the stasis chambers from the new botanical tanks on the third floor.

The entheotech sequencer and additional monitoring software had also been installed in the data center on the second floor. Jude would be making modifications to the Vajra Sequence to synchronize the brains of five psychonauts. To do this, Josh had selected the hemi-synch method developed by the Monroe Institute in Virginia.

This involved adding two frequencies to the vajra audio mix, separated by 50 hertz, and placing them left and right in the surround sound field. The technique created the perception of a third frequency pulse that was the same for each psychonaut. After a few minutes of listening, the hemi-synch pulse would cause the brainwaves of all five psychonauts to synchronize and oscillate together. Josh’s hypothesis was the hemi-synch would keep the crew together during astral travel, but this would need to be tested.

SBS engineers were also hard at work miniaturizing the God Helmet into a smaller cranial headpiece, leaving the ears open to take advantage of the stasis chamber’s superior sound capabilities. Josh had

jokingly dubbed this new device the ‘Crown of Thorns’ because of how the sensor connectors protruded from the top of the cranial ring. When unplugged, they hung outward in a slight arc, giving the wearer a decidedly kingly appearance. Both the Crown and MRI ring in the chambers required modification to eliminate any interference between the two electromagnetic fields.

The Control Center itself was being updated with a larger single video wall to accommodate the additional monitoring systems. Divided into five vertical sections for each crewmember, there was a facial video feed; vital sign readout; MRI display of the brain; real-time brainwave charts; entheogen identification and dose level; Ganzfeld waveform; real-time vajra pattern readout; hemi-synch display; electromagnetic field display; and sequencer timing readout that featured a look-ahead display. Any variation from nominal would turn yellow and flash intermittently to call attention. Malfunctions or dangerous vital sign readings would flash red and sound an alarm. It was nothing less than a Mission Control Center for psychedelic dosages, wave fields, and brain states in place of rocket thrust and burn times.

Under Màiri’s direction, a few additional plants and fungi required for the Sequence had been planted in the atrium’s hanging gardens. These and the other plants could be easily harvested from the botanical lab via the spiral staircase and catwalks along the inner edge of the gardens. The entire hydroponic grow system was designed to be self-sustaining with drip sprinkler and nutrient feeds to ensure a continuous and sustainable botanical supply for distillation in the lab.

Seven rows of remote-activated storage tanks in the lab were directly connected to seven entheogenic refining apparatus to ensure a pure and sterile production environment for each serum. Màiri had taken the liberty of color-coding the tanks and glassware in each apparatus to match the seven spectral colors listed in the Gandharva scroll. This made the lab look something like the prismatic refraction on the cover of Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon*. As a physical expression of the elven Sequence, it was without a doubt the most colorful and psychedelic looking chemistry lab in the world.



One thing Josh was still trying to wrap his head around though was the interaction of the electromagnetic fields in the God Pod. In their star configuration, the combined fields of the five psychonauts would interlock at 72-degree angles to form a single pentagonal electromagnetic field centered on the water vortex.

According to harmonic interference theory, Josh knew the fifth harmonic acts as a pentagonal damping geometry to provide stability and coherence in resonating standing waves. For this reason, he hoped it might give the team even greater strength and cohesion while traveling through the Sequence. But exactly how this pentagonal field might interact with the waterspout flowing from the center of the God Pod through the center of the atrium was still anybody's guess.

Under Josh's direction, the egg stasis chambers had been acoustically tuned to resonate at 111 hertz by a psychoacoustical research team from Lomonosov Moscow State University. The design, based on the same studies he had used to tune the God Helmet, had the effect of reinforcing the Earth's atmospheric Schumann harmonics within which human beings and all other life had evolved. As a result, any music auditioned inside the eggs switched attention away from the left-brain language center to right-brain intuition and visualization. The 'golden egg' dimensions and resonant properties of the chamber made it an ideal psychoacoustical incubation chamber for trance and vision inducement.

The aquamarine aerogel cushions in each egg allowed sound to pass through unimpeded to the body, enabling total immersion in the sonic field. Like an unfolded cube, the aerogel was laid out in the shape of a cross inside the chamber, providing support for outstretched arms at the broadest circumference of the egg so intravenous fluids could be easily administered into the arms—one side for vital sign monitoring, liquid nourishment, and blood toxin filtering; the other for entheogenic serum injection.

Catheters integrated into a soft but sturdy pelvic appliance, appropriately referred to as the Waste Elimination Equipment or WEE, would remove body waste using technology developed by Roscosmos, the Russian Federal Space Agency. To prevent the possibility of involuntary movement that might dislodge connections, the arms, legs,

waist, and head would be lightly tethered to the underlying support structure. In this position, each psychonaut would lay completely relaxed in a near weightless environment—free to fly “comfort eagle”, as Josh liked to say, through all seven dimensions of the Vajra Sequence for extended periods of time.

## Chapter 18

### Flight Test

“*H*old still,” Màiri insisted, patting Josh’s shoulder to soothe him. “If you keep fidgeting like that you’ll work the leads loose.”

It had been six months since the Americans moved to Vedi and the time had finally come for a test of the radically enhanced entheotech system, now fully operational and integrated into the beautiful SBS laboratory. INTERRUS had hired a group of Russian ‘psychic spies’, famously known as the *Blue Star*, to train with Màiri and Josh. If the hemi-synch technology worked as hoped to enable crew exploration, their mission would be to protect Josh in Sequence while broadcasting the vajra resonance pattern to amplify its persuasive effect.

As everyone in the Control Center looked on through closed circuit monitors, Josh and the four Russians entered single file into the God Pod wearing only their headgear, WEE pelvic appliances, and an assortment of sensors and wires hanging from their heads and upper torsos. Stepping into their upright stasis chambers, the ground crew went to work connecting their leads to the capsules’ external lines. Reclining into horizontal launch position, the last step of intravenous line insertion was nearly complete.

“I still can’t get used to this aerogel, Màiri,” Josh commented as the last needle was inserted. “It feels like I’m floating on a cushion of pure air, a very weird sensation in a gravity environment. Have you checked all the actuators on the tanks?”

“Yes, yes...but now you need to calm down and not worry yourself,” Màiri chided softly. “Here...hold onto your vajra controllers and close your eyes. Start your breathing exercises—you know what to do. I’m going to signal Control now to cue the Ganzfeld hemi-synch feed.”

As Flight Director, it was Màiri 's responsibility to issue the launch instructions. She took this role very seriously and ran a tight ship.

“On my mark it is 11:00 AM...MARK and cue the A/V feed. We are T-minus eleven minutes and counting.” Leaning down to whisper in his ear. “You’re going to do just fine. I’ll be by your side the whole way. Bon voyage, laddie.”

Gently arranging the wires away from his face, Màiri walked back into the observation room to wait for the other attendants to join her. Sealing the door to the God Pod, she took one last look at Josh and the other four psychonauts thru the observation window before proceeding down to the Control Center.

Under her direction, the operators ran through their checklist items one-by-one. Each crewmember’s face was displayed at the top of the video wall with entheotech stats, MRI image, and vital signs displaying in real-time directly below. Lit dimly by a soft golden nightlight near their heads, she gave the nod to close the hatches and seal them inside the eggs.

As if watching over an alien hatchery, the Control Center staff sat spellbound as the five human eggs closed in perfect unison inside the God Pod. The swirling aquamarine light patterns from the central water vortex were now fully visible, washing over the white eggs and onto the golden walls of the pyramidion. The symbols on the walls seemed to dance faster now as the churning waters of Ara the Beautiful created the illusion of being sucked down a wormhole.

Lying weightless in the dark, the pulsing Ganzfeld hemi-synch effect had already begun to induce visualizations for the men. This fact was indicated onscreen by their elevated respiratory rates and brainwave activity, which were quickly nearing synchronization. No one could be certain, but this might be the first time anyone had ever traveled in a vision with another human being, much less five at the same time.

Finishing the system test and launch checklist, Màiri gave the green light to start the countdown.

“Final countdown commencing. T-minus ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five...entheotech sequencer on...intravenous flow has been initiated.”

With that, the first entheogenic serum was released simultaneously into the bloodstreams of all five crewmembers. The vajra sonic pattern and EM field, customized to each psychonaut's brainwaves, were timed to begin just before the first entheogen kicked in. Josh noticed that the hemi-synch pulses in the audio feed were inducing a feeling distinctly different from his prior trips. He could actually sense the other crewmembers rising with him above their bodies then rotating slowly counterclockwise in the direction of the whirlpool at the center of the God Pod. Just as he had suspected, the vortex was interacting with their interlocking pentagonal electromagnetic field to help keep them bound together and tethered to the axis that ran through the pyramidal building.

Within minutes, Josh and his crew had passed into a gray fog. He could sense the other crewmembers moving behind him as they floated together through a tunnel toward a bright light. Holding up his right arm, the vajra-kila crackled in the ether as he willed himself to turn around to face the others. There they were—four luminous eggs floating behind him in a loose star formation.

“So, it is possible, my friends,” Josh thought to the other psychonauts. “Our minds can be synchronized to enter a shared vision, a shared reality. Remember now to follow my lead when we arrive at our first destination.”

But despite his prior experience, Josh was not prepared for what was about to happen. For as soon as the team exited the tunnel their forward progress suddenly stalled and they came to a complete stop. Something—an invisible force of some kind—had rendered them immobile, freezing the entire crew in place.

As the fog cleared, a smooth, curved metallic wall began to appear. As more of the fog dissipated, it was evident they were in a circular, saucer shaped room interrupted by a large three-dimensional holographic display to their left. Within it was a three-dimensional projection of Earth as if viewed from a high orbital position.

“Men, we are off-course,” Josh announced matter of fact. “This is not the first step in the Sequence. It appears we are now in orbit around the Earth...in some kind of...well, spaceship. Stay calm and await my orders.”

Something had gone terribly wrong. He had seen nothing like this in his earlier trips and was very worried. He could not even move his arms and his vajra controllers were completely sapped of power. At this point all the men could do was hope something would happen. They did not have long to wait.

From the right side of the circular chamber, a group of what can only be described as gray aliens with large black pools for eyes emerged from a passageway that had opened from the smooth continuous surface. Things just did not seem real here—real, that is, like his other visions. It was much more dreamlike.

Still immobilized, the team watched helplessly as their crewmate Dmitry was taken away by the creatures. As he left the room, the tallest one turned to Josh and spoke without moving his thin lips.

“The human will be returned after a sample has been taken,” the alien being told them telepathically. “You and your crew will then be released.”

Josh felt sick as he watched Dmitry disappear. Were these the same aliens so many people claimed to have seen or been abducted by? Do they travel across dimensions using an advanced form of the same technology he was using? And are they the ones who perform painful experiments on humans as some abductees claim or were they just benevolent scientists like him?

Reentering the room, the alien spoke again inside their minds.

“We know of your mission,” the being said, “and wish to help.”

“How do you know this?” Josh replied.

“We are the Vanir, the ones you know as Grays. We descend from the Alfar and build the machines some have seen in your sky. We travel here to access the upper regions of our shared planet, which enables travel between dimensions and consultation with the Ascended Ones.”

“Shared?” asked Josh. “You live on Earth too?”

“In a dimension adjacent to yours,” replied the being. “There are many other dimensions, some inhabited and some not.”

“Why then have you captured us,” Josh wondered, still unable to move.

“We learned of your journey from our queen and wished to meet you before you ascend further,” the being explained. “We desire preservation of your species as much as you; perhaps more.”

“Why then haven’t you done something to help our world?” Josh asked skeptically.

“We have tried to help you...many times. We were there to guide your earliest civilizations that lived in balance for thousands of years. But this changed during your Dark Ages and now you only fight amongst yourselves, following an unbalanced path to destruction. Your discovery of the structure of the atom now threatens not only your survival but also ours. Thus, we began the Great Work to cure your spiritual disease.”

“Why else would there be so many sightings of our vehicles, some in large formations and others projecting patterns of light?” he explained. “Who else could create such beautiful and elaborate geometries in your fields? What else could be causing your people to now question everything they have been taught? How else could you have advanced technologically in so little time? We often enter human dreams to guide the direction of your people just as Rambha gave you knowledge of inter-dimensional travel.”

“Then tell me if our mission has any chance of succeeding,” Josh replied. “Can we rebalance the collective mind?”

“You can, but only with our help,” replied the being. “Our fleets will appear upon conclusion of your first pass through the Sequence. This will offer undeniable proof of our parallel existence on this planet and so awaken the collective consciousness of your people.”

“Afterward, your military will be forced to reveal their knowledge of us. Human civilization as you now know of it will change. With the dimensional technology you have discovered, your people will learn to live in balance and once again receive guidance from the Ascended Ones as we do.”

“This is good news,” Josh replied. “We accept your offer of help and will welcome you on behalf of our world upon your return.”

With this, Dmitry was dragged back into the room and the group released. But the shared vision had already begun to fade. Dmitry’s extreme vital signs had forced Mairi to abort the mission and extract the

crew. As the stasis chambers lifted into vertical position and the hatches opened, she was the first to arrive at Dmitry's side. He was clearly distraught from his experience and was obviously in pain.

"What's wrong, laddie?" Màiri inquired softly. "What happened in there?"

"The bastards!" Dmitry swore, shaking his head. "D'ey did terrible bad things."

"What do you mean?" Josh inquired, tearing off his sensor pads and stepping over to check on his crewmate. "Did the Vanir hurt you when they took you out of the room?"

"Goddamn right they did, filthy alien sons of bitches," Dmitry rasped, holding the side of his egg for support. The other psychonauts listened quietly as Dmitry described what had happened when he was taken away.

"Alien monsters drag me to operating room; I could do nothing. D'ey put instrument in me like hot knife. I tell you...hurt like hell," Dmitry explained, tears welling up in his eyes. "But d'is v'as not all," he continued reluctantly, rubbing his eyes. "I admit now...they rape me. They gang rape me, Goddammit! Each one of disgusting alien creature! I could do nothing," the poor man sobbed, "...nothing at all!"

If it was not clear before, it was certainly clear now. The Vanir would miss no opportunity to take advantage of human beings when they got the chance—even as they promised to help.

"Perhaps," Màiri suggested, "they were gathering a sampling of DNA to repopulate the planet in the event of a global catastrophe, human caused or natural. And, in the process, they succumbed to the same base instincts, immoralities, and abuses as humans sometimes do. If they were the Vanir of Nordic folklore as Josh mentioned, this must be the reason they are described as fertility gods."

"We are so very sorry this happened to you, Dmitry," Josh said sympathetically, patting him on the shoulder. "I am deeply disappointed by the terrible behavior of these otherwise advanced beings. Do they even have a conscience; any concept of right and wrong; or even the least respect for personal rights?"



“They must see human beings as we see animals,” Màiri replied, “mere objects to serve their own survival and pleasure instincts.”

No one was surprised when later that day Dmitry resigned from the program. The experience had been too disturbing for him to risk the possibility of another encounter like that. Fortunately, the fifth member of the Blue Star team was available as a backup and was immediately assigned to take his place. Still, everyone was sad to see Dmitry drop out of the program so soon. The world’s first shared vision had been a real wakeup call.

Journeying through the Sequence was no cakewalk; they all knew that now. Psychonautic exploration was filled with real psychic danger, including deep emotional trauma, abuse, and the possibility of death. Josh could never again trust the Vanir, but the stakes were too high to reject their help either. The people of Earth needed all the help they could get, even if it was from gangs of inter-dimensional rapists.

Yet in spite of the abduction and assault, Josh felt the test flight was still mostly a success. The stasis chambers had done their job and the hemi-synch protocol had performed flawlessly. For the first time in human history a group of human explorers were able to travel together inside a shared vision, proving correct his hypothesis of synchronized astral projection.

A few days from now they would try it again. If all went according to plan, the crew would continue through all seven dimensions of the Sequence in a weeklong mission. In the meantime, Josh and Màiri had a little free time on their hands and were looking forward to using it for something they had been planning now for months.



## Chapter 19

### *The Vajapeya Rite*

**I**t was Sunday, the day before mission launch, and the entire lab was deserted. Ever since their tour of the facility, Josh and Màiri had been secretly planning to meet up in the atrium to perform the Vajapeya Yajna ascension ceremony together. The spiral staircase; the waterfall; the beautiful hanging gardens—everything in this building seemed specifically designed for this ancient Vedic rite. Today, they would ascend together as a secret blessing of the mission.

The waterfall would take the place of the Vedic yupa pole, symbolizing the world axis and bridge to heaven, and the spiral staircase would replace the ladder. Of course, their ascent up five stories would take much longer than a 5-rung ladder leaned against a yupa pole, but their reward would be the same psychedelic Soma at the top.

Growing in the top garden tier near the opening of the waterfall was a fresh patch of *Psilocybe cubensis* mushrooms. The circle of UV grow lights in the floor of the pyramidion around the waterfall would be their Sun Door, the symbolic “gateway of escape” from the ordinary world. Reaching this would win them the Soma, which they would consume raw as their communion.

Both had come dressed in ceremonial robes from entirely different traditions. Màiri was wearing the robe of a Delphic Sibyl as depicted by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. This modest ensemble included a sea green floor length dress, saffron overskirt, blue shawl, and baby blue scarf draped over her head to cover her red hair. A gold lion brooch and white headband were her only adornments.

Josh had selected the robe of a Tibetan priest. This included a yellow Nehru shirt and dark red robe draped over one shoulder. To this he added a nineteenth century Tibetan priest headdress featuring three graduated domed forms. Decorated traditionally with five Dhyani

Buddhas in copper repousse with fire gild, the headdress featured two small turquoise accents and a gold vajra symbol that crowned the top. Both he and Māiri would perform the rite barefooted.

Walking toward one another in the pyramid atrium, they felt transported back in time—a meeting perhaps between two ancient cultures joined in a common understanding and respect for the spirit world. Smiling at one another before the fiery ring of the sunken waterfall pool, Josh began the rite by proclaiming his intent according to the exact words of the Vajapeya Yajna rite.

“May gain of food accrue to me,” he said pointing to the top of the waterfall. “May these two, heaven and earth, be of universal form—for, Prajapati, the soul of the universe and lord of creatures, is these two, heaven and earth. May father and mother come to me—for, Prajapati is both father and mother. May Soma come to me to confer immortality—for, Prajapati is Soma,” Josh concluded by touching his belly because this is where the food settles.

To win the Soma, he must become the Sacrificer and she his Nārī.

“May my life prosper through this sacrifice; let my vital air prosper through this sacrifice; let my eye prosper through this sacrifice; let my ear prosper through this sacrifice; let the backside of my body prosper through this sacrifice; may the sacrifice prosper through this sacrifice,” Josh paused, contemplating that he who performs Vajapeya is winning Prajapati.

With this, the Sacrificer took his Nārī’s hand and began the ascent northward up the spiral staircase around the pole star of the wonderful Mount Meru. This is the direction of human and the quarter that belongs to the Yajamana, he remembered.

“Come my Nārī, let us ascend to the sky,” recited the Sacrificer, feigning to climb to the heavenly world. In this way, he would win the heavenly world by the Vajapeya.

“Let us ascend,” the Nārī replied.

This they repeated three times, ascending one flight of stairs for each. Between recitations, the two reminded themselves thus.

“We have become Prajapati’s children for he who performs Vajapeya does indeed become Prajapati’s child,” they recited together.

Reaching the top turn of the staircase, the Sacrificer reached for the circular ring of grow lights as if to touch the Sun Door. As he did so, his Nārī collected the fresh mushrooms from beneath a small coniferous pine in the top garden grown for just this occasion. Touching the Soma harvest, the Sacrificer spread wide his arms and cried.

“We have reached to the light, O gods! We have come to heaven, to the gods; we have become immortal. Verily the celebrant of this rite makes this stairway a bridge to attain the world of heaven.”

Eating now the immortal food of the gods with his Nārī, the two would open the Sun Door together. For it is said that He who performs Vajapeya indeed reaches the light. And he who touches the wheaten wheel wins the Soma. Having now attained the supreme state, the Sacrificer has won the heavenly world; he has won his food. Now he contacts it and puts it into himself. He smears his belly with it for it is there in the belly that the food settles.

As the formal ceremony ended, the Sacrificer and his Nārī embraced, feeling the rapture of shared spirit. Moved by the intensity of the moment, they now kissed for the first time. Where professional ethics had kept them apart for so long, the highest Vajapeya ascension ceremony had brought them together. No longer did they feel the need to hide their true feelings; now free to feel something indescribable—something familiar, yet much deeper and more profound. They had kissed before, lovers from another time, another place. This they now knew.

Leading Josh back down the staircase, Māiri smiled playfully as she took him by the hand to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor botanical lab, arriving in the central Meditation Center. Positioned in the same relative location of the pyramidal building as the King’s Chamber in the Great Pyramid, Māiri considered this room the perfect place to complete their ascension.

“Verily,” she said with a coy smile, “we have eaten of the fruit of knowledge and it was good. We have opened the Sun Door and ascended to the heavenly plane. Now we shall become the One known as Rebis, the Divine Androgyny.”

Locking the door, they faced one another to remove their robes. Smiling in anticipation, they stood naked one before the other in full

view of the Hanging Garden. Through a wall of glass, the two could see the great mountain of Ararat framed in the pyramid's vertical opening, enclosed by a garden of the gods. The early morning sunlight had colored the mountain's snowcap an orange pastel.

Streaming into the atrium, the sunlight transformed the waterfall into a shimmering column of orange and cerulean blue. The hanging gardens seemed happy the Sun had returned to live another day as a faint rainbow hung in the smoky mist of the atrium. Facing the mountain of Ara, there could be little doubt this building and very room had been intended for this day. The time had come.

Taking his yoga position on the floor, Josh sat cross-legged facing the radiant mountain. He would become the World Axis this morning and she the Sky Womb. Crouching into the yab-yom pose, Màiri straddled his lap to lower herself onto his golden pinion. Beginning the Tantric practice, they synchronized their breathing, looking deep into one another's eyes. Taking in the other's breath and spirit, the two meditated as one.

As the couple's tantric energy rose, so too did the Soma's effect. Màiri's red hair seemed afire now in the Sun's yellow light, like a flaming sacrifice to Agni. The radiant disc behind her head grew to reveal the luminous egg of her entire light body. Looking deeper, Josh could see beyond the veil of flesh into the feminine archetype beneath the surface. Glimmering with the pearlescent scales and large eyes of an Apsara angel, her true face was revealed.

Could it be? Was Màiri one of the beings guiding him in his visions—even as she remained consciously unaware? Was this why she seemed so familiar? Had they performed this ceremony together before—perhaps even a thousand times?

The epiphany deepened as the room fell away to open sky. Here shone the invisible Black Sun, bathed in a glory of song and radiant light. For they, the Divine Androgyny, had returned home to eternal love, if but for a brief time. Pulsing with life, breathing together in perfect unison, they had become the archetype of all that was, is, or ever would be. In this moment, they kissed—a kiss as deep as their love, crossing the

ages to the first time they had become the royal double eagle and two-headed Phoenix.

As one body, one mind, one spirit, the Sacrificer and his Nārī made their final ascent to the heavenly summit. Passing upward through the seven wheels of light, they climaxed together, blossoming in unity consciousness from the white lotus. So, crowned, the King and Queen from Princeton had become the Great Hermaphrodite, enthroned as Rebis on the font of singularity. This, they knew, is where they had begun and where they would one day return.





## Chapter 20

### *The Nagual Body*

**S**trolling down South Temple Avenue from Temple Square, Mosiah admired the Salt Lake Masonic Temple on his right as he approached. From its seven pillars, triptych doors, and dual sphinx statues to its Gothic and Egyptian rooms inside, it was a monument to the ancient mysteries. Trotting up the grand stairs from the sidewalk, Mosiah entered through the middle door, a symbol for the third eye.

Entering the lobby, he glanced at the portraits of Masonic leaders from years past as he turned right beneath the lodge flag heraldry to access the stairwell. Shuffling down four flights of stairs, he landed at the third sub-basement. While few knew of it, this floor was part of a large network of tunnels connecting the Masonic Temple with several Mormon buildings in Temple Square. There was even a tunnel leading to an underground refuge in the nearby mountains, built as a secret escape route in the nineteenth century for Mormon polygamists in case of a government raid. He could have taken one of these tunnels today, as he often did, but it was just too beautiful to stay indoors.

Using a key entrusted to him by the Masons, Mosiah unlocked a large wooden door engraved with the Templar Cross and Crown. Opening into a special lodge room, two men were waiting for him there. Dressed in Templar white and red garments, drawn at the waste by a black leather sash and topped with a white mantle, the men extended their hands in the Knights Templar grip.

“Brother Merkley...Brother Gunderson! Is everything ready?”

“Yes,” Merkley replied. “Everything is prepared. Come.”

Walking to the rear of the room, the three men stepped onto a raised altar platform. Slipping around a screen partition at the rear of the altar, they came to a heavy metal door mounted into solid rock. Unlocking the

door, the trio entered into a subterranean cavern modeled after an ancient Roman Mithraeum temple.

The main room was a natural cavern that had been excavated into an oblong chamber. Dimly lit by electric torchieres, the cavern's earthy smell was mixed with the scent of burning myrrh in accordance with Mithraic temple tradition. Mosiah counted about a dozen men working on computers and checking equipment along the left wall. To the right were three saltwater tubs placed against the wall that were fashioned from solid granite, exactly like those used in ancient Roman Mithraeums.

At the far end of the chamber stood the golden statue of a nude male figure with wings, standing erect on a world globe. He towered over a raised alter area covered with an elaborate floor mosaic depicting twelve astrological symbols. Loosely wrapped in what looked like thick cabling and holding three lightning bolts in his left hand high above his head, the statue was an original model of the much larger "Golden Boy" crafted in 1914 by Evelyn Beatrice Longman for Western Electric.

During his first visit to this secret room, Mosiah had been told that several of the executives of Western Electric in the early twentieth century had been members of The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of New York. As Knights Templar, they practiced the seven communion rites and Craft degrees of the two-thousand-year-old Roman religion of Mithraism. Because of this, they had commissioned their "Genius of Telegraphy" to be modeled after a famous Roman relief of the solar vegetation god Mithras wielding the vajra thunderbolt. As the Romanized version of the Zoroastrian deity Mithra, this Green Man had long been worshipped as the son of the solar deity Ahura Mazda, anciently known as Aramazd or simply Ara.

Many such statues had been discovered in Roman Mithraic temples where ancient entheogenic communion rituals included saltwater sensory deprivation tanks as part of the initiation rites. For their own Mithraic York rites, the Western Electric Masons had also commissioned a smaller version of the Golden Boy to place in a secret underground Mithraeum in the heart of Manhattan. It was only later in the mid-1950's that the President of AT&T, also a high-ranking Mason, moved it to this secure underground facility in Salt Lake City for safekeeping.

But to Mosiah the Golden Boy—now known as AT&T’s “Spirit of Communication”—was none other than the Mormon messenger angel Moroni. After all, his great-great grandfather Joseph Smith was a York Rite Mason and had his most important vision of Moroni in a cave under Cumorah Hill in Manchester, New York. This was the vision that led him to the Golden Plates that became the Book of Mormon.

Indeed, it was from his Masonic studies that Joseph Smith learned to use caves as incubation chambers for psychoactive communion and astral traveling. This he had rediscovered from the medieval Christian Cathars and their psychoactive Consolamentum rites adopted from the seven sacred communion recipes of the Mithraic Brotherhood, itself descended from the Hebrew tradition of sacred manna. For Mosiah the Angel Moroni was no different than Mithras, Mercury, or any other messenger god. All were Heavenly Father’s messenger represented by the Golden Boy statue now standing before him in this dark Masonic cave.

For the past several weeks, Mosiah and his team had been working with their Masonic brothers to install the equipment necessary to journey through the Sequence for an extended period of time. He had turned down Dr. Savin’s offer to join him in Armenia so he could build his own entheotech lab here in this cave. As far as he was concerned, it was an all-out race to inner space and there was no way he could let Savin and his Russian comrades reach the Throne of God before him.

From Mairi’s work at Princeton, the Masonic engineering team had constructed a sequence of remote-controlled intravenous tanks with lines running to the incubation tubs where the three brothers would float weightless in saltwater. They would wear white waterproof suits to protect their skin and a sealed “ORB” diving helmet modified with the same electromagnets, electrical stimulator, monitoring leads, and audio-video feeds as Savin’s God Helmet. Jude’s sequencer software would control all of this via a server network and three laptops, providing a simple but effective automated entheotech system.

Mosiah had personally overseen the distillation of the teacher plants and mushrooms for the same seven entheogens used by Savin’s team. Two chemists—one a Mason and the other a Mormon—had assisted him

in refining the ingredients obtained from tribal sources. They included a few variations to the recipes, but, in the end, he was able to obtain the same compounds and purity levels as Mairi.

As part of a short ritual prior to departure, Mosiah had prepared a special communion recipe passed down to him from his great-great grandfather. Obtained from an African “chief man” named Black Pete, the elixir was made from a blend of acacia and *Peganum harmala* extracts he had customized with extra ingredients selected to help each of the men prepare their astral bodies for battle. Each would drink their special communion to assume their “animal double” before entering the Sequence.

For hundreds of years now the innermost circles of Freemasonry had been secretly conducting astral missions and were now quite proficient in transforming themselves into what indigenous tribes referred to as the nagual body. Descended from Egyptian and Native American traditions, this practice made them more agile and powerful than the ordinary light body of a human. It would give them a distinct advantage over Savin and his Russian crew who knew nothing of this psychical art.

In his studies with Incan vegetalismos, Mosiah had learned how to transform himself into a “Runaturuncu” or jaguar-man using Ayahuasca. Projecting through his body double, this took the form of a winged black jaguar. This nagual form helped protect him from elemental spirits while making him much more powerful in combat.

Brothers Merkley and Gunderson used the same technique, only in different animal forms. Gunderson could transform himself into a Russian polar bear nagual, a powerful form used by Nivkh shamans, while Merkley took the form of a half-man, half-wolf creature. Known popularly in medieval Europe as the wolf-man or werewolf, this nagual body was created by aconitum or “wolfsbane” long used by indigenous shamans to assume the wild canine form.

Schooled in the old magick, the three naguals represented the combined shamanic knowledge of Eastern Siberia, Europe, and South America, thus forming the triumvirate known as wizard, warlock, and sorcerer. Combined with Dr. Savin’sentheotech system, Mosiah was

sure he and his Masonic brothers could easily overpower the SBS crew. They would stalk them through the Sequence like cold-blooded predators; seizing any opportunity they could find to sabotage their mission. They would kill them if necessary.

In a world where the Temple of Jerusalem had not yet been rebuilt for the Messiah's return, the Mormon Church and Masonic Templars could never permit the false peace of an anti-Christ. Dr. Savin's blatant disregard for prophecy was heresy and clearly the work of the Adversary; of this Mosiah was sure. Lasting peace could only occur with the return of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in full accordance with Biblical prophecy.

Stepping over to the stone altar before the Golden Boy, the three men kneeled to begin the Masonic communion rite. Picking up a red leather book from the altar, Brother Merkley began to recite from the *Masonic Egyptian Rite of the Companion*, an initiation central to the Holy Royal Arch degree.

"Now we take the primal matter, that being the acacia, holy shittum of Solomon. We consume the rough ashlar, the mercurial part, to be purified as the cube. Thus, we consummate the congress of the Sun and Moon and achieve the perfected projection. Take as much as you need and have appetite for."

Turning to Brother Gunderson, he continued.

"My brother, as you receive the primal matter recognize the blindness of your first state. Then you were not enlightened; everything was dark within you. Arriving here now in full awareness of yourself, remember the Ancient One hath created this primal matter before man, who he did create to possess it and become immortal. Man has abused it and lost it, but it still remains for God's Chosen to partake of even the finest grain of the primordial matter to open the sun gate to infinity."

Next, facing Mosiah, Brother Merkley concluded the recital.

“Know ye that the acacia you receive is nothing but the primordial matter. And Hiram’s assassination is the loss of this first communion, which you are now to receive. In this know the Ancient One shall bring you glories beyond material riches.”

Turning now back toward the Golden Boy, he began the spirit invocation, reading from the *Ancient Magickal Rites of Angelic Alchemy*.

“Omnipotent and Eternal God who hath ordained the whole creation for thy praise and glory and for the salvation of man, I earnestly beseech thee that thou wouldst send one of thy spirits of the order of Jupiter, one of the messengers of Zadkiel whom thou hast appointed governor of thy firmament at the present time, most faithfully, willingly, and readily to show me these things which I shall ask, command or require of him, and truly execute my desires. Nevertheless, O Most Holy God, thy will and not mine be done through Jesus Christ, thine only begotten Son our Lord. Amen.”

Accepting the red book from Merkley, Brother Gunderson continued the invocation.

“Spirits, whose assistance I require, behold the sign and the very Hallowed Names of God full of power. Obey the power of this our pentacle; go out your hidden caves and dark places; cease your hurtful occupations to those unhappy mortals whom without ceasing you torment; come into this place where the Divine Goodness has assembled us; be attentive to our orders and known to our just demands; believe not that your resistance will cause us to abandon our operations. Nothing can dispense with your obeying us. We command you by the Mysterious Names Elohe Agla Elohim Adonay Gibort. Amen.

I call upon thee, Zadkiel, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, blessed Trinity, unspeakable Unity.

I invoke and intreat thee, Zadkiel, in this hour to attend to the words and conjurations which I shall use this day by the Holy Names of God Elohe El Elohim Elion Zebaoth Escerehie lah Adonay Tetragrammaton.

I conjure thee, I exorcise thee, thou Spirit Zadkiel, by these Holy Names Hagios O Theos Ischyros Athanatos Paracletus Agla on Alpha et Omega loth Aglanbroth Abiel Anathiel Tetragrammaton: And by all other great and glorious, holy and unspeakable, mysterious, mighty, powerful, incomprehensible Names of God, that you attend unto the words of my mouth, and send unto me Moroni or other of your ministering, serving Spirits, who may show me such things as I shall demand of him in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

Finishing the invocation, Mosiah appealed for the help of God’s special angel from the Mormon version of the rite.

“I intreat thee, Moroni, by the whole Spirit of Heaven, Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Witnesses, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, by the holy, great, and glorious Angel Orphaniel Tetra-Dagiel Salamla Acimoy pastor poti, that thou come forthwith, readily show thyself that we may see you and audibly hear you, speak unto us and fulfill our desires, and by your star which is Kolob, and by all the constellations of Heaven, and by whatsoever you obey, and by your character which you have given, proposed, and confirmed, that you attend unto me according to the prayer and petitions which I have made unto Heavenly Father, and that you forthwith guide us, willingly, truly, and faithfully

fulfilling all our desires, and that you appear unto us in the form of a beautiful Angel, gently, courteously, affably, and meekly, entering into communication with me, and that you neither permit any evil Spirit to approach in any sort of hurt, terrify or affright me in any way nor deceive me in any wise. Through the virtue of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in whose Name I attend, wait for, and expect thy appearance.

Fiat, fiat, fiat.

Amen, Amen, Amen.”

Standing to retrieve three bejeweled chalices from the stone altar, the men toasted the Golden Boy before downing their nagual potions. Returning the empty goblets to the altar, they turned to approach the saltwater tubs. Removing their robes, the men sat naked as attendants catheterized them, inserted the intravenous tubes, and attached the monitoring lines to their scalp and bodies.

Donning the white diving suits and locking on the ORB helmet, some in the Mithraeum whispered how they resembled cosmonauts preparing for their journey into outer space. But on their helmets and suit, where emblems of agency were worn, were instead emblazoned the crests of their Order. And their destination—it was not a faraway place in outer space, but rather a place very nearby in the inner space of the collective mind.

Connected now to the entheotech system, Mosiah recited the remainder of his invocation by speaking through the ORB’s internal microphone. Broadcast through loudspeakers inside the cavern, his voice echoed the final invocation for all to hear.

“Comest thou now, noble Spirit, in peace in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Thou art welcome. I have called thee in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth at whose Name every knee doth bow in heaven, earth, and hell, and every tongue shall confess there is no name like unto the Name of Jesus, who hath given power unto man to bind and to



loose all things in his most Holy Name, yea even unto those that trust in his salvation.”

Stepping together over the edge of the stone tubs, the three nagual psychonauts sat facing the Golden Boy. Leaning back into the arms of their attendants, they were baptized in the buoyant saltwater, floating now in the dark abyss. With the flip of a switch, their physical bodies fell away as their nagual doubles rose together above the tubs. Then, with a jolt, the three were gone—flying in chevron formation thru the Celestial Kingdom.



## Chapter 21

### Launch Day

The big day had finally arrived for Josh and his Blue Star crew. After a good night's sleep, light vegetarian breakfast, and morning routine of yoga and meditation, he met up with the men in the God Pod for mission prep.

As in the previous beta mission, the men traded their clothes for WEE pelvic appliances and the new lightweight cranial headset. Entering the stasis chambers upright, they waited as the ground crew did their job. As before, all their leads were connected before being reclined into horizontal position for insertion of the intravenous lines.

Strolling around the inside circle of eggs, Mission Director Winegard inspected the ground crew's work. She could not help but marvel at how far things had come in such a short period of time. In less than a year, she had quit her job at Oxford, moved to the States, and helped create what may well be the most important scientific experiment in human history. Stopping to adjust one of Josh's connections, she leaned into the egg to whisper in his ear.

"Remember who we are—" she said, "who we became yesterday. Lead us courageously to the Throne, my Purusha Atman. I will be right next to you whenever you need me."

"Of this, I am certain, O Shakti Parvati," Josh replied with a wink.

Kissing him warmly on the cheek, she stepped back to the center of the pyramidion to stand over the circular vortex. The swirling light from the atrium below gave her white lab coat the appearance of a whirling dervish. To the Armenians watching from the Control Center, she seemed the very embodiment of their blessed Anahit, arisen this day from the pure waters of Ara.

“Okay, listen up laddies,” Màiri announced in her usual Scottish brogue. “I’m going to walk you through the engagement protocols one more time to make sure we’re all on the same page.”

“You will recall from the mission plan that each entity affects a different facet of our physical world,” she reminded the men as she circled the whirlpool window. “Those entities encountered in the early, dense dimensions influence the elemental mechanics of our material dimension while those in the later and less dense dimensions hold sway over more charitable characteristics of consciousness, such as compassion, forgiveness, and tolerance. Since the vajra pattern is most effective in the higher dimensions, we want to focus on those to try and positively affect human behavior. But remember—we still need to maintain stability in the closer dimensions so the subtle higher harmonics won’t become swamped and rendered ineffective.”

“You will have twenty-four hours to explore each step of the Sequence, requiring a full week to complete one cycle. Your mission is to explore and communicate with any extra-dimensional entities you encounter. Coordinate and direct your vajra fields to calm them and enjoin their favor. Always stay together and travel in pentagonal formation. The combined effect of your individual fields makes you far more powerful together. You will be more vulnerable apart.”

“As your mission leader and navigator, Dr. Savin will guide you, discharging his handheld vajra devices toward any entities that appear agitated, uncooperative, or aggressive. We will be monitoring your vital signs and brain activity along the way, providing help as needed by lengthening or shortening your time in that part of the Sequence. If things become too dangerous we will override the Sequence and push you immediately into the next step. Only in a dire emergency will you be extracted from the Sequence. Otherwise, you’re on your own. Godspeed laddies.”

With the engagement protocol reviewed, Màiri motioned the ground crew to lower the psychonauts’ goggles into place and back away. As a prelaunch blessing, she would recite the opening Prayaniya Ishti rite normally performed prior to the ritual “buying of the Soma”. The

crewmembers could observe the rite with everyone else through the video feed in their VR goggles.

“Cup-bearer, bring the Raja’s Cup.”

Stepping forward, a young woman in a white tunic presented an elegantly designed gold amphora with griffin handles, lifting it up for all to see. Stopping before Màiri, the cupbearer removed a shallow silver dish that covered the top, placing it into her hands. Into this she poured a milky white liquid.

Pausing for a moment to bless the oblation, Màiri raised the communion dish skyward with both hands. Her image and voice filled the central screen in the Control Center.

“O Come ye hither, sit ye down: to Indra sing ye forth, your song,  
companions, bringing hymns of praise.

To him the richest of the rich, the Lord of treasures excellent,  
Indra, with Soma juice outpoured.

May he stand by us in our need and in abundance for our wealth:  
May he come nigh us with his strength.

Whose pair of tawny horses yoked in battles foemen challenge not:  
To him, to Indra sing your song.

Nigh to the Soma-drinker come, for his enjoyment, these pre drops,  
The Somas mingled with the curd.

Thou, grown at once to perfect strength, wast born to drink the  
Soma juice, Strong Indra, for preeminence.

O Indra, lover of the song, may these quick Somas enter thee:  
May they bring bliss to thee the Sage.

Our chants of praise have strengthened thee, O Satakratu, and our  
Lauds, So strengthen thee the songs we sing.

Indra, whose succor never fails, accept these viands thousandfold,  
Wherein all manly powers abide.

O Indra, thou who lovest song, let no man hurt our bodies, keep  
Slaughter far from us, for thou canst.”

Placing the dish at the center of the whirlpool window as an offering to Indra, Màiri backed away to the pyramidion wall. Running through the

final launch checklist with mission specialists, the time had come to give the order to close the chamber doors and initiate countdown.

As before, the launch went off without a hitch. To this everyone in the Control Center cheered, congratulating one another for having achieved such a historic moment. But Director Hakobyan was less euphoric. He could only breathe a sigh of worried relief as he stepped back from the celebration to the rear wall of the Control Center for a calming vapor. It had been a long difficult road to get here and he needed a private moment to collect his thoughts.

Taking a long drag from a blue-tipped Atmos vape pen, he relished the familiar taste of his favorite blend of McClelland Cherry tobacco and cannabis. More importantly, its effect always took the edge off and put things into perspective. Exhaling into the surrounding atmosphere to create what looked like a thought bubble just above his head, he instantly recalled the day this all began.

It had been four years since he first met the two Russian inventors at a Moscow tradeshow. Describing their isolation chamber to him, he was initially skeptical of its usefulness. But when they mentioned the results of their experiments combining psychoactive plants with the isolation chamber, he became much more interested.

They claimed to have found a connection between events in their visions and events in the physical world. Apparently, the information they were receiving while tripping inside the chamber gave clues about things that would soon happen in the real world. Using this information, they could sometimes anticipate which way certain stocks would turn. In fact, through timed trades buying and shorting stocks, they were able to fund their startup company Stasis Biotech and develop their first working prototype.

Realizing the potential to exploit such premonitions on a large scale, he introduced the entrepreneurs to Chief Petrovich with the Moscow investment company INTERRUS. Fortunately, the Chief was also impressed with their technology and decided to invest tens of millions of rubles into the venture. There was only one problem. Any publicity concerning their intention to manipulate the stock market could bring legal action from the Russian government. To avoid this, the INTERRUS

Board moved the team to a remote village in Armenia and built a state-of-the-art laboratory far away from the public eye.

As it turned out, Petrovich was an amateur historian and antiquity collector who had a personal interest in religious history, particularly the history of the Vainakh people around Lake Van and Mount Ararat. Like many other scholars of antiquity, he was convinced the ancient Vainakh civilization of northeastern Armenia had migrated outward in all directions to found the great civilizations of the ancient world.

The first migration, he believed, founded the city-state in southern Mesopotamia known as Ur located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. This became the first great civilization known as Sumer to be later followed by the Egyptian civilization ruled by the Hyksos people, followers of the ancient patriarch of Armenia named Hayk. From here an army of archers in horse drawn chariots traveled eastward, sparking the ascension of the Indus Valley Civilization and construction of a hundred yet unexplored pyramids in western China.

Petrovich shared with him his long-held belief that the mysterious Soma drink of the Vedics descended from the Vainakh ascension ritual. He even believed their visions were the inspiration for their missionary expeditions out of Armenia. Perhaps, he argued, they were receiving information or instructions in their visions that told them where to travel to obtain different entheogenic plants. He was convinced that Stasis Biotech might be able to reproduce this visionary communion to help him predict and perhaps even influence future events.

Chief Petrovich had chosen the village of Vedi to build the laboratory not just for its seclusion but also for its proximity to Khor Virap, the Vedi River, and the ancient capital of Artashat. Long ago, this area had been a holy site for the worship of Ara and Anahit where sacrificial rituals and the making of visionary drinks were practiced and perfected. To him, this place was nothing less than the ancient altar of the First Religion.

Because of this, Petrovich had built the laboratory according to the classic Vedic stupa, designing it as a place where Soma communion and temple incubation might once again be used to prophesize future events. Only this time his vision was one of making money, not meeting gods.

“This would be a temple of financial salvation,” he would remind them, “not spiritual.”

But no one—not even his prized Blue Star psychonauts—could have predicted the phone call they would receive from Dr. Savin. His entheotech system and sequencer had changed everything, accelerating their progress by years. Too bad the American scientist was more interested in his silly dream of saving the world than the practical application of getting rich.

Only a few weeks before, his programmers had reverse engineered the entheotech code. Realizing that the vajra pattern could be turned off in the other psychonauts without Dr. Savin realizing it, his staff had secretly developed an inverse-vajra pattern to be carried through the Sequence by the Russian psychonauts. It worked something like noise-cancelling headphones where an inverted signal is used to cancel out any unwanted signal. Through a remote-control app on his smart phone, Hakobyan could secretly switch on or off the cancelling vajra signal by order of the Chief.

The INTERRUS plan was diabolically simple. The inverse-vajra pattern would suppress and cancel out Savin’s vajra signal any time they wanted. Using their combined negative influence, they could inject agitation and chaos into the collective conscious, raising tensions on Earth and manipulating world stock markets.

Their plan was to increase tensions in the Middle East by prompting ISIS to do something rash, like invade a major oil producing country. Then when instructed by Chief Petrovich, he would switch the pattern back to Savin’s original pattern to calm ISIS aggression. With foreknowledge of world events and the ability to control oil prices, they would have a foolproof money-making machine.

INTERRUS would buy up as much stock in the petroleum sector as possible before using the inverse-vajra effect to increase Middle East tensions, causing prices to rise. At the peak of aggression and brink of all-out war, they would then short the oil stocks and switch the vajra pattern back to a positive influence, calming tensions and pushing prices back down before selling their short positions. This they could do again and again with slight variations to produce different war scenarios



designed to manipulate world financial markets. Using this “pump and dump” scheme, INTERRUS could generate huge returns for their investors and themselves.

Of course, everyone knew full well the plan was more than a little risky. Such things were not entirely predictable. Use of biological or nuclear weapons, say by Israel or Iran, could escalate out of control into a global holocaust. Nevertheless, the INTERRUS Board believed the risk was still manageable and voted unanimously to approve the plan. The potential of generating billions of dollars in near-guaranteed returns for their investors and themselves was just too irresistible to pass up. As one of these investors, Hayk considered himself very fortunate—very fortunate indeed. This was his one chance to get rich and he was not going to let anything or anyone stand in the way.



## Chapter 22

### The Hall of Colors

Passing thru the foggy cloud layer into the Hall of Colors, the crew immediately set out to locate Baphomet. Josh was the first to spot him by following the toroidal flow of colors to its source. But unlike the bright fluorescent colors and jagged patterns of his earlier visits, a muted range of pastels now surrounded the creature. Canary, aqua, and cerulean hues were emanating from the being, making him appear far more subdued and peaceful than before. No longer was he dodging or trying to hide, instead remaining stationary and seated in the center of the Hall as if he wanted to be seen. All of this, Josh believed, proved the crew's vajra signal was having a calming effect.

Josh could now better distinguish the creature's appearance. Just as medieval folklore had described him, the Baphomet did in fact resemble a combination of the ancient bull-headed Semitic god Ba'al Hedad and the later medieval Sabbatic Goat archetype most Christians identify with Satan. Composed of simple geometric shapes, the creature's head appeared as an inverted pentagram with two horned projections at top and a long snout or beard at bottom. The rotating donut-shaped field around him gave him the appearance of wings, especially on the backside where the polar Gaussian heart shape of the torus core shimmered and seemed to flutter like those of the Apsaras. His body, if you could call it that, was a series of nested spheres and waves bundled together by some kind of binding force that emanated from a central beating locus.

Directly below the seated figure, Josh noticed a geometric platform that was projecting a baby blue beam of light upward into the heart of the Baphomet's body. It seemed to be some kind of coherent power source, like a laser only much broader. The surface of the platform he was sitting on was crystalline in appearance, like a seat or throne that resembled an enormous octagonal 'pillow cut' sapphire.

“My God, can it be?” he thought aloud. “Could this be the legendary throne of the Teacher of Righteousness?”

As an apparent response to his question, two more creatures emerged from the fractal buds protruding above each shoulder of the Baphomet—each with six fiery wings. Like Baphomet, their ‘wings’ were also polar Gaussian fields organized in a triangular formation around a shining face. Viewing the overall scene objectively, it was easy to see how people two thousand years ago would have described this vision in terms of a host of burning angels around a horned bull-god.

“Could it be that Baphomet—lord Ba’al Hedad of the Canaanites whom Christians identify as the fallen angel—is actually the Essene Teacher of Righteousness? And those—” he pointed out to his men, “are the winged seraphim who accompany him?”

“Maybe this really is the founding vision of the Essenes,” Josh explained to his men. “The toroid of colors and fractal patterns are the nimbus cloud said to surround him. And this entire vision; well, it could be the first enlightened state taught in the Essene mystery school. If so, it would only make sense the Essene priests consumed the same communion we did to get here.”

Approaching the entity in tight formation, the crewmen found themselves increasingly buffeted by the toroidal flow. Streams of color and geometry crashed against them faster and more intensely with every step. Yet, they had no choice but to push on if they were to establish contact and request the creature’s help. Gaining the Baphomet’s favor was necessary if their work in higher dimensions was to reach Earth, especially those of the Abrahamic faiths who feared him so.

“Are...are you the Fallen One?” Josh asked, pushing hard against the repelling field.

“I am the One known as Mahomet,” the entity replied in a low voice that resonated stereoscopically in the Hall, “ruler of the lowest heaven.”

“Mahomet?” Josh repeated with surprise. “Is this not another name for the prophet Muhammad? Surely the goat-headed Baphomet is not the prophet of Islam!”

“Truly it is I Jibreel, messenger of El-ah, who is the essence. For I am the Way and the Truth and the Light.”

“So, then, it was also you who led the Jewish Essenes into the Clear Light,” Josh declared, “and the one named Gabriel, prophesied to herald the return?”

“Yea, I am the teacher for all those who win the Haoma. For all those who seek the Way must pass through me, Father of the Temple, to enter the Kingdom of El-ah. For it is I who give men the strength of Heracles.”

“No wonder there is so much confusion in the world,” Josh remarked to his crew. “The entity calling himself Mahomet or Baphomet is not only the Persian Prophet Muhammad but also Heracles of the Greeks. So too is he the Phoenician Melqart whose ‘son’ Iesous is the Christ figure. All of these Green Men must have originated with Abraham right here in the Hall of Colors, becoming the founding archetype behind many of the world’s great religions.”

“Tell me then, my Lord. Why do some of your followers now inflict pain and mass casualty upon my world? For it is in your exalted name that the murderous tribes behead the innocent; stone and burn our women; and murder countless others by explosion—all for what purpose; to what end? Could you not have helped your followers find peace on the Path to Righteousness?”

“All things must exist in a balance between the two extremes,” the entity replied patiently. “There is no better way to learn and no other way to teach. You must pass through the temporary world of dualities before you can attain the perfected order. Were it not so, there would be no high refuge and all would be lost; cast forever upon the void.”

“But so many are given no chance; dying early or falling victim to poverty, disease, and injury,” Josh replied, offended by the entity’s apparent lack of compassion for the human condition. “How can these souls learn anything of balance in a world that gives them no chance?”

“Those who seek the Path will live a life of greater purpose. Over many lives they will learn the balance they need. Come with me so you will know the truth,” the entity offered.

With that, the Hall of Colors began to fold in upon itself, its geometrical structure turning inside out to form a kind of container. But the container was not a room. It was a new form—the form of a winged

animal with the head of Baphomet. As absurd as it seemed, they were now riding in the belly of a translucent winged animal. This, he realized, was Al-Buraq, the winged steed of Muhammad known by the Greeks as Pegasus. It was not a myth at all, but rather a kind of visionary archetype accessed only through the Hall of Colors.

“On the back of Al-Buraq we fly to the Foundation of Shalim,” Baphomet explained. “Look there! Can you see now the Hill of YeruShalayim? It is the village of the Jebusites, devoted followers of Jesus, who knew it as Ursalimmu, the land of Shalim. They lived here long before the Israelites came and took it from them. The rock on this hill is an altar known by many. Pilgrims traveled to this place to offer Haoma sacrifice to the gods.”

The psychonauts were astonished by what they saw below them. Somehow, they had been transported back in time four thousand years and were now flying over ancient Jerusalem. The vision was so vivid; so highly detailed; so real. There was no way it could be a movie or simulation, Josh decided. What else could it be other than an actual trip back in time?

Below them was an ancient settlement with primitive huts and people dressed in Canaanite robes, headdresses, and leather sandals. The smell of burning hair and flesh hung in the air as the words of sacrificial prayers floated up into the sky. Slowly, the winged steed circled the large, flat boulder on the hilltop in what was otherwise a barren and godforsaken land. It was then that the creature explained the purpose of this vision.

“Behold the altar of the Evening and Morning Stars known to all as Shalim and Shahar. See how the people offer the Haoma jar to the Evening Star to bring forth Great Mother Asherah and Most High Father El Elyon, now burning the milky waters on the Foundation of Shalim. This they do earnestly to seek the Path of Righteousness.”

“As the Foundation Stone of Jerusalem, it was here where the followers of Ibrahim, the Brahman, came to build their great temple to Asherah. And by their bidding, I descended to this altar to show them the Way to her Light as I taught the Jebusites before them and as I shall teach you. But the priests turned against me—caring naught for the Path

of Righteousness—following instead the path of sensation and illusion. They called me Iblis and Shaytan—names of evil; forsaking me; no longer ascending with me to seek the Path.”

“Some hid me from their flock, replacing the Haoma body and blood with the ordinary grapevine. In your time—even in the name of Muhammad, praying upon bended knee—not one from the altar now seeks me. Without true knowledge in the Path of Righteousness, they find purpose only in death. I weep for their blindness as I do now all creatures of the mundane.”

Josh could only feel pity for this miserable, lonely creature. No longer with noble purpose, the Baphomet messenger of El was a dead god, a dead prophet, and a dead teacher. A deep bitterness and despair had darkened him, a shroud the entire crew could feel. So strong in fact was the sadness, Josh knew they must soon escape or be lost forever in the creature’s misery and self-loathing.

“Now you see,” he whispered, “it is YOU who refuse to find harmony between the two extremes, accepting the imbalance that now pervades your world. It is YOU who no longer win the Haoma. It is YOU who choose not the ancient ways, living instead in a self-imposed blindness. No longer do YOU wish to visit the other worlds, turning away from your spiritual brothers. It is YOU who have forgotten all I have taught you only to repeat empty rituals whose true purpose has been lost in time.”

“I call again and again from the Great Hall, yet few harken. Still, here I remain to carry you to Mount Yeru, the City of Peace, climbing to the high holy land of El and The Lady, and you ignore my call. For it is true that peace is there for all those who seek it. This is the way of enlightenment and gnosis of the Seven Heavens. This is the one true path of liberation and freedom. Will you and your brothers now ascend with me to follow for yourself the Path of Righteousness into the Clear Light?”

As the voice paused for his answer, Josh knew it was now or never; they must leave at once or risk becoming trapped inside this being forever. Mustering all his strength, he pulled his hands together in a clap

to break the creature's spell and disrupt the vision. The result was more than he had bargained for.

A bolt of blue plasma shot out from between his hands with so much force it sent a thundering shockwave through Baphomet and into the scene below. To the worshippers of the Rock, it was the thunderous voice of El, clearly displeased by their oblations. Falling to the ground, the frightened people prostrated themselves to show their obedience. In mortal fear they prayed for forgiveness to the angry mountain god Ba'al.

So too was Baphomet surprised by the power of these humans. Never before had he seen one from the mundane world wield the thunderbolt. These humans were not like the hapless followers of Jebus—they were different, stronger. They might have a chance to restore the Path.

Filled with a newfound sense of authority, Josh spoke with confidence to the Teacher of Righteousness.

"Teacher, we know of the Path through the Seven Heavens and now travel them of our own accord," Josh said firmly. "We ask your release so we may continue our mission through the Sequence. You may find solace that I will carry your words back to our people. This I promise."

Repositioning with the crew into a tighter star formation, Josh raised the vajra-kīla before him, focusing his entire life energy into his hands. From this a magenta toroid with blue Mandelbrot core formed around them. Like a wizard in a video game, he had conjured a shield around his crew. Yet to Josh it was only the natural effects of electromagnetism and resonance as it appears in the astral realm. He knew no other magick.

"I entreat you to join with us, Mahomet, to restore the balance missing in our world. We need your help, my friend, in restoring the divine order so that our people may once again seek your teachings."

In the blink of an eye the psychonauts were returned to the Hall. Indeed, they had never left. Baphomet was silent now, breathing only the pleasing pastel colors of the First Heaven. Gone was his agitation and gone was his remorse.

As the crew now made their transition out, the Hall of Colors began to brighten into a peaceful field of white. But no sooner did the creature disappear than something took its place—something angry and vicious at



the farthest periphery of awareness. Josh could not tell what it was, but it felt like a pack of wild animals in full gallop toward them. Vanishing as they arrived at the nexus between dimensions, he dismissed it as perhaps a glitch in the transition. Yet still it was worrisome after their dreadful encounter with the Vanir.

“With any luck at all,” Josh thought to the others, “our work today had a positive impact back home. Brace yourselves now for the next step.”

As a rush of new communion made its way into their bloodstream, the frequency shifted, tuning the psychonauts to a higher attention level.

“Stay together now as we make the jump. We should be arriving in the Nordic realm soon.”

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Watching the crew’s vital signs was, of course, Mäiri’s first priority. But she always kept one eye on the news in hopes of identifying any cause-effect correlation between their mission and world affairs. For this reason, one corner of the Control Center’s giant panel remained tuned to CNN International.

Turning up the volume from her console, it was immediately apparent that tensions in the Middle East had not lessened one bit. If anything, they had become worse.

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “We have breaking news. The U.S. Defense Department has just released satellite images showing ISIS troops and armaments amassing at the southwestern border of Iraq. Here is Christina Amunpur with a live report on the ground from Karbala, southwest of Baghdad.”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “Rolf, here in Karbala we are about three hundred kilometers from the border between Iraq and Saudi Arabia. At least 20,000 ISIS troops have gathered over the past several days on the road between here and Arar in northern Saudi Arabia. Arar is just across the border about

seventy kilometers. Our sources tell us this is the beginning of a major ISIS offensive into Saudi Arabia designed to oust the Saudi regime and establish a new Islamic caliphate.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “I believe there are about 150,000 active troops in the Royal Saudi Land Force. How, in your opinion Christina, could the new ISIS leadership overthrow a military force more than seven times their size and much better equipped?”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “Rolf, I am told the Sons of ISIS now have many sympathizers in both the Royal military and high levels of the Saudi government. They claim many in the Royal army have pledged to defect and join their cause.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Thanks for that report, Christina. Let’s turn now to Rumi Mactabu, our CNN analyst in Iraq. Rumi, in your opinion what is their strategy?”

Rumi Mactabu, CNN Iraq: “Rolf, the moment ISIS captured Ritba and Al-Nukhib in western Iraq everyone knew their next move would be against the Saudi kingdom. Their most likely military move would be to cross the border into Saudi Arabia at Arar and join up with the Saudi rebel forces, probably around Sakaka in the north. From there they would likely make their way westward to Tabuk and then south through Medina to capture Jeddah and Mecca. This traces out the northwestern region of Saudi Arabia that was once part of the Ottoman Empire. With control of Mecca, the heart of Islam would be in their hands and with it the support of many more Muslims in the region and around the world.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “What then? What would they do after capturing Mecca?”

Rumi Mactabu, CNN Iraq: “With Syria, Western Iraq, and Western Arabia united under the ISIS flag, their strategy would likely shift toward Egypt and Jordan. In theory, the dominoes would continue to fall very quickly across North Africa to include Tunisia and Morocco. After this, I would expect them to push northward into Turkey. At least sixty-seven percent of the Muslims in Turkey are Sunni just like ISIS and significant infiltration into the government and military is rumored. So, it is certainly possible for Turkey to fall to the caliphate. Of course, the ultimate goal would be to take Israel, since it too was once part of the Ottoman Empire—especially the Dome of the Rock. This would prove to be very difficult, though, given Israel’s nuclear arsenal and promise of military protection from Western nations. Worst case scenario: it could spark a major global conflict.”

Muting the audio, Màiri could see no indication their mission was having any affect whatsoever on world events. In fact, everything still seemed to be careening toward a major confrontation in the Middle East. She could only hope that Josh and the crew could find a way to stop the madness.

She had often thought it more than coincidence their entheotech project, a modern revival of First Religion communion rites, had come along at this moment in time to counter the rising threat of religious intolerance and terrorism. It seemed to her that nature was seeking a state of equilibrium and their mission the counterbalancing factor in the equation. How exactly the equation would work out was still hard to tell, but this idea of cosmic balance had always been a source of hope and comfort for her.

Glancing at the crew’s video monitors, the men had not moved an inch. They were still lying there quietly, completely entranced inside their incubation chambers. Wearing their Crowns and VR goggles they looked like alien cybernetic kings sleeping peacefully in egg sarcophagi, waiting patiently until they could be reborn. But they were anything but

peaceful right now. Their heart and respiratory rates were soaring as they began to enter the second step of the Sequence.

“A small prayer certainly wouldn’t hurt right now,” she suggested to those around her.

## Chapter 23

### *The Sol Factory*

**S**tartled from his reverie by the haptic vibration of an incoming message, Hakobyan looked at his wristwatch. It was a text from Chief Petrovich saying only:

#### ACTIVATE PROTOCOL

Reaching for his phone in his coat pocket, he launched the vajra control app and touched a button on the screen. Instantly, the entheotech control server inverted the Russian crewmen's vajra signal in the Sequence, canceling out Savin's positive pattern while inducing a negative signal. From here on, the crew would be without the protection of their vajra field.

"This better work," he muttered, shaking his head.

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Arriving out of a cool rush, the SBS crewmen found themselves now fully immersed in the Elphame world. Josh had been expecting the same carnival and circus tent as before, but this was completely different. They had instead arrived in a forest of tall pine trees on a footpath lined by bluebells and colorful mushrooms. From the angle of the light, it was late afternoon on what seemed like an early autumn day. Birdsong filled the air as a cool breeze swept through the trees, rustling the branches above. Yet despite this fairy tale scene, the Russians were already scanning their surroundings for potential danger.

"Whatever happens, don't give in to astonishment," Josh warned the others, fearing something unexpected might catch them off guard. If they became separated in this place, they may never find their way out.

European folklore was filled with warnings against losing yourself inside an elf ring.

Just then, someone appeared on the trail directly ahead. It was a tall blond bearded man dressed in a medieval tunic wearing a long sword and silver helmet with wings like the Roman messenger god Mercury. He was walking in their direction. Looking over the travelers with a mix of curiosity and distrust, the man stopped short of a proper greeting. Something seemed to be keeping him from approaching further.

“I ha’ been sendt by min Fath’r til a bringe de til Valhöll,” the man explained in a German-sounding lilt that Josh took for a Norwegian accent. “Folla, but hold ya distaince. I vil defend meg selv.”

With that, the man turned in the direction from which he came.

“We will follow you,” Josh called after him, motioning the others to stay close and walk with him at a brisk pace. “But where, may I ask, are you taking us?”

“Du er no lengr an jorden, but in Glaoshimr of Asgard, de resting sted of the Einherjar and home av Vanir and Æsir,” the man said over his shoulder. “Du er første living travelers from jorden to visit Valhöll. Min Fath’r knows of your mōting wit de Alfar and Queen of Elphame.”

“You mean Rambha?” Josh replied.

“Ja, de Apsara queen.”

“She is the one who sent us here,” Josh explained. “Who, may I ask, are you?”

“Min navn is Helgi Hundingsbane, son av Sigmund. Once a mann like you, but kom her and ne’r returnert. Av Vanir now, serving an right hånd of min Fath’r Óðr. I hjelp den Alfar med dette holografisk illujon.”

“This I understand,” Josh replied. “We call them the machine elves. As I understand it, they construct the artifice of reality—”

Mentioning the elves was all it took for the forest landscape to suddenly become translucent. What had at first been a convincing and solid reality was now a finely spun web of fractal machinery and bioelectrical circuitry. Josh could see the machine elves hard at work even here, building this reality from the archetypes of their favorite worlds and cultures.

“I’m afraid they weren’t very nice the last time I met them,” Josh complained to his crewmates. “Do not provoke them.”

Emerging from the forest into a downhill clearing, the travelers approached a wide valley surrounded by mountains. Astounded by the hyperrealism of the landscape, the SBS crew paused to marvel at the detail of their shared vision.

Reaching up into the air, their guide Helgi seemed to be manipulating a small transparent control panel. Flipping a switch, a medieval city suddenly appeared on top of a mountain across the valley. Turning a dial, he adjusted the color tone of the scene before them, increasing the contrast and pumping up the color saturation. There was no attempt to hide the fact they were inside a simulation.

“Se de Asgard!” the Viking proclaimed, as the psychonauts stared wide-eyed at the beautiful city now before them.

None had seen anything as magnificent as this. Backlit by an orange and magenta sunset, a radiant complex of stone buildings was arranged around a large domed building that sparkled like a jewel. Overhead circled an eagle, gliding gracefully through the evening air. Nothing could be more peaceful or more idyllic.

Continuing down the path, the travelers hiked across a lush valley of wildflowers to reach an Iron Gate into the city. Next to the path and just before the gate stood a large tree with shimmering gold leaves. Hanging low over the path, it seemed to be weeping leaves onto the path ahead.

“We inn through Valdriind, Gate o’ the Dead,” Helgi explained as the Iron Gate began to open. “An før it stands Glasir, the magisk rød gilt tree what fylt with the tears of Vanadis. Har liv the Lady’s pet—a chatte bird. But ne’r a question posere to this winged profet les you wish to lære den historien of yer own death. For har alle is known, alfa and omega.”

Passing beneath the golden tree of Glasir, its boughs pulled back as a shrill voice issued forth from somewhere amongst the branches.

“Sawest thou Måiri, daughter of Thomas,  
The fairest maid in her homeland found.  
Though coupled you art in Heaven’s light,  
You leave her now forever earthbound.”

“Stille, dum bird!” Hilga shouted back. “AllFather Óðr kommand det and it vil be.

Looking back at the tree, Josh was concerned about the bird’s warning. What danger might be waiting for them inside Valhöll? He could only hope the vajra would be enough to protect them and win their leave.

Entering the Iron Gates of Asgard, the psychonauts found themselves walking through a bustling Norwegian village, or so it would seem. It was as if they had traveled back in time more than a thousand years to medieval Norway. Wooden carts were overflowing with cod, herring and lutefish; ducks hung from twine in shop windows; and baskets were filled with potatoes and eggs. A great assortment of bread could be found in the market, filling the evening air with the sweet aroma of home. Last minute shoppers in medieval dress haggled for supper bargains before the carts were shuttered for the evening. To the elves this must be the best of human civilization, Josh imagined. Why else would they choose such a setting for their human zoo?

Zigzagging through the crowd, Josh noticed subtle auras around the human figures. Just beyond the crowd facade were the ghost-like figures of the dearly departed. They wore earthly bodies like actors wear clothes, costumes for their roles in a never-ending play about medieval Scandinavia. Perhaps these were the ones who knew the machine elves best and visited them most often.

Like the elven carnival, everything here was an archetype of some kind. Here the archetypes modeled the ideal social order, a place where spirits could live the life they had always dreamed. While Valhöll itself is often described as nothing more than a great beer hall, it was far more than this. It was the reward of idealism for a courageous life served in the mundane world of pain, war, disease, and ignorance.

Following Helgi through the narrow streets, they turned onto a broad boulevard that led up to the same domed building they had seen from afar. Mounting the broad staircase, he counseled the visitors on court etiquette before entering the Great Hall.

“Adresse Óðr as ‘AllFather’ and knele on one kne. Do not speak første and ne’r interrupt ham, lest he become mest irritert. He er en



mester prankster and supreme Riddler who må teste ya før he kan trust ya. Giv ham a sarkastisk or dim-vett answer and ya may finne yourself in a sted ya dn't wish t' be."

Proceeding through an enormous wood-beamed foyer running the front length of the building, the crew entered between two huge rough-hewn doors into a grand hall made of dark wood and shaped like a cube. Along the four walls were more doors—hundreds of them, it seemed—but for what reason Josh could not tell. At the center of the cube's ceiling was a dome circumscribed by a square tower made of logs. Smaller wooden structures and gardens were scattered throughout the hall with tall trees offering shade from a powerful beam of light shining down from the center of the dome.

Caped men in tunics, cinched tight with leather belts, mingled with those clad in armor. Some celebrated at long banquet tables laden with food and wine as others strolled leisurely between jovial conversations. Colorfully dressed minstrels played lutes and flutes to accompany jesters who led the crowd's favorite drinking songs. Stories of warriors lost were repeated endlessly, finishing always with a melancholy madrigal or tragic funerary elegy. It was the best of life in medieval Scandinavia.

"This is too creepy," Josh whispered to the others. "A city full of dead Vikings acting like they're still alive."

Looking closer at the hall itself, Josh was reminded of domed buildings back on Earth, St. Peter's Basilica perhaps or the U.S. Capital. But this building was larger than those and, for him, far more beautiful in its simple design. The elves latticework sparkled like a million lens flares, illuminating a network of gold threads and jewels just beneath the surface of the roughhewn woodwork. The elven Gandharva had outdone themselves with this, he decided. It was like an enormous jewelry box for their most prized possession—a menagerie of souls from a thousand medieval warriors.

Stepping into the hall, Helgi announced the visitor's arrival for all to hear. Many turned to peer curiously as the crew made their way through the crowd before returning to their endless celebration. The visitors were neither welcomed nor threatened—simply tolerated.

Walking toward the center, Josh took a cinematic flight thru his mind's eye. Circling the rotunda three times, the golden throne was more than met the eye. It was more of a control console than a throne. Translucent panels around the throne were instrumented with an array of silver buttons and sliders. What could this possibly do, he wondered.

Approaching the base of the seven-step platform, Josh's consciousness snapped back into place. Spreading out into a wider star formation, the five crewmen kneeled together, as instructed by Helgi, to wait for the king to speak first.

Óðr, who Josh knew as Odin, was not the grand kingly figure described in Nordic mythology. Instead, the AllFather was a rather slight figure larger than an ordinary elf sharing only their large black eyes and pointed ears. As leader of the Æsir and Vanir, cousins to the machine elves or Alfar, he was probably Æsirian.

"Why have you come here?" the king demanded, wincing as he shielded his eyes. "You are still incarnate; impure and unfit to approach the Throne."

"AllFather, we bring our friendship," Josh replied, wondering if his comment was the test Helgi had mentioned.

"Your aura is dark," Odin complained. "You stink of rotting flesh and the putrid stench of death. Why do you bring such impurity into the hall of eternal life?"

The hall fell silent as all eyes turned to the strangers.

"This must be the riddle Helgi mentioned," Josh whispered to the others. "Only the correct reply will gain his favor. I have an idea."

Stepping forward, he turned to restate Odin's riddle for all to hear.

"AllFather asks: 'What reeks of death yet promises eternal life?'" Josh announced with confidence, sweeping his hand around the room with a flourish.

"Why, my Lord," he said, turning back to the king, "the answer is 'fly agaric'. For though the Amrita may reek of rotting flesh in the light of day, it brings immortal life in the darkness of night. Only under the spell of its shade may the faithful attain the purifying light that shines through Óðr's door!"

The Æsirian king was not amused. Standing up before his throne he pointed an accusing finger at the visitors.

“The Jordenian mocks me,” Odin accused. “It is you who brings this vile stench into Valhöll. Take your malodorous parasol back where you found it!” he demanded, pointing the way out.

“AllFather, we meant you no slight,” Josh pleaded, embarrassed that he might have misinterpreted the king’s words. “Please forgive me if I have offended you. We ask only a moment of your consideration. Our world is on the verge of a great conflict that might be its last. We seek your help in restoring order to our people.”

“So says the sansorðinn to whom the Queen bestowed our greatest gift,” Odin replied with disgust, “only to use it for his own petty gain.”

“But AllFather, this is not true,” Josh replied, puzzled by such a charge. “We travel the Sequence in peace. Perhaps a demonstration of my purest intent will convince you of our good intentions.”

Extending his arms, he once again brought his hands together in a thunderous clap. And though it was not nearly as powerful as before, a wave rolled through the hall causing a faint vortex to form beneath the central dome above the king’s throne. To this a chorus of laughter rippled through the court, the dead Vikings were unimpressed by his naïve show of wizardry.

“You may wield the diamantine dagger,” the king said mildly amused. “But you have not yet learned to channel the light.”

“How do you mean, AllFather?” Josh replied.

“You are impure and insulting, but I am a patient father,” the Æsirian king replied sternly. “I will tell you what you wish to know, but then you must leave before you corrupt the light.”

“The dagger can channel the Clear Light through the Yggdrasil to influence your world. Between the lower nine realms and the upper nine realms, Valhöll is the central cube that joins two great pyramids into the hourglass structure of your star system,” the king explained. “This Great Kaaba is the lens that transforms the archetypes of the upper realms into the avatars of the lower realms.”

“Created by the Alfar during the First Cause, this machinery projects the illusion of your world and many others. In your world the

temple at Palenque is an entrance into the lower pyramid of this projector, built for access to the underworlds of Xibalba. The Maya were dear friends and we taught them much.”

“Your diamantine dagger can be used to amplify the axis of light that flows downward through the Yggdrasil Tree. When placed at the center of the Alfar Machine, it acts as a resonator to amplify the Clear Light through the trunk of the Yggdrasil to the root worlds. Used properly, it will amplify your purest intent to influence consciousness. Use it naively, as you use it now, and it will release unholy discord into the heavenly realms, threatening us all.”

With that, the Æsirian king reached down to touch his control panel. Instantly the facade of Valhöll fell away to reveal an enormous cubic crystalline structure underneath. It was part of an enormous hourglass framework of opposing stepped pyramids above and below Valhöll, rotating slowly in opposite directions. The dome that had been at the top of the great hall was now the top of a gigantic sphere centered on Odin’s Throne. Together, the crystalline cube and sphere appeared to act as an iris to focus and project the light beaming down from the upper pyramid tiers into the denser tiers below.

“This must be the elven machine I saw before,” Josh told the stunned Russians, “or at least part of it. I think it functions something like a crystal resonator. Each world resonates at a different frequency within the hourglass framework, which represents the bidirectional structure of time. The elven Sequence only spans the middle seven of nineteen dimensions with Earth occupying the root dimension two tiers below us. Valhöll is thus the trunk of the Yggdrasil Tree and central cube in a nineteen cubic lattice that enclose the upper and lower pyramids.”

With the lattice revealed, the Viking souls had also been stripped of their human appearance. In their place, thousands of light bodies orbited the king’s throne. When combined with the spherical lens of Valhöll, the whole thing looked remarkably like the ringed planet Saturn.

“I wonder. Could this vision explain the Kaaba in Mecca and its circumambulation by Muslim pilgrims?” Josh whispered to the others. “Could Yahweh and Allah actually be the Norse god Odin who the Romans knew as Saturn? And could Odin’s hourglass machinery be the

reason the Romans associated Saturn with the feminine Crone, the Queen of Elphame who controls the Sequence of time? This explains so much!”

The machine elves were everywhere, legions of them turning knobs, pulling levers, and pushing buttons on the enormous holonomic projector. Yet even this, Josh realized, must operate on an even deeper level beyond the archetypes of human comprehension.

“The elves certainly do a lot more in this workshop than make toys for children,” he joked to the others.

Standing now, Odin raised his arms to welcome the light from above. Shining down into Valhöll, the Clear Light reflected in every direction, bouncing off the walls and causing the cube’s crystalline structure to vibrate and glow.

“Without a doubt this must be the inspiration behind the great pyramid-building religions,” Josh theorized. “The hourglass shape of the Nordic Yggdrasil is no different from the Buddhist’s Mount Sumeru which is no different than the Zoroastrian’s fire altar or Robert Fludd’s alchemy tree of interpenetrating pyramids. They were all hourglass structures believed to focus the flow of energy thru the Cosmic Tree. And at the center of this tree-like structure is the Eye of Ra in Valhöll, a focal point for high-frequency light that millions worship as the Kaaba. It’s all beginning to make sense to me now.”

As the light began to resonate inside the crystalline cube, it grew brighter, sending a beam of pure coherent light down through Odin’s throne into the pyramid below. The cube’s spherical lens had become as bright as the Sun with the ring of souls forming a shiny golden disc around it. The king had indeed become Saturn, thundering like a god as he spoke.

“Look upon me,” the thunder god echoed. “For I am the lens of the Clear Light. And you, my children, are but shards born of the light of my Sol Factory.”

With these words, Josh felt his hands begin to glow brighter, then his entire body. His vajra had begun to resonate sympathetically with the cube, sending blue plasma tendrils licking out from his hands into the surrounding ether. When he turned to show his crew, they too had changed but not in a good way. Their light bodies had become darker,

cloaked inside a dull cloud. Jittering like a misaligned filmstrip, he feared their vajra signals were reacting negatively to the harmonic frequencies now resonating in the hall.

At the same time, the lens had begun to lose power. The entire hall was starting to tremble and darken. All Josh could see now were the shimmering neon threads outlining the enormous lattice structures of the great machine.

“Your presence is corrupting the light,” the voice bellowed. “You threaten the projection of not only your world, but all worlds of this star system.”

But the god of Saturn was not the only angry one. The machine elves had begun to crawl out of the lattice and through the hundred doorways on the perimeter of the cube, headed directly for the SBS crew. Angry and vicious, their large black eyes and razor-sharp teeth twinkled from inside their luminous spheres. There were hundreds of them and they had become like a monster hoard in a bad nightmare.

In just seconds the creatures were hurtling themselves against the intruders. Passing back and forth through the crew’s astral bodies, the men were soon smothered like antibodies on an invading virus. To them it felt like a swarm of bees.

As the attack continued to escalate, some of the elves began to burrow inside the psychonaut’s light bodies. Josh felt as if they were trying to dislodge his consciousness and force him from his physical body in an effort to murder him. This time they were definitely playing for keeps. Though he could feel no pain, there was still the trauma of violation—like the Vanir’s violation of Dmitri. He must find a way to repel them if he and his crew were to survive.

“Like they say,” Josh shouted to the others, “don’t let the bastards get you down. Work your way in my direction and try to position yourself in the same location as my light body. Our combined field density might force them out.”

Struggling against the swarm, the Russians maneuvered one by one into the same etheric space as Josh. As hoped, the burrowing elves were gradually repelled and no longer able to penetrate the overlapping fields.

But then, just as the last crewmember joined the collective, Josh noticed something odd. The buzzing in his head had stopped.

If anything, he reasoned, the buzzing should have become louder as the vajra signals combined to amplify one another. Were the vajra signals no longer working? What had gone wrong?

On a hunch, Josh maneuvered out then back into the crew collective. The vajra signal returned when he was outside of the group but again disappeared when he reentered. The only thing that could explain it, he reasoned, was the Russian's signals were somehow interfering with his signal. In fact, their vajra patterns would have to be exactly opposite of his to cancel out to silence.

Odin's comments now made total sense. The Russian's inverse signals appeared as a dark aura that the Æsirian king must have perceived as an offensive odor. Then when he amped up the light, the Russians' signal interfered negatively with the machine's projection, thus destabilizing the coherent beam from the upper pyramid. He needed to get them out of Valhöll fast before they destroyed everything.

Moving together now in a dark cloud toward the exit, Josh imagined they must appear like a multi-armed, multi-faced Hindu demon to everyone in the hall. Yet, their demonic appearance in no way deterred the machine elves from continuing to dive into the odiferous miasma. They were relentless in their effort to kill the invading virus. All the while, the Great Hall only shook harder as the inverse-vajra signals continued to reverberate inside the dome's resonant sphere. If ever there was a force of evil near the Throne of God, they were it.

Stumbling forward through the doors and out the foyer, the city was dark. A heavy mist crept over the cobblestone streets as they struggled to find their way back to the Iron Gate. But as the weight and pressure of the growing mass crushed down upon the men, their forward progress had become increasingly slower. Walking was like slogging through a sea of molasses. By the time they reached the Iron Gate, Josh had little hope of ever making it out. The assault had become too much to bear.

Just then, when it seemed things could get no worse, a pack of animal-like creatures appeared at the Gate. Eyeing the men and their elven hoard, Josh thought perhaps they would rescue them from certain

death. But any hopes of a cavalry rescue were quickly dashed as the creatures simply spread out to block any route of escape.

These were the same creatures, Josh realized, he had glimpsed as they were leaving the Hall of Colors. Who or what they were was anybody's guess, but they obviously had no intention of saving him or his crew from the elven swarm. On the contrary, they now looked as if they might join the fight to finish them off. Collapsing onto the cobblestone street, the five psychonauts could fight no more. Huddled over, they were prepared to die.

How could everything have gone so horribly wrong? Josh wondered. How could his crew's signal have become inverted? And how could these feral animals even know to follow them into this dimension? If he were not so averse to believing in conspiracy theories, he might think that—

“Goddammit! Somebody is trying to sabotage my mission.”



## Chapter 24

### *The Mother of Amaruca*

*T*he Breaking News banner splashed across the screen just as Màiri gave the order to push the crew early into the third step. Their respiratory rates and brain activity were off the charts and she had no choice but to follow protocol and intervene.

Cranking up the television audio, it sounded like the situation in the Middle East had taken another turn for the worse. While there was no way of knowing if the crew's encounter had adversely affected world events, the timing of this development seemed more than mere coincidence.

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: "We have just received word that a U.S. reconnaissance satellite has confirmed reports on the ground that the ISIS coalition army is now traveling full speed toward the holy city of Mecca. CNN's Chief International Correspondent Christina Amunpur is in Riyadh with more."

Christina Amunpur, CNN: "That's right, Rolf. I just received a report from Saudi government officials saying the incursion force includes an estimated 25,000 troops, but that's not all. Two mechanized infantry brigades (the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>), one armored brigade (the 12<sup>th</sup>), and the 19<sup>th</sup> Light Motorized Infantry Brigade from the Royal Saudi Land Force have defected to join them. Needless to say, this disturbing turn of events has left Mecca and the entire Saudi peninsula vulnerable to capture by the ISIS coalition."

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: "This is a disaster not only for Saudi Arabia, but for stability across the entire Mideast. This news is

only minutes old, but our commodities ticker is already showing that crude oil prices in European markets have jumped nearly twenty dollars a barrel in fear of a disruption of Saudi oil exports. What can the Saudis do to fight back?”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “Well, keep in mind the remaining Saudi army is still larger than this combined force and they have the advantage of a formidable air force. But it’s not clear if they can respond fast enough to prevent the capture of Mecca at this point.

Wait...this just in...a local Saudi radio station just announced that a Saudi jet has been shot down. I repeat: we have an unconfirmed report that a Saudi air force jet has been shot down by an ISIS ground-to-air missile.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Christina, have you heard anything from Mecca? Is there any unusual activity in this Islamic holy city yet—any defensive measures or gathering of ISIS sympathizers?”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “We are getting reports that local radio stations in Mecca are being taken off the air. Because of this, news about what exactly is happening on the ground there right now is unavailable. The ISIS coalition army is expected to begin arriving in just a couple of hours. I doubt this is enough time to mount any kind of defense. Key parts of Mecca are expected to fall into ISIS hands by nightfall.”

Muting the audio, Màiri slumped into her chair. She could only assume the crew’s encounter had something to do with this new development. World tensions were getting worse by the minute. What if Josh’s theory about the vajra pattern as a calming influence was wrong and the pattern was instead making matters worse?

Glancing back up at the monitor, the news ticker confirmed the violence was already escalating into a broader conflict.

“...The U.S. has announced an emergency meeting with key NATO countries to discuss what they will do to support the Saudi government...”

Things would begin to move faster now, she realized. After an extended period of market instability and depressed oil prices, oil futures were skyrocketing in anticipation of a global shortage of gasoline and other petroleum products. At the same time, automobile and plastics manufacturing stocks would fall precipitously as the military-industrial sectors rose in anticipation of an expanded war in the Mideast. Under these conditions, an already delicate global financial system would almost certainly descend into a depression or full global collapse. Something like this could bring a new Dark Age or even nuclear war, taking many centuries for the world to recover.

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The psychonauts escaped the elven attack at Asgard with only moments to spare. Lucky for them, a newentheotech frequency had kicked in just as the feral creatures pounced. Josh figured Màiri must have noticed their elevated heart and respiratory signs and decided to push them into the next step. They were very fortunate indeed to have her as their guardian angel.

Reaching the next dimension, the crew continued as a merged collective until they could be sure the machine elves were no longer in pursuit. Slipping out of his light body through his mind's eye, Josh again took a spin around to assess their condition. It was not a pretty sight.

The crew now appeared as a single luminous egg surrounded by a murky cloud. Out of this protruded five faces and ten arms, making the crew look demonic just as he had suspected. Perhaps, Josh speculated, the merging of astral bodies was a well-known method of protection against the elves and their cousins the Vanir, used especially by Hindu

priests during astral travel. What else could explain the many stories of multi-faced, multi-armed gods in Indian history?

Landing again in trees and heavy undergrowth, these were not the tall pines of the Nordic realm. Rather, they had arrived in the jungle world of the Maya covered with crawling vines, poisonous snakes, and ferocious insects. With no signs of elven pursuit, the crew spread out in star formation to search for a path through the tangled undergrowth. Josh could again hear the vajra signal buzzing in his head and the power of the vajra-kīla in his hand, confirming his suspicion the Russians were broadcasting an inverted vajra signal to cancel his own.

Pushing through the jungle, Josh instructed the crew to take care and avoid the vines as they reached out at their feet. Like lost souls looking for a friend, they seemed akin to the *Banisteriopsis caapi* vine, living teacher plants seeking to ensnare a student. They might never escape should one of these manage to lock on.

Falling back as the others took the lead, Josh mulled over his situation. The Russians had been conspiring against him all along, probably under orders of Director Hakobyan. And Hayk in turn must have been acting under orders from Moscow. The only question is why? Why would they risk pushing the collective consciousness toward war by sabotaging his mission and broadcasting an inverse-vajra signal? What could they possibly have to gain, he wondered. Then it hit him.

“Oil! It’s all about oil,” Josh thought to himself, as a sick feeling sank into his gut. “They must be trying to create unrest in the Mideast in order to push oil stocks up—that and the military sector stocks. The goddamn Russians have hijacked my entheotech system to game the global stock and commodity markets. *This* was what Odin was trying to tell me.”

“I’ve got to find a way to stop this, but I can’t let on that I know what they’re doing. I need to find a way to tell Mairi to take the Russians out of Sequence. But how in the hell am I supposed to do that? It’s not like I have a telephone in here.”

Up ahead was a wall made of dark gray stone, barely visible through the jungle overgrowth. Approaching closer they could see the wall was actually part of a much larger pyramidal temple complex mostly buried

under the jungle growth. It reminded him of the Maya Temple of Inscriptions at Palenque or, better yet, the Tomb of the Red Queen next to it.

Inspecting the wall, Josh confirmed the language as a proto-Mayan language similar to Quichean. The stone surface was covered with iconographic carvings around a large carved mural of a woman wearing the headdress of an entwined serpent.

“Looks like Ixchel to me,” Josh commented to the others. “Known as Lady Rainbow and Goddess O in the Dresden Codex, she was the archetypal earth goddess of childbirth for the Mayans, Aztecs, and other indigenous peoples of the Americas. Today she is usually conflated with the Virgin Mary.”

But no sooner had the words left his mouth than the mural began to loosen and move around. The solid gray rock was becoming three-dimensional and translucent like a windowpane of thick lead crystal. Peering thru the window, the woman on the wall could now be seen floating in a shimmering rainbow of clear liquid, the same bioluminescent liquid used by the machine elves. She was motioning for him to join her.

“I have seen this goddess before,” Josh explained to the others. “She appeared to me during a series of Ayahuasca ceremonies with the Santo Daime brotherhood in Brazil.”

After his Ayahuasca trip to South America, Josh had become very interested in pre-Columbian civilizations, immersing himself in the study of the Mayan gods and goddesses. In the process, he had begun to understand certain connections between the visionary gods of the Old World and those in the Americas that mainstream archeologists typically ignore.

“Ixchel’s serpent headdress represents the Mayan god Kukulcan,” Josh continued, “also known as Quetzalcoatl or Amaru. Some scholars believe this Mayan serpent god corresponds to the ancient Amorite serpent god named Amurru, who was also worshipped in the Amurru Kingdom of Assyria and coastal Mediterranean Phoenician cities between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.”

“Phoenician mariners are believed to have brought these gods to the Americas through transatlantic voyages. The Amorite serpent god Amurru then became the Mayan ‘plumed serpent’ Amaru while the Amorite Queen of Heaven Athirat or Asherah became the Mayan Ixchel. Together, the Maya deities Amaru and Ixchel were associated with the planets Venus and Earth. Here we have before us a vision of Ixchel with her Amaru serpent headdress representing the re-ligioning of heaven and earth.”

Placing his hand up to the window, Josh was surprised to find it flexible—like a thick gelatin. He could have stuck his hand through the window if he wanted.

“Incidentally, when the Conquistadors arrived more than two millennia later they were told by the natives their supreme god was Amaru, a god believed to live in the Amerrisque Mountains of Nicaragua. They were told all the lands were his, which they called ‘Amaruca’ to mean ‘land of the plumed serpent’. For this reason, some scholars consider Amaruca the true source for the name America—a kind of mirror in time to the old Amorite mountain god Amurru and the Amurru Kingdom of Assyria named after the Vedic Mount Meru.”

He would have explained more, but a muffled grunt from behind caused them all to spin around. The same pack of animals as before had somehow followed them here and now had them cornered against the temple wall. Being this close to the creatures, Josh could see they were not ordinary animals. They were hybrid or “liminal” creatures part animal and part human encased in luminous eggs. One was a white bear; another an upright wolf; the third a winged jaguar even larger than the other two. All had grotesque humanoid facial features stuck onto their animal bodies.

As the liminal monsters coiled to attack, Josh’s intuition took control.

“Brace yourselves!” he shouted.

Slamming his hands together, the vajra shockwave thundered outward. At the same time, he hurled himself backward directly into the wall. As he had hoped, the window was indeed a permeable membrane that allowed him to pass right through.

“That should get Màiri’s attention,” Josh figured, as he flew leisurely into the darkness of the inner temple. Looking back, he watched as the others tumbled in slow motion into the thick foliage locked in mortal combat with the liminals. Were it not for the Russians’ mutinous sabotage he might feel some concern or compassion for them. But as it was, their actions had probably caused irreparable harm and they deserved whatever those monsters might have in store for them.

Rolling slowly to a stop on the dusty temple floor, he found himself now in a dimly lit chamber. What had looked like a multicolored hydrosphere from the outside was neither gas nor liquid, but rather an intermediate state of matter. Kneeling first before standing up, two feet suddenly stepped out of the shadows directly in front of him. They were the bare feet of a woman. Following the lines of her gown upward, he came face to face with the Maya mother goddess herself.

“Did I not tell you I would be here whenever you needed me?” a double voice said, offering him a cup of brown liquid. “It is I, your Parvati and Shakti Durga, appearing to you now as Ixchel.”

Could it be? Was that Màiri’s voice he heard in there? How could she have found a way into his vision?

“Something terrible has happened,” Josh began urgently. “I have learned that my very own crew has conspired against me by using an inverted vajra signal to cancel out my signal. This has already disrupted the elven machine and could trigger a similar disruption on Earth. If you can carry a message to her, please tell her the Russians should be taken out of Sequence immediately.”

“You can do this yourself,” the double voice replied stepping backward into the darkness. “Don’t you know where you are?”

Like the elven Big Top, the inside of the temple chamber was an organic network of glowing neural pathways and synaptic circuitry. Little lights whizzed around him like electrons, leaving trails of bioluminescence in their wake. He was again inside some kind of archetypal cerebral cortex.

Moving slowly through the thick atmosphere, a series of visions began to appear in the neural circuitry around him. They were memories of Màiri—the first time he saw her in the Oxford lab; the time she

explained the Vedic votive objects; their tantric union—everything. Overcome with melancholy, all he could think was how much he missed her.

“Why do you show me my own memories?” Josh asked the goddess.

“These are not your memories,” replied the double voice, “they are the memories of my avatar. You are now inside Màiri’s dream mind, which is my mind.”

“How can that be?” Josh protested. “Her brain is back on Earth and I am inside my own brain.”

“Dear boy,” the double voice replied. “Have you not yet learned your mind is everywhere, focused only for a brief time through your earthly body. How else could you have traveled here and with the others if this were not so? You are focused inside her mind now.”

“Please tell me then how Màiri’s perceptions of Earth are received by you and your thoughts by her.”

“You know this already. Reality is but a projection of the Clear Light, which the aluxes create with their machine. This you have seen.”

“Yes, in Valhöll,” he replied, taking a deep drink of the Ayahuasca she had given him.

“This is the Maya of First Cause,” the double voice explained. “Your mind exists behind this illusion as an intelligence-collective. These are the voices in your head and the producers of your dreams transceived through the mind’s eye. They help manifest your intent within the dense realm.”

“Everything you perceive through your senses is received by the collective and retained in Akasha for your rumination after physical death. In exchange for the entertainment and education you provide them, your intelligence-collective help guide and produce your life journey. I too am part of an intelligence-collective known as the Tridevi,” she explained. “No one is singular.”

“When you drink of the yajé, as you do now, you establish a stronger link with your intelligence-collective through your mind’s eye. Residing in the container of your body, your mind’s eye is the link between your physical and spiritual selves.”



“If this is as you say, then how do I send a message to Màiri?”

“Laddie,” the double voice replied with a smile, “you are in her dreams right now. Simply say what you wish her to know and she will know it. This is the nature of intuition and inspiration.”

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Alarms were sounding everywhere as Màiri awoke from a deep sleep. As was too often the case these days, sleep deprivation had gotten the best of her and she had fallen asleep at the console.

Scanning the crew’s vital signs, the four Russian crewmembers were experiencing dangerously high respiratory and blood pressure rates with delta brainwave readings indicating they were unconscious. Once again something had gone wrong in the Sequence, at least for the Russian crewmen.

“Hayk!” Màiri shouted across the room. “Are you seeing what I’m seeing?”

“Yes, of course!” he replied nonchalantly, switching off the alarm. “V’ee give men time to recover maybe?”

He was as concerned for his men as Màiri. But as long as their inverse-vajra signal was operational, he knew the Chief would insist they remain in Sequence. There had not been near enough time for the INTERRUS basket of petroleum stocks to increase enough to reach their goal. It would be a financial disaster if the oil stocks suddenly fell before they could unload it all.

Màiri was not so sure if they should be left in Sequence. A voice in her head was telling her something bad had happened and she should pull the Russians out immediately. But Hayk was probably right. Perhaps they just needed a little time to recover. Anyway, as long as Josh’s vitals were stable he might be able to revive them. They had come so far and it would be a shame to abort the mission now.

“Okay...I agree, Hayk. Let’s push them into the next step of the Sequence to see if they recover. But if they don’t improve soon, we’ll have to pull them out. Who knows what kind of dreadful situation they’ve fallen into now?”

“Acknowledged, Director Winegard,” Hakobyan replied, relieved he had bought them some time. “D’is is very v’ise choice.”

Instructing the operators to override the Sequence and push them forward, Hayk stared into his monitor as he considered his next move. If he could just keep the men in Sequence with the inverse-vajra signal for a little while longer, Moscow should be able to unload their holdings. Typing a text message to Chief Petrovich, he explained the situation and suggested they accelerate their transactions.

Meanwhile, Màiri had slipped out the rear door headed for the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor meditation room. She still had a nagging feeling that something was terribly wrong. Her intuition was telling her this was the moment the Librarian had told her about and Josh needed her help.

Unrolling her yoga mat in the same spot she and Josh had consummated their Tantric Yajna ceremony, Màiri began a series of yoga moves designed to relax her body and silence internal dialogue. Lowering herself finally into lotus position, she slipped on her favorite Melon™ biofeedback headband and began her usual breathing exercises to center her mind.

Gazing out the floor-to-ceiling windows past the waterfall, the mountain of Ara loomed large through the atrium’s vertical slit. Lit by the gold and violets of an early summer Armenian sunset, the mountaintop was calling her—as if Josh himself were up there somewhere asking her to come join him.

Turning her attention now to the Melon biofeedback app on her smart watch, she focused on lowering her heart rate. Once this was nominal, she began to work on synchronizing her breathing rhythm with her heart—eight beats in, sixteen beats hold, and eight beats out for two complete breaths per minute. Known as the Square Breath method, it always had a stabilizing effect on her state of mind by reducing negative thoughts.

Having practiced this technique many times, she closed her eyes and began next the process of slowing her brainwaves into the Theta range of 4 to 7.9 Hertz. She could always sense when she reached the Schumann

Resonance fundamental of 7.83 Hertz by the pleasant feeling it produced in her heart. This particular frequency was always the one where she could most easily transition into a state of lucid dreaming.



## Chapter 25

### *Baptism of the Unborn*

“**7** feel like I was hit by a truck,” Brother Gunderson moaned, struggling to pull himself up over the edge of the saltwater tub to stand up.

“Savin obviously used some kind of weapon against us, Revelator,” added Merkley, toweling off his face.

“Here...drink this,” Mosiah suggested, retrieving two cups of Mormon tea from the altar for his fellow warriors. Made from a traditional Indian recipe based on the reinvigorating plant *Ephedra sinica*, his great-great grandfather found this concoction to be especially effective in clearing the mind after a difficult journey thru the Celestial Kingdom.

“He must have found a way to harness the vajra thunderbolt,” Mosiah said glumly, walking back to the altar beneath the Golden Boy. Retrieving his own cup of tea, he downed the bitter drink before continuing. “And did you see how Savin escaped. He jumped right through the wall. We’ve never found a way to enter that temple before.”

“Whatever technology he was using,” Merkley added, “it was powerful enough to make the Æsirian city tremble and the Gandharva very angry. Wish we could have made it into Valhalla ourselves to see the damage. I’ll bet grouchy old Wōdan wasn’t too happy about it either,” the Mason chuckled.

“Neither were the Secret Chiefs, I’m sure,” Gunderson said, shaking his head. “Probably did a fair amount of psychic damage here on Earth, too. Talk about amateur hour.”

“Anything big happen while we were gone?” Mosiah asked one of the attendants.

“Yes, Revelator. CNN has reported that ISIS has invaded Saudi Arabia and is now expected to capture Mecca. Several Saudi Royal Army battalions have defected to join them.”

“I’d call that big,” Gunderson grumbled.

“Gentlemen, we need to reenter the Sequence as soon as possible lest we lose our prey,” Mosiah replied. “But first we need a defensive countermeasure for Savin’s weapon. Perhaps their punk programmer will be forthcoming, especially if I tell him about a new conspiracy theory that implicates Dr. Savin in an Illuminati plot,” he said with a chuckle.

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The vision of Mairi’s brain had vanished as Josh was pulled back to the nexus stack. This time he was sucked down through a different door into a series of increasingly aqueous layers. Like a liquid psychedelic light show from the sixties, he was floating through juicy splashes of florescent orange, neon blue, and aqua green blobs as sonic booms marked his penetration into each layer. Muted underwater sounds accompanied by the distinctive chirping of dolphins and whales created the perfect soundtrack for this beautiful psychedelic vision. He could almost understand what the creatures were saying.

Then suddenly, a burst of radiance filled his field of vision as the last barrier was breached. Unlike the previous Earth-like dimensions, this dimension was completely submerged in liquid—a warm liquid, in fact, that was oddly arousing.

“Talk about a wet dream,” he said jokingly. Adjusting his vision to the liquid environment, he tried to remember which dimension this should be.

“If I haven’t lost count, this is the fourth realm of the Sumerians who worshipped the fish god Enki and fertility goddess Ninhursag, the one most know as Inanna.”

It was an underwater world but this was definitely not water he was floating in. It was the same clear bioluminescent liquid as before, just lots more of it. Waving his right arm through the hydrosphere, a tracer of fluorescing paisleys formed in its wake illuminating millions of tiny

organisms wiggling through the liquid. Good thing he didn't need to breathe any of this.

The fact he was here at all meant Màiri had received his message. The only question now was whether she had pushed the rest of his crew forward with him or taken them out of Sequence as he had requested. Surveying his surroundings, a huge stone ziggurat stood before him at the center of an ancient submerged city built on the seabed. The city was illuminated by the fluorescing liquid, which gave it a very dream-like appearance.

"Perhaps this underwater city was the inspiration for the legend of Atlantis," he thought to himself. "Might even be the archetypal source for the flood story found in so many cultures."

Sometimes walking, sometimes swimming, Josh ascended the long column of steps up seven terraces to reach the top of the ziggurat. From here he could survey the surrounding terrain. Many smaller buildings, some with domes, encircled the ziggurat in a series of three concentric valleys separated by four concentric plateaus.

"Sure enough, the city matches Plato's description of Atlantis written over two millennia ago," he told himself. "Like other Greek philosophers before him, he too must have sipped the sweet nectar of Amrit and made the journey to this submerged world. Yet the city also matches the description of Mount Meru in the Rig-Veda, suggesting a much older provenance in Vedic lore. No matter what you call it, this underwater world probably inspired the process of baptism and ascension in Christianity and other ancient religions."

Looking down on the streets below, he could make out hundreds of luminous humanoid beings going about their daily lives. Fortunately, there was no sign of either the Russians or the liminal creatures that had been stalking him.

"If the crew made it into this dimension there's simply no sign of them," he concluded. "They are either floating somewhere unconscious or Màiri pulled them out. Either way I seem to have lost them, at least for the time being."

Turning now to the entrance of the central nave at the top of the tower, Josh willed himself toward it. There was a noticeable current

flowing out of the opening, suggesting a spring source somewhere inside. Pushing against the current, Josh managed to make it through the doorway and along the back wall of the nave.

A ritual was underway at the far end. Several dozen gray Vanir were kneeling unclothed in rows before a stone altar. A priest standing on a raised altar area was lifting a ceremonial bowl above his head as the congregation bowed repeatedly before him on the stone floor.

Looking around the chamber, Josh noticed a series of elaborate stone friezes on the walls to his right between three doorways that opened into anti-chambers off the main room. The detailed carvings depicted the Vanir engaged in a variety of sex acts, suggesting the side rooms were reserved for sacred prostitution. No doubt about it—this was a fertility cult. No wonder they had no qualms in assaulting poor Dmitry.

Behind the podium Josh noticed an oval baptismal basin filled with a white, denser version of the clear liquid around him. The apparent source was a rather phallic-looking fountain in the center gushing a shining liquid into the baptismal. It lit up the entire nave with an eerie pearlescent glow. A channel and opening on one side of the basin made the fountain look like an oversized lingam-yoni, a symbol Buddhists typically use to represent the origin of life.

As the priest dipped his bowl under the fountainhead, the white liquid began to overflow through the channel, spilling out onto the floor. Flowing slowly toward the congregation, the thick substance gradually covered the floor as it made its way toward the entrance. Finally flowing out the entrance and off the top terraces, it dissipated into the hydrosphere.

All the while, Josh continued to observe the scene unnoticed from the back of the room. The priest, he could see, was not entirely humanoid. His head and top torso was definitely Vanir like the others, but his lower half was more like a fish, giving him the appearance of a merman. Like the angelic Apsaras, he was covered with pearlescent scales, but was also horned like Baphomet. On his oversized head he wore the mitre headdress of a Mesopotamian god, giving him the appearance of a Catholic Pope. From what little he knew of Sumerian mythology this could mean only one thing. This priest was no ordinary



holy man. He was none other than the Mesopotamian solar deity known as Enki.

In response to the fish-god’s communion offering, the Vanir congregation chanted their response.

“lugal-mu sud-rá-ág eridu ki-ga  
 en sá-galam-ma-zu ău nu-ti  
 a-a en-ki sipa-zi sul-i-re  
 nu-dim-mud hé-gál nam-he a-dalla sa-mu-na-ni-é”

Although the language was entirely unrecognizable, Josh could still understand it just as he had in the other worlds.

“My king, brilliant light of Eridu,  
 Lord, there is no one who does not take your skillful advice;  
 Father Enki, to the faithful shepherd Sulgi,  
 Nudimmud, abundance and plenty in the shining waters you bring forth.”

To Josh, there seemed to be little difference between this service and the traditional Islamic prayer rituals he had seen back on Earth. Muslims cleanse themselves with water before prayer and recite the Isteftah Dua prayer much like the one spoken here. It seemed to him that Islam was, in some way, an adaptation of the Sumerian worship of Enki.

Other associations came to mind. Ancient Vedics worshipped Enki as Varuna while the Persians knew him as al-Khidr. To the Akkadians he was Ea; whereas, the Greeks and Romans knew him as Poseidon or Neptune. The Frankish Merovingian kings even saw him as their first ancestor—the sea-bull Quinotaur. Many religious legends can be linked to Enki, he recalled, including Yahweh’s 40-day Biblical deluge and Solomon’s 40-year reign—both of which were borrowed from Enki’s sacred number 40. Some say the number 4 refers to the musical interval of a “perfect” fourth, found even today in modern Churches as the plagal or “amen” cadence in Christian hymns.

It was now becoming apparent to Josh that all of these gods had originated from the same archetype, taking on a different appearance depending on which teacher plants were used. They were all modeled on concepts of fertility, horned animals, and “pure water”—an old euphemism for semen. Indeed, he had read somewhere that Enki was worshipped in a so-called House of Water, which was described in ancient texts as a font of semen and the source of all life. Chuckling to himself as he looked around, Josh was pretty sure he was floating in a sea of transcendental semen right now.

Watching the rite carefully, the fish-god was now instructing the congregation to file past the altar for communion. It seemed they would all drink from the bowl of milky liquid he had dished out of the fountain. This gave him an idea. He would slip into the back of the communion line in order to meet Enki and request his blessing. As the supreme deity of Mesopotamia in the heart of the Middle East, his support would be crucial to persuading the Islamic terror organizations toward peace.

Working his way to the back row, he took the last spot in line and waited as each one before him accepted the immortalizing communion. But when it finally came his turn to drink from the communion dish, the fish-god refused to offer him the bowl, instead placing the bowl on the altar and retrieving a ritual object. Glaring down at Josh, he held the serpent-entwined thyrsus over the stranger’s head.

“You dare enter E-abzu, the holy Fountain of Hizzir, unclean?” he scolded. In response, a group of young Vanir women against the left wall sung their admonishment.

“The land of Dilmun is a pure place,  
the land of Dilmun is a clean place,  
The land of Dilmun is a clean place,  
the land of Dilmun is a bright place;  
He who is alone laid himself down in Dilmun,  
The place, after Enki is clean, that place is bright.”

To this Josh replied using a greeting he had prepared for this very occasion.

“Silim-ma hé-me-en. May all be well! My earthly name is Joshua and I carry the thunderbolt of Adad through the Sequence of the Shining Ones. I have traveled to this place to humbly request your help in calming the restlessness that now threatens my world.”

Stretching up his arms to make the sign of the cross, Josh focused every ounce of his attention into and through the double vajra. Holding one hand vertical and the other horizontal, one in front of the other to form a cross, slivers of blue lightning arced between his hands, lighting the luminescent hydrosphere around him. Glowing brighter, the entire chamber soon began to resonate under the spell of the calming vajra signal.

Bowing to such a magnanimous display of love, the congregation intoned the perfect fourth above the vajra fundamental, creating a mesmerizing effect. It is such irony, he thought, that he might be seen as a god to these disincarnate beings when it was really they who were the gods.

“Oh, Green One, I beseech you!” Josh begged the Sumerian deity. “Join with me to overcome the ignorance of those who have forgotten you and no longer seek your immortal communion.”

Quieting the congregation with a wave of the thyrsus, Enki softened his tone.

“The answer you seek awaits you with Ninhursag in Dilmun, the sacred Garden of Creation. It is she who will take your seed and plant it in the fertile soil. But first you must purify yourself in the Ma’ul Hayat. Come!” the fish-god commanded.

Motioning for the visitor to step up onto the altar platform, he then pointed toward the baptismal. Though Josh was not particularly eager to participate in any kind of religious rite, he knew he had no choice if he were to gain their trust. What harm could it do anyway to be baptized in the legendary Fountain of Youth?

Stepping onto the platform, the congregation sang a prayer to the goddess Ninhursag.

“Her City Drinks the Water of Abundance,  
Dilmun Drinks the Water of Abundance,

Her wells of bitter water, behold they are become  
wells of good water,  
Her fields and farms produced crops and grain,  
Her city, behold it has become the house of the banks  
and quays of the land.”

Sitting on the edge of the baptismal and swinging his legs over, Josh was surprised to find the liquid very warm. The white fountain waters washed over him as he stepped down into the basin up to his knees. The bottom was soft and rubbery, giving a little with each step—almost as if it were alive. Sitting down before the lingam fountainhead as he was instructed, Enki held the initiate’s nose as he lowered him backward into the warm water. As his head became submerged, he felt a wave of joy and love sweep over him. So, this is what holy baptism is like, he mused.

But Josh had little time to enjoy the pure waters. Without warning, the bottom of the baptismal opened up like a giant mouth. Before he could even think to move, the yoni baptismal had transformed into an enormous pink vagina and the lingam fountainhead into a four-foot erect penis in a state of continuous orgasm. There was no time to escape as the monstrous phallus suddenly withdrew to reveal a gaping crimson cavern below him. With no footing and nothing to grab onto, he tumbled headfirst into the dark tunnel.

“This must be the place they called Dilmun,” his voice echoed as he hurtled down into the abyss, “—the Garden of Creation.”

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Hayk looked on from the SBS Control Center as the Russian crewmen were removed from their eggs. They had remained unresponsive after the last transition and, with Màiri nowhere to be found, he had no choice but to extract them from the Sequence. Something really bad must have happened in there. His only hope now was to get them revived and reinserted before the Chief finds out they were removed.

As for Dr. Savin, his vital signs had remained normal. Hayk assumed Savin had become separated from the others during an encounter and avoided whatever had disabled the Russians. He would be left in Sequence for the time being. The mission protocol was very clear on this point—the vajra signal must remain active and in Sequence unless there is a clear and present danger to crew safety. At the moment, Savin seemed safe enough.

Unmuting the sound on the news monitor, Hakobyan hoped the absence of their negative signal had not yet weakened the rising tensions in the Mideast.

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “We have breaking news out of Riyadh, the Saudi Arabian capital. The Sons of ISIS and several rebel Saudi Royal Army battalions have captured the holy city of Mecca with no resistance. Going now to Christina Amunpur in Riyadh—what can you tell us Christina?”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “Hi Rolf. Yes, we are getting reports that tanks entered the city only hours ago to little resistance. My understanding is tanks and several thousand troops have already encircled the holy mosque of Al-Masjid al-Haram around Islam’s most holy site known as the Kaaba. Large crowds are gathering inside the mosque now and many have begun to circumambulate the central black cube in prayer and celebration.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “As I understand it, the Kaaba is known as the Ancient House or the House of God. Is that right?”

Christina Amunpur, CNN: “Yes, Rolf. Muslims believe it to be a replica of a holy cube located in heaven, named Bait al-Ma’mur or Sacred House, situated in the sky directly above the Kaaba. For this reason, ISIS fundamentalists consider it a shrine of supreme strategic importance. They are betting control of this holy site will encourage more Muslims, mostly

Sunni of course, to join with them—especially those in other countries, such as Egypt.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Thank you Christina. Switching now to our Mideast military expert Rumi Mactabu, how do you think the Saudi government will respond to the ISIS invasion?”

Rumi Mactabu, CNN: “The Royal Saudi Air Force has already been engaging the ISIS fighters during their march to Mecca. But they are reluctant to bomb their own rebel troops as this will only work against them in eventually regaining control of the city. Furthermore, they are unwilling to bomb anywhere near the Al-Masjid mosque. Their only hope is to retake Mecca using the remaining armored battalions and ground troops loyal to the Saud family. Here again they fear some of these troops might also defect to join the ISIS coalition, so are working very closely with NATO on a plan for reinforcements.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “This is certainly terrible news for the Saudi government. But the question we have to ask now is will this rebellion spread more rapidly to other Islamic nations. ISIS has already made significant advances in Egypt, which has a 97 percent Sunni majority totaling about 80 million people. How do you see this capture of Mecca helping to bring about a similar military takeover in Egypt?”

Rumi Mactabu, CNN: “Rolf, there is a very ancient connection between Mecca and Egypt of which most are unaware. The three pre-Islamic daughters of Allah, named al-Lāt, al-Uzzá, and al-Manāt, are represented as three pillars inside the Kaaba shrine. These three goddesses together were often represented singularly as the goddess al-Lāt associated with the planet Venus, symbolic of feminine fertility and rebirth. She was equated with the Egyptian goddess Isis, who was and still is held in highest regard by Egyptians as the wife of sun god

Osiris and mother of Horus. As a result, the capture of the Kaaba by the terror group ISIS creates a very significant spiritual link for Sunni Egyptians to the goddess Isis and daughters of Allah.

But something else is at work to cause Egyptian forces to rebel and join with the ISIS forces. The western part of the Arabian Peninsula that includes Mecca was once part of the old Islamic Ottoman Empire. Egypt was part of this empire. In my opinion, ISIS may be attempting to rebuild this 16<sup>th</sup>-century Islamic caliphate by using Mecca to capture the hearts and minds of Egyptian Muslims. From there, they could consolidate other Sunni nations on their way toward conquering Shia nations like Iran. After all, both Sunni and Shia Muslims must pray to Mecca five times a day.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Thanks very much for your religious and historical insights, Rumi. In related news, an earthquake measuring 5.7 was reported about 215 miles outside of Mecca this morning with the epicenter in the Red Sea. The quake was located on the fault line known as the Red Sea Rift, which—“

Hakobyan leaned back relieved. The Moscow Exchange tickers for oil commodities and Western military industries were continuing to rise quickly. He was getting richer every minute and it felt pretty damned good. Still, he would need to tell Chief Petrovich about the problem with his crew. With any luck, the Russian crew could be revived and reinserted before Savin had a chance to reverse world tensions.





## Chapter 26

### Journey to Putuoshan

“Are you sure we’re headed in the right direction?” Brother Gunderson asked, shielding his eyes from the glare off the rippling blue water.

“Yes, I am quite certain,” Mosiah replied. “I have visited this temple before. We sail north of the rising Sun to reach Quan Yin’s island of Putuoshan.”

Turning to the swarthy man at the wheel, “Is this not true, my Lord?”

“We sail to the temple of the goddess of mercy,” the Phoenician replied, pausing to bark an order to tack starboard. “There you will find the one you seek. But woe to those who wish to enter, they must conquer themselves first. Failing this, another cycle must be accrued.”

“I know this well, Lord Iesus—the three challenges of Quan Yin,” Mosiah replied. “For I have attempted to enter the temple twice before and been turned away each time. It is our mission to reach the Throne of Heavenly Father to protect Him from those who would bring harm. Verily, there is one named Savin who seeks to enter the temple impure. Do you know of him, my Lord?”

“I know of him,” the Phoenician replied, turning the wheel into the wind again, “for it was I who sent him to the Gandharva to learn The Way.”

“But my Lord, he is not righteous as we are. He does not purify himself as we do. And the blessed Angel Moroni does not guide him as he does us. How are we to fulfill the prophecy and rebuild our Father’s Temple if he gains entrance to the Throne before us? How will the End Times come and the Earth be cleansed of sin?”

The Phoenician paused to consider his words carefully. So many times had his words been misunderstood and wrongly construed; so

many times had they been misused to turn ardent seekers away from the Clear Light.

“My brother, it is but an illusion you believe. There is no temple but the one already inside you and no end but a new beginning. The god you seek is a reflection—nothing more and nothing less. For on the far horizon is the island of your body and upon it the temple of your mind. From the sea you may be reborn unto the body, but only through the temple will you find the Path of Righteousness. All are welcome but few pass.”

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Everything had happened so fast it had been impossible for Josh to fully grasp his new predicament. He had been washed down a dark pink canal filled with the same seminal fluid as the baptismal. From here he was swept through a small circular opening and into a conical chamber that led to another canal where he was shot through a thin membrane into a large spherical chamber. Coming to rest inside a gelatinous substance, he was unable to move.

“What in the hell just happened?” Josh complained, as he struggled to move his arms through the substance. “The damn thing was having sex with itself and I stepped right into the big fat middle of it...disgusting! Then that...that...that dinosaur vagina sucked me down into this vat of Jell-O. What a ridiculous wet dream this vision has turned out to be!”

Calming himself and listening to the environment around him, he could hear muffled breathing and a heartbeat above.

“That’s it, then,” he said to himself. “I’ve been impregnated into the womb of a living organism of some kind—a very big one, obviously. Reminds me of the Bible story of Jonah being swallowed by a whale, only in my case the whale’s belly is an actual womb.”

“Who knows? Maybe this is the vision where the story of Jonah got its start,” he thought to himself, as the gelatin sphere began to move. “After all, the name Yonah was an ancient euphemism for the feminine yoni symbol and the whale an archetype for rebirth. The Jewish Yom

Kippur even celebrates the tale in the word ‘Yom’, meaning ‘yoni’ or ‘womb’, where the whale’s belly symbolized a pregnant woman. As an obvious fertility myth, it seems more like a story of spiritual purification and rebirth now. Maybe that’s what’s really going on here—I’m being purified.”

“But how am I ever to get out of this place,” he said to himself, as he felt himself starting to roll back down the tube from which he had entered. “I’d bet more than a few holy men visited this Garden of Creation before me,” he decided, as the jelly ball finally came to a stop.

*“A porta inferi erue Domine animas eorum,”* said a muffled feminine voice from above.

“What’s that?” Josh replied. “What did you say?”

“From the gate of hell deliver their souls, O Lord,” she shot back.

“Why do you say this to me,” Josh demanded. It was a double voice again—part goddess and part...

“It’s from the Office of the Dead, Josh. Do I have to explain everything to you?” the voice said exasperated.

One of the voices was Màiri, all right. But how did she find him again—so far into the Sequence and now deep inside this...this celestial womb. Had she somehow managed to plug into the entheotech system and follow him here?

“Màiri! Where are you? And, where am I?”

“Inside me, of course,” the muffled double voice replied patiently. “You must be purified before you can continue. I have come to help you do this.”

“You have passed through the yoni into the Temple of the Unborn,” she explained. “The tether to your physical body is stretched very thin here and you must release it now to be reborn pure. You must atone and reject that which you desire most in the dense world. Release your bodily desires and travel with me back through the Pearly Gate.”

He could indeed feel his tether straining like a rubber band; yet it could not pull him from this place. He was definitely stuck. Letting go of his physical body was the only way out, but it was easier said than done. The very idea of giving up his human avatar was the most frightening thing he could ever imagine.

“But I will die!” he objected. “Where will I go then? What will become of me? Will I ever see you again?”

“I will not let you die,” she assured him. “You will lose your body for a time, yes, but it will continue long enough for your return. I will help you pierce the Janua Coili to return to your body before it dies. Let go of your fear and trust in me. I will protect you as I have all along. Begin by releasing the vajra-kīla for it will always find you when you need it.”

The vajra-kīla had been his only protection inside the Sequence. Letting go of this was like letting go of his only lifeline. Yet this he must do if he was ever to escape this limbo state.

Slowly, he released his grasp. First his left hand, then his right. He could feel the power draining away as he did so, leaving him feeling helpless and empty.

“Good, lad!” said the voice. “Now, look down at your midsection and see the thread of light that links your astral body to the material plane. Release it now! Let it go! Envision it disconnecting from your light body and let it return to your physical body.”

Considering the prospect of an eternity encased in Jell-O, he had no other choice but to do as he was told. In a final act of unconditional submission and self-abandonment, the cord detached, floating away into the ether. As his last connection to Earth disappeared, he could feel himself begin to dissolve into the bioluminescent fluid around him. His light body was becoming corpuscular, flowing free now from the gelatin sphere into the arteries and capillaries of the cosmic body.

From this new state of awareness, Josh could now see the multiverse was far more than the hourglass structure of his solar system. There were untold trillions of these toroid-generating machines at work creating parallel dimensions, each with their own intelligence and mission working toward a common goal. The cosmos was alive like the Hiranyagarbha “golden fetus”, resonating into every form of life inside the Brahmanda egg of creation.

As promised, the goddess appeared beside him as he floated through the ether. Her face was that of Māiri combined with another female face; a Chinese face he did not recognize. Her complexion was again

pearlescent with Gaussian ‘wings’ wrapped around her like those of the angelic Apsaras. Her green eyes burned and her red hair was afire, flowing far behind her like a torch. She was indeed a goddess of loveliness, her presence a great comfort to him here at the edge of awareness. He wanted nothing more than to hear her voice and feel her touch.

“You still haven’t explained how you found me.”

“I simply dreamed that I must help you...just as the Librarian said I should,” the double voice replied. “And, here I am.”

“But Màiri, how did you know the way?”

“We are all born knowing the Way and spend our entire life trying to remember it. I needed only to dream my love for you to remember how to find you. Come and I will show you.”

Taking his hand in hers, the goddess collapsed time to reveal to him the archetypes of the universe. Stars were batteries and galaxies power plants, intricately interlaced with filaments to form the multi-dimensional neural circuitry of an enormous brain. She told him it was the living mind of the Ancient One who had found a way to learn and entertain itself through the eyes of its children. But from where it had come no one knew.

Sometimes Josh could only laugh at what he saw, awestruck by the absurdity of his vision. Mechanisms combined and flew apart only to collide again in the endless pursuit of novelty. Other times he could only weep as waves of unconditional love swept over him. Mostly he just looked on in silence as the geometry of space unfolded before him in perfect fractal perpetuity, pulling him deeper and deeper into the melancholy loneliness of a cosmos struggling to understand its own existence.

But the goddess had more to show him—much more. Like Theseus and Ariadne, she would show him the Way through the labyrinth of Minos to his destination and destiny. If the myth be true he would soon take battle with the Minotaur, she told him.

“Where are we going?” he wondered aloud.

“To the island of Putuoshan...to my island,” the double voice replied. “The people there know me as Quan Yin, the goddess of mercy. There you will enter my temple as the Vajrayāna Bodhisattva.”

Sometimes it seemed that great periods of time had passed; other times, infinities were but a moment. Grand visions she shared with him as he dreamed and was dreamed in the cosmic mind, produced, she told him, with the help of his intelligence-collective.

She taught him the Karma of Rta, the cosmic order behind the machinery. He held witness to divine truth; of balance and the harmony in all things; and of the beautiful musical structures that spin inside the loom of creation.

“But why do you take me to this temple, Parvati?” he interrupted.

“There you must conquer yourself to reach the inner hall,” she replied. “Only then can you become the venerable Samyahsambuddha.”

Still onward they travelled into the heart of the Hiranyagarbha to learn of Ma’at, Moira, Aša, and the Logos until his soul overflowed with the ineffable principles of the Tao. From these teachings Josh was transformed, becoming so much more than a mortal human.

Indeed, he was the immortal Hiranyagarbha itself, purified and yearning to be born again. In the cosmic mind he could become anything he wished, but all he really desired was the warmth and comfort of his own human body—that and the feel of Māiri’s embrace.

“We have arrived at last at the island of Putuoshan,” the double voice announced. “Here you will find the Red Pagoda. I will meet you there.”

A column of warm light had appeared above him, filtered through the languid ripples of an aquamarine fluid. Not the bioluminescent fluid of the inner temples—this was actual seawater. He was home, or so it seemed. Through the ripples, Josh squinted into a summer’s blue sky, broken only by a thin ribbon of sand. A wall of emerald trees ran along its edge, opening midway into a garden and elaborate pagoda complex.

“Welcome to my holy temple,” she said pushing him upward to the surface.

## Chapter 27

### *The Red Pagoda*

Josh shot up into the air with a gasp, splashing back down into the blue-green seawater. Inhaling deeply the warm sea breeze, he looked around for his guide only to find himself totally alone. A single sailing ship was on the horizon and the Red Pagoda of Putuoshan Island clearly visible on the far side of the beach. Reaching for a foothold on the sandy bottom, he waded ashore. He was as naked as a newborn and felt like one too.

Thankful to be back on Earth, he stooped down to scoop up a handful of sand. To his dismay it was not real. It sparkled unnaturally—too perfect and uniform, he decided. Looking closer at his hand, it too lacked the imperfections of an earthly existence. This was not even his real hand, but an idealized version apparently taken from when he was about nineteen years old. It seemed Enki's Fountain of Youth had worked its magic on him.

Scanning the beachfront, it too was improbably perfect. As much as he hated to admit it, his real body was still strapped in a stasis chamber back in Vedi.

"It figures!" Josh said disappointed, tossing the sand down and heading for the temple. "This isn't Earth. It's the fifth plane of the Buddhist nibbāna. I still have two more dimensions to go thru after this."

Approaching the large open gate to the temple grounds, he surveyed the area. Beyond the gate were several buildings around a lush central garden. Just inside the gate stood a long black wall of stone and beyond that a massive gong hanging between two enormous timbers. On the far side of the gong was a flight of stairs into the red pagoda flanked by two temple lion statues.

The pagoda was constructed in seven magnificent tiers, each with a bamboo roof coated with clear lacquer to preserve its natural yellow

color. Decorating the ridgelines of the roof were small wooden carvings depicting royal processions. The temple was a beautiful example of 16<sup>th</sup> century Chinese workmanship, even if it was just a simulation.

Walking through the gate, Josh bumped into an invisible barrier extending either side of and above the black stone wall. The wall itself was decorated with nine different Chinese dragons carved into the rock; each rendered in exquisite detail and painted a different color. Touching the face of one of the dragons, a female voice began to speak.

“Welcome to temple of Quan Yin,” a synthesized Chinese voice said brightly. “These nine dragon represent highest odd number... symbolic of male yang principle. It represent ‘manifest of three’ and so Principle of Way; preventing impure thought from enter temple by pain of devouring. One must cleanse before entering.”

“Am I not already cleansed?” Josh replied to what sounded like a Disneyland tour guide. “Have I not been baptized in the venerable Fountain of Life? Have I not been purified by my journey through the Cosmic Egg? Is my rebirth from the very heart of the Hiranyagarbha not enough?”

“Visitor require instruction so attention raise to suitable level,” replied the cheerful voice. “Lesson begin with three ancient Chinese riddle.”

“Three riddles? Where am I—some nineties video game?” Josh replied sarcastically, disappointed by having to confront this latest challenge. “Look, I’m sorry. It’s been a difficult journey and I’m ready to go home. Please, just ask me the riddles so I can enter the temple.”

“Not so fast! Listen carefully. For if answer wrong, you die forever. Is visitor ready for first riddle?”

The voice’s warning was terrifying. He liked games, but not when he had to bet his life on winning. However, given his situation he really had little choice—he had to play along. Anyway, Mairi had led him here for a reason and he would just have to trust her on this.

“Okay...yes. I’m ready,” Josh answered reluctantly. With that, the voice recited the first riddle.



“This bridge is built of pearls most fair,  
High-arching over waters gray.  
It rises swiftly in the air,  
To the heavens it makes its way.

The tallest ships can pass below,  
Yet of all burdens it is free.  
Broad as this bridge may seem to grow,  
When you draw near it still will flee.”

Thinking hard, Josh parsed through the words.

“Let’s see. It arches over the water and is built of pearls. Ships pass under it, yet it gains no woe. Maybe the ‘pearls’ are water that has evaporated, he reasoned, thus rising into the sky. But then it flees when you draw near. Hmmmm...I think I know the answer.”

“Is it a rainbow?”

“Visitor is correct!” the tour guide replied. “Buddha sit on peak of Sumeru, wonderful land of immortal water and beautiful rainbow. Maybe visitor find second riddle more challenging.”

“What is that thing few value much,  
And yet it graces any hand?  
Formed to do hurt, its power is such  
As, like the sword's, none can withstand.

It makes wounds, though no blood is shed.  
Robs none, yet brings prosperity.  
Through all the world its rule has spread,  
Softening life's severity.”

Josh heard the words, but had become distracted. The sailing ship on the horizon earlier was now anchored offshore with its sails down and a landing party headed toward the beach. The wooden ship, he thought, looked just like the one he had sailed on with Iesous and, from what he

could tell, was delivering the same creatures that had attacked him and his crew in the Mayan jungle. He needed to get past this wall and fast.

But how could he ever solve this riddle in time? What could it mean to grace any hand? Or, have a power none can withstand? It makes wounds even though no blood is shed. This seemed impossible.

“If I may...please repeat the riddle a second time.”

“Repeat it once, I will,” the tour guide replied in a singsong manner, “but only once.”

Calming himself, he analyzed the riddle one line at a time.

“Few value it though it brings prosperity—why is this? Then, it makes wounds yet sheds no blood. This is not a living creature. And yet its rule has spread around the world to soften life’s severity. Let me see. A plow wounds the Earth without bloodshed, feeding the people. Would this not bring prosperity to all?”

Pausing, the woman’s voice giggled.

“Yes! Yes! Plow feed the body temple. One riddle only remain.”

“Please, make it fast! I’m sure those creatures, whoever they are, are here to murder me.”

“Me think visitor not find this one so easy. Listen three time, if need.

“I know a picture fair to see,  
A picture full of fire and light,  
This picture changes constantly,  
Yet it is ever fresh and bright.

A narrow frame contains it all,  
Yet all great things that move the heart -  
Although this picture is so small -  
They reach us only by its art.”

Fear gripped Josh’s body as his mind raced through the possible meanings. What is a picture fair to see that is full of fire and light, he wondered...a picture where all great things reach us only by its art? He thought he would never suss this one. He was doomed.

“Repeat again, please,” Josh requested. “They’re getting closer...” The tour guide complied and the riddle was repeated a second time. Yet, he made no progress even with the second reading and requested the third.

“This third and final chance. Then you must answer,” the tour guide said slowly, her voice sounding gravely serious as she read it a last time.

Taking a step back, he decided to approach the problem from a different perspective. What would be required for a Vajrayāna Bodhisattva to enter the temple and become the next Samyahsambuddha? What does such a Bodhisattva have that the Samyahsambuddha needs most? Wait...wait...YES!

“I’ve got it!” he proclaimed, a feeling of relief sweeping over him. “The changing picture is a vision, its narrow frame an iris, and it’s reach into our heart the source of enlightenment. It can only be the mind’s eye!”

“Ahhhhhhh...YES!” the voice giggled with delight. “Way to Clear Light found only through mind’s eye. Bodhisattva must use inner vision to see world he wish, then make real through purest intent. Some say illusion, other just dream. But this is divine power of Bodhisattva: to make something of nothing. This is Way.”

“Visitor, you have big destiny you not yet know,” voice informed him. “You are Bodhisattva Maitreya of ancient prophecy—one to enlighten Earth and restore divine order, balance, and harmony. This we call *dharma*, the Message of Way. You finish work of great Guatama Buddha and return dharma to Earth so consciousness in pure state for acceptance into Clear Light.”

This Josh knew from his study of Mithraism and the Vajrayāna. He had only recently learned the name Maitreya descends from the Sanskrit word *maître*, meaning “loving-kindness”, which in turn descends from the noun “*mitra*”, meaning “friend”. It is the root from which the Zoroastrian Mithra and Roman Mithras originated.

“Are...are you saying I am to become a new Mithras, a new Buddha?” Josh asked incredulously, “—the one born from a rock?”

“Born again, you will be, from Pāli Neru—the great rock you now climb in Sequentia,” the voice explained. “Go now Vajrayāna Maitreya! Two more tests await you.”

Looking over his shoulder as he stepped quickly past the dragon wall, the three creatures had already crossed the beach and were storming through the gate headed directly for him. Slamming into the first barrier now behind him, the three creatures immediately set about to solve the same three riddles. It would not be long, Josh knew, before they found their way in.

Reaching the gong midway to the pagoda, it had begun to vibrate without being struck. A low frequency emanating from somewhere inside the temple was apparently tuned to its prime resonant frequency, causing the golden disc to resonate sympathetically. As the tone became louder, an image began to form in the blurry wave patterns reflecting across its metallic surface. It was a humanoid figure.

“Your Path awaits,” said a deeper artificial Chinese voice, “in the Labyrinth of Minos. There the Minotaur is found. Slay him and hero Theseus you will become.”

“Great! Another impossible challenge,” Josh grumbled, again displeased with the idea of having to navigate an imaginary maze only to fight some mythical creature so he could enter the temple. “Have I not proven myself worthy? Have I not overcome every obstacle set before me? Yet still I am denied entrance?”

“Great Sacrifice you must make,” the voice replied, “to enter Great Hall of Quan Yin.”

Examining the figure in the gold disc, it was clearly cymatic in nature. Composed of common harmonic patterns within a circular standing wave, the figure’s outer and inner structure was now becoming visible. The familiar shapes of bones and organs were forming, as were the fretted nodes of a wavelike spine. The cardioid shapes of a pelvis and lungs were unmistakable—kidneys and brain too—all joined together by a high frequency standing wave running upward along the spine between the organs. Circles radiated outward from the figure’s navel corresponding to the gong’s epicenter. And around the edges, all manner

of harmonic geometry seethed in and out. All was part of a singular resonant process to create the humanoid figure on the gong's surface.

But while the overall figure was that of a man, there was one very important non-human feature that caught Josh's attention. At the location of the brain's pineal node in the vertical standing wave, spirals of energy were forming and exiting the cranium on both sides just above the ears. Resembling bull or ram horns pushing out of the figure's humanoid head, these were the same locations he had targeted with his God Helmet. Seeing this, Josh surmised these vortex 'horns' were actually subtle pathways in and out of the brain.

The horns must act like antennae, he reasoned, for the transmission and reception of consciousness. This would explain why electromagnetic stimulation in these locations is able to tune in the presence of beings in other dimensions. The electromagnetic field must help open and amplify the flow of energy through these horn locations, enabling consciousness to perceive other dimensions.

"So, this is the mighty Minotaur," Josh said to the gong, "—the resonant archetype for Man. For all the stories of the Apis bull of Egypt; the Greek bull of Minos; Shiva's Nandi, and the Phoenician Ba'al—their Devil Horns are but archetypes for the serpent of consciousness that seeks to escape the cranial egg and re-ligion with the gods. Even the labyrinth of Minos is but a euphemism for the spiraling horns that lead the Way home. How could anyone fear the Minotaur of Minos when it is but a reflection of our true self, our inner primordial beast?"

But no sooner had Josh finished speaking than the Minotaur began to move, causing Josh to jump back. To this, the Minotaur also jumped back. Taking a step closer, the Minotaur moved closer. Whatever Josh did, the Minotaur mimicked perfectly.

"Aha! The golden labyrinth of Minos is a mirror!" Josh realized as he thought the puzzle through. "And slaying the bull is to slay myself. Is it your wish then that I battle myself in a bullfight to the death?"

"Slaying ego is only Way to purity," the deep Chinese voice replied.

"But this is suicide! How am I to do such a thing and ever hope to return to Earth?"

“Execute the veronica with impeccability,” the deep voice boomed, echoing now through the courtyard.

“The veronica...executed with impeccability?”

“As brave toreador pivots last moment to escape certain death,” the voice explained, “this is *veronica*. But to execute impeccably and slay bull, he must pass *between* horns. Only then can one liberate from bull-headed self and enter temple pure.”

Puzzled by the idea of passing between the bull’s horns, Josh recalled Màiri’s lesson about Vedic cosmology and the ancient purification and rebirth symbolism of Taurus during a Venus Transit. The Sun passes between the horns of the constellation Taurus on its path along the elliptic at the same time Venus crosses the solar disc. This celestial death and rebirth of the Sun between the horns of Taurus was the meaning behind the Mithraic Taurobolium blood baptism rite where a real bull was slain on a raised platform to baptize the worshipper standing underneath. Discontinued in Rome with the rise of Christianity, the Mithraic blood baptism continues even today with the Spanish bullfight where a toreador slays the bull to symbolize his own ego death and purification.

“Slaying the bull is to slay my own ego,” Josh replied. “I get it. But how is it possible to slip between the Minotaur’s horns at exactly the right moment when the beast is but my own reflection and will always move just as I do?”

The three riddles had been difficult enough, but this puzzle seemed insurmountable. Still, there must be a solution.

“Let’s see,” Josh reasoned. “The veronica might refer to the twirl of consciousness out the crown chakra at death—a location between the horns of my Minotaur reflection. So, just as Sol passes between the horns of the constellation Taurus to enter another cycle, so must my Soul pass between the invisible horns of my cranial egg to be born again. The only question now is how to do it?”

Stopping to face his bull-headed reflection, he noticed a swirling red area in the region of what would normally be his pelvis. To his surprise, the red vortex seemed to respond to his focus on it by becoming a little brighter. This, in turn, triggered a slight upward surge of energy at that

location in his light body. The disc was more than just a mirror, it seemed. It was some sort of biofeedback device.

Focusing again on the red vortex, the energy spiraled a little further upward into a second orange vortex, glowing even brighter in the lower torso of the Minotaur. This too he could feel inside himself. Concentrating harder still, he pushed the vortex into the yellow stomach region in the figure; then farther into the green zone of the heart; the cyan voice box of the throat; and the indigo pineal node at the center of the brain. As he did so, he could feel the same waves surging upward through his own body, causing his luminous egg to light up like a rainbow.

Through sheer concentration and force of will, he had caused six chakra wheels to spin synchronously in both the Minotaur reflection and inside himself. His body had become a prism for the Clear Light, elevating his consciousness step by step to a sublime state of awareness. He was actually feeling much purer and cleaner inside already.

“It must have been in a vision like this where the Hindu chakra system was first discovered,” he reasoned. “Ancient psychonauts must have journeyed to this very temple to learn how to activate the inner Chi rainbow. Each must have had to execute the veronica with impeccability just as I do now to exit the crown chakra between the horns and slay the Cosmic Bull.”

Focusing now on the indigo vortex swirling inside the head of his reflection, Josh again concentrated his strength. Pushing the wave upward, he struggled to drill through the top of the Minotaur’s head into the open space between the standing wave horns. This was the position of the mind’s eye, the Sahasrara location where he might escape the cranial egg and hatch from his luminous egg as a non-local entity.

With another concentrated push, the vortex grew larger and more intense, slowly twisting up through the crown. Growing brighter by the second, a blinding flash of white light was finally released as the seventh vortex was reached, rotating just above the figure’s head. This one had a violet wheel at the center of a white halo, like a lotus blossom spinning inward toward a brilliant point of light that sparkled like a star. At last, his Sol had passed between the horns of Taurus.

“Yet still I am not free,” Josh exclaimed. “If only I can push just a little harder...maybe, just maybe.”

Mustering his last reserve of will and intent, he finally felt something give. A final half twist was all it took to make the Minotaur’s crown shine so intensely that it grew to engulf Josh and most of the courtyard. With it, his vision exploded in a burst of harmonic colors and deep shimmering chords.

Like the hero Theseus, he had slain the Minotaur and won the bullfight of Mithras. His mind’s eye was now free of his light body, floating above it as a crown of Clear Light inside a Tyrian purple halo.

“Executed most impeccably,” the deep voice congratulated him. “You may enter temple, but only if Quan Yin wishes it.”

As his last link to human ego slipped away, Josh could feel his desire for the world of sense and sensation fading. His bull-headed animal desires now slain, he could step past the golden gong and into the inner courtyard. It was not a moment too soon.

A cacophonous crash behind him confirmed his pursuers had answered the riddles of the dragon wall and reached the second barrier only feet from where he was standing. Turning to face his pursuers, they were crouched low and growling like caged animals. He was quite sure they would have devoured him in an instant if he had been but a moment slower in solving the labyrinth puzzle.

Now at very close range, he could see the creatures in detail. As before in the Maya jungle, one was a massive white polar bear with a man’s face and another the head of a wolf on a man’s body. But the third—this one he recognized. It was a Runaturuncu, what anthropologists categorized as a winged malanistic jaguar-man.

He knew this from his Ayahuasca trip in South America where he had purchased a carved stone statue of this liminal creature from a Brazilian boy who told him it was the nagual body of the brujos. Josh could only assume these creatures were earthly sorcerers who had assumed nagual form for the purpose of stalking him.

Looking the Runaturuncu in the eye now, something else looked familiar. His face...it had a striking resemblance to someone he knew.



“Is...is that you Mosiah?” Josh asked incredulously, pointing at the creature with his vajra dagger. “Do you now plot against me, using my own technology to hunt me down and murder me?”

Standing upright on his hind legs, the black jaguar spread his wings in an impressive display of shamanistic power.

“Dr. Savin,” he growled, “you have no idea the damage you have wrought in the Celestial Kingdom and back on Earth. You know nothing of the Secret Chiefs and their plan for our people. You are ignorant of the End Times prophecies and the importance of rebuilding the Holy Temple of Jerusalem for the Second Coming. And now you threaten the Throne of Heavenly Father himself with your willful disobedience and naïve actions. Only I have earned the right to approach the Throne. Not you!”

To this Josh simply turned and walked away. He no longer felt the need to debate anything with this misguided religious zealot who believed Solomon’s temple must be rebuilt over an old Jebusite rock altar in Ursalimmu. Surely it had been Mosiah and his brethren who fanned the flames of war in the Mideast all these years with their hateful agenda in the supernal realm. Not he!

Reaching the temple stairs, a third invisible barrier now blocked his path into the temple. What riddle or puzzle must he solve this time? Or would this one be an enigma too difficult to solve?

No sooner had he begun to doubt himself than the temple lion statue on the left of the stairs stirred to life. Stretching up into a sitting position, the creature stepped down from its pedestal onto the steps before him. Above at the temple entrance next appeared a beautiful Chinese woman in a flowing white robe. She wore an elaborate jewel necklace and the Fengguan “phoenix crown” headdress, a mark of great royalty, Josh presumed. Stepping down the stairs to take her seat on the temple lion’s back, she smiled with admiration at her earthly visitor.

“Greetings Vajrayāna Bodhisattva,” she said in the familiar double voice. “I am returned to you now in venerated form of Quan Yin, bestowing final rite of transmogrification.”

Reaching toward him with arms extended, she did not seek to take his hands or embrace him. Instead, she reached up to clasp the crown of light radiating just above his head.

“This crown of light is your mind’s eye,” she explained, as she gently held it in both hands above his astral body. “Everything you ever were or ever will be channels through this. This is your memory, your consciousness, and your link to the Ancient One.”

With these last words, she removed the crown. As if flipping a switch, Josh’s illusory teenage body suddenly went limp, collapsing to the ground at the base of the stairs. Lying there motionless before the temple of mercy, the luminous egg that had been Josh Savin went dark before disappearing completely.

Seeing this, Mosiah and his nagual brothers let out a vengeful cheer. Their adversary must have failed the third test, by punishment of death, and Quan Yin had stolen his soul. No longer would he be the Vajrayāna Bodhisattva. No longer would he be a threat to the Throne of God.

Turning on her steed, Quan Yin raised the shining crown high before her as they approached the temple lion on the right. Then, performing the ancient rite of enthronement made famous by Jacques-Louis David in his painting *The Coronation of Napoleon*, she lightly placed the luminous crown on the statue’s head and recited the Mithraic prayer of lesser communion to consecrate the new Sun King.

“First origin of my origin, first beginning of my beginning, spirit of spirit, the first of the spirit in me, fire given by god to my mixture of the mixtures in me, the first of the fire in me, water of water, the first of the water in me, earthy material, the first of the earthy material in me, my complete body, I who was formed by a noble arm and an incorruptible right hand in a world without light and yet radiant, without soul and yet alive with soul.”

In response to these words, the statue slowly stirred to life. Standing upright upon his globe, Josh was born again before the Red Pagoda of Putuoshan Island. With the body of a man and head of a lion, he had been given the nagual form of the Leontocephaline. Peering over his shoulder, four wings now protruded from his back. Around him whirled an energy field, twisting like a serpent around the Orphic Egg. Above his

head burned the crown of a king, a purple nimbus around his mane. As the Zurvān akarāna and Aion of Boundless Time, he held the Diamantine Dagger in one hand and key to Empyrean in the other.

Mosiah could not believe his eyes. For now before him stood the immortal Leontocephaline of Mithras—the same Golden Boy archetype in their Mithraic cave. Known as Narasimha to the Hindoos and Maahes to Egyptians, the Leontocephaline was the oldest and most supreme deity of the ancient mystery schools, key holder to the seven Celestial Gates. Possessing a primordial power beyond all others, only the Leontocephaline has the power to unlock the Eighth Gate to Empyrean and reach the Throne of Heavenly Father. From there Mosiah knew anything was possible.

“Behold the Phanes; First-Born Protogonos; and noble Chnoubis,” the goddess announced. “All bow to the one true Sun of God.”

Mosiah fell to his knees all right, but only in despair. He and his Masonic brothers had failed to stop the mad scientist and his demonic goddess from reaching the Throne. With Savin now reborn as the Golden Boy, the prophecies he had worked so hard to fulfill were in jeopardy and the very future of his Church in question.

“How could this have happened?” the black jaguar lamented to his brethren. “Savin has never before approached the Throne. And he knows nothing of Moroni and the Ascended Masters. He does not even believe Jesus was a real person, much less the one and only Son of God. He is but an atheist heretic using scientific technology to corrupt the Celestial Kingdom and destroy Earth. He is the very embodiment of the anti-Christ and not worthy to become the *Ángele Dei* and guardian of God.”

“YOU are an imposter,” Mosiah cried out. “You pretend to be the Messenger but are in fact Ariamanus, the Roaring Lion of Apollyon. You, the Destroyer and anti-Christ Al-Shaytan, are but the ignoble Prince of Darkness.”

“O Heavenly Father, know ye that your children have not forsaken thee,” the Mormon Apostle cried. “By instruction of our blessed Moroni, we have come to defend thy Throne. Verily I say unto you, the Roaring Lion of Apollyon shall never enter the holy temple. With your blessing, we shall never allow him to reach your Seat.”



## Chapter 28

### Throne of Maitreya

*R*olf Blitzen, CNN: “Welcome back. Fierce fighting continues to rage between the Sons of ISIS and troops loyal to the Saudi government. Several northeastern cities in Saudi Arabia are now controlled by ISIS coalition troops, the most important ones being the port city of Jeddah and holy city of Mecca. Even more troubling, the ISIS forces now include several battalions formerly part of the Saudi military. We turn now to CNN correspondent Rob Nickerson on the ground at the Al-Masjid al-Haram mosque in Mecca for an update on the situation there.”

Rob Nickerson, CNN Saudi Arabia: “Rolf, the ISIS army is now well entrenched here in the holy city of Mecca. In spite of intense fighting with loyal Saudi troops on the southern and eastern perimeters of Jeddah and Mecca, there has been an influx of Sunni pilgrims into the city from the north and west. Many are coming by boat from Egypt and Sudan across the Red Sea to join the rapidly growing circumambulation of the Kaaba. Word on the street is the original Ottoman Empire is being spiritually reborn here at this Holy Mosque in preparation for the return of the Prophet. Back to you, Rolf.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Thank you for that report, Rob. Our correspondent in the Egyptian capital, Arva Diman, has an update on the coup yesterday in Cairo.”

Arva Diman, CNN Egypt: “Yes, Rolf, ISIS here in Cairo now takes full responsibility for the coup to oust Egypt’s President

Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Several factions of the Egyptian Armed Forces, including the Southern command of the Army and several other divisions of Armored, Mechanized, and Air Force, have left to join with the Sunni Islamist rebels just as we saw in Saudi Arabia. Mechanized infantry are now in Tahir Square surrounding key government buildings and the Heliopolis Palace, official residence of the President. Our understanding is the President's family has been taken hostage there."

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: "That's very disturbing news. Can you tell me if anyone has been killed so far in the coup?"

Arva Diman, CNN Egypt: "We have been told several government officials of the el-Sisi regime have been imprisoned, but nothing yet on any fatalities or executions. We have however heard that a faction of ISIS has arrived at the Great Sphinx on the Giza Plateau and are threatening to blow it up. We are heading there now to see what, if anything, is happening."

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: "It's hard to believe anyone would want to destroy one of the wonders of the ancient world. Very sad to hear this! Please keep us updated when you arrive at Giza.

In related developments today, the United States has convened an emergency meeting with its closest NATO allies to see what can be done to help stem the tide of ISIS inspired revolutions. This morning the Pentagon announced the deployment of additional American warships to the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, including the USS Nimitz and USS Harry S. Truman carrier groups. The British immediately announced deployment of the Royal Navy's latest £1B anti-missile destroyer, the HMS Daring, as well as several Hunt Class minesweepers to provide tactical—"

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Hakobyan was feeling anxious as he headed for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room to join a videoconference with Chief Petrovich. Things had gone from bad to worse in just a matter of days. The effect of the inverse-vajra was obviously still holding even though his Russian crewmen were still out of Sequence. The negative influence had proven to be far more powerful than they had originally estimated. His only hope now was to get the Russians back in Sequence and switch their signal back to positive in hopes of moderating the slide to war.

Fortunately, all four Russian psychonauts had been revived and were now being given a cocktail of steroids and vitamins to stabilize them. Although he had hoped to reinsert them back into Sequence before the Chief learned of their removal, this seemed unlikely now. He was going to have to tell Petrovich everything and that was not going to be pretty.

All the while Savin's vital signs had continued to remain stable. While there had been a huge spike in his respiratory signs and brain activity with the rest of the crew, he was again the only one who had stabilized and remained in Sequence. This was just as well, Hakobyan figured, in case the good doctor had already discovered their deception.

Based on the latest commodity index, crude was already at a record \$142 per barrel and still climbing. The MICEX trading floor in Moscow was in frenzy as traders scrambled to buy up even more oil stocks as valuations shot past historic highs. Everything was going according to plan. Yet, he knew the INTERRUS traders would need even more time to reach their goal of twenty billion dollars before dumping everything and placing their short positions. All it would take then would be to reset the vajra signal to calm tensions in the Mideast and wait as the price of oil and related petroleum stocks went back down, more than doubling their money. All this assumed, of course, that he could get his men back in Sequence to do this.

Walking into the conference room and closing the door, the Chief and other Directors were already waiting for him on the videoconference.

“Glad you can join us, Director Hakobyan,” Chief Petrovich said sourly. “Time is very critical now; listen close. Plan is v’erking, but more time and pressure needed. How are psychonauts?”

“Ahem,” the Director began, clearing his throat. “V’ee have unfortunate problem in night, Chief Petrovich. Crew encountered unknown threat.”

“W’ot has happen? Is crew okay?”

“Cause is not known, but men lose their consciousness—all but Savin.”

“V’ere in Sequence is crew?”

“Dr. Savin is in fifth step.”

“And our men?”

“Uh, hmmm...extracted from Sequence for medical attention. They recover now in infirmary.”

“Ty che, blyad?!” Chief Petrovich said furiously, slamming his hand onto the conference table. “Why I v’as not told this? D’is is big mistake!”

“But Chief Petrovich...soon v’ee can reinsert—maybe tomorrow...”

“Nyet! Whose caring if brain conscious when inverse-vajra still v’erking?” Petrovich said angrily. “Put crew back NOW; no delay! If not, INTERRUS v’ill be bankrupt...INTERRUS clients v’ill be bankrupt...YOU v’ill be bankrupt.”

“But Chief Petrovich, our men are weak; needing more time to recover. Returning now to Sequence could kill them.”

“Not my concern, Director Hakobyan,” the Chief replied emotionless, waving his hand dismissively on the video screen. “This is my order. If you refuse, you v’ill be replaced...or v’orse.”

“Understood. I v’ill see to it personally,” Hakobyan replied sheepishly as the video link went dead.

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Stepping back from the second barrier, the Runaturuncu gently moved his wings, lifting himself upward into the center of the courtyard.



Without real air for lift, he had learned to direct the energy field of his Gaussian “wings” to simulate flight. The sight was at once magnificent and terrifying—beautiful in a strangely menacing way.

“Savin, you are not the only one who wields the thundernail!” the jaguar hissed, holding a bolt of blue plasma high in his right hand. “Your delinquent hacker has betrayed you...again.”

With that, the Revelator slammed his right fist into his left palm. Using the vajra-kīla like a hammer, a powerful concussion wave crashed into the second barrier, temporarily weakening it. In an instant, the naguals were through headed directly for Josh.

But Quan Yin was ready. Raising her arms, she clenched the air as if holding a shield. Smashing against it with full force, the naguals were thrown to the ground. As guardian temple lions of the Red Pagoda, Quan Yin and the Phanes stood firm to defend the Throne of God.

“O Revelator. At your own peril you forget this is my temple and you are guests inside my vision,” the double voice scolded. “You are here at my pleasure and I do what I wish. There is no need for violence for I am the merciful one. I need only dream you away to find my peace.”

Stepping down from her steed, Quan Yin raised her hand. But instead of throwing a lightning bolt of her own, she flicked a switch in mid-air. In an instant, the ocean and sky were gone and the island of Putuoshan was left to float alone under a starry night sky. Another flick and the beach had vanished up to the Wall of the Nine Dragons. A twist of a dial and the front courtyard and gong had disappeared. One more flick and it would be all over for Mosiah and his brethren. Like a game designer toying with her opponent inside a world of her own making, Quan Yin was the supreme ruler. No one could defeat her here.

“Quan Yin, you have made a grave error,” thundered the Runaturuncu as he struggled to hover in place. “It is I who should become the Phanes and Right Hand to the Throne—not him! It is I who should become the new Messenger in the footsteps of our blessed Angel Moroni. For only I have the authority of the Twelve Apostles to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem and herald the Second Coming. Only I can

summon the last judgment of our Heavenly Father and receive the transmogrification.”

“So be it then,” replied the goddess. “You shall receive the transmogrification...but only as king to the retched souls and elemental spirits. There you will find a dusty Hell waiting for you. Farewell Mormon Revelator!”

With a final manipulation of the air, the naguals and courtyard were gone, leaving only the Red Pagoda to drift quietly through the starlit sky. A full moon hung where the yellow sun once stood, casting a pale silver light over the floating temple.

“What...did you do with them?” Josh asked softly, concerned for Mosiah.

“They are given to the netherworld,” the double voice replied, Màiri’s Scottish accent now more apparent, “where they can do us no harm. This is the most compassion and mercy I can offer them.”

“And why have you given me the lion-human form?” he asked again.

“The lion nagual is the purest archetype for life and the living persona of the temple,” Quan Yin replied. “This is why sphinxes and temple lions stand guard outside. It is the animal condition of the Bodhisattva, the son of Buddha, and protector of the dharma in the temple. Soon you will be the Buddha reborn and the dharma yours to protect. Come now into the Great Hall where we will have tea before our ascension.”

Holding her hand as they climbed the stairs, he felt the familiar pearlescent scales on her hand. Yet beneath this was the warmth and kindness of Màiri’s touch. She was part of him now and he of her. They were destined, he knew, to be together in this sacred temple after so many lives of struggle together.

Stepping inside, Josh was surprised to see how large the Great Hall was—much larger than it appeared from outside. Stepping to a low table at the front of the hall, their tea service was waiting. Kneeling on cushions before the red lacquer table, Quan Yin prepared the tea according to Chinese marriage tradition. Spooning black tea leaves into the pot; pouring in the hot water; waiting for it to steep before straining

three times; then filling each teacup—they would give thanks to the Ancient One for the invitation to ascend together on this day. For only through the gratitude of deep tea could they enter into the sacred matrimony.

Finishing the ceremony, the two stood and bowed one to the other in mutual respect. Turning toward the center of the hall, they stood side by side before an enormous mosaic in the floor.

“This is the Hetoimasia, the Throne of the Second Coming of the Buddha Maitreya. It shall henceforth be your throne, and your name.”

The mosaic was a mandala of nine overlapping triangles, inlaid into the floor, whose intersections created forty-three smaller triangles. Around this were a circular lotus of eight petals, a lotus of sixteen petals, and an earth square representing a temple with four doors. The entire mosaic was filled with different colored gemstones, creating a mesmerizing mandala Josh recognized as the Sri Yantra Meru.

“Do you remember?” she asked. “We have climbed this staircase together before.”

With that, the low frequency tone that had activated the gong earlier began to sound; emanating it seemed from the mandala’s central “bindu” point. The Sri Yantra, he recalled, was a pattern revered in Buddhism for its symbolism of both the transcendental Mount Meru and the Tripura Sundari goddess of the three worlds. The tone originating at its bindu was said to be the resonant Cosmic Om, the fundamental creative frequency of the cosmos. This he recognized as the same 111-Hertz frequency he used to pulse the electromagnets in the God Helmet.

As the tone grew louder, the outer square edges began to rise into steps. This was followed by each of the inner patterns extruding one by one upward into a series of concentric variegated gears to form the steps of what Buddhists called the Maha Meru. Like a giant mechanical Christmas tree in the center of the temple, the gears turned quickly at the bottom decreasing in speed as they reached upward through the pagoda’s seven tiers. At the top, the central triangular axis of the bindu offered a stationary platform just large enough to sit on.

“So, THIS is the Throne of Buddha,” Josh said incredulously, looking up at the extruded Sri Yantra mandala.

“It is a part of the Gandharva machine,” the double voice replied, “and sits in the upper branches of the World Tree.”

“You mean in the upper pyramid of the hourglass projector?”

“This you already knew, Maitreya. We are tuned to a higher frequency in this world very near Indra’s heaven. The Gandharva machine resonates through all dimensions with only a portion visible in any single world, each a harmonic in a singular multiverse. Every effort has been made to hide this fact from those inside the illusion.”

“What are we to do here then?” he inquired.

“Come with me,” she replied taking his hand, “and I will show you.”

As the mechanism continued to rotate, the two began to climb the variegated tiers of the Bodhi Tree. Like players in a platform game, they had to choose and time their steps carefully from one tier to the next as the gears turned at different speeds. And as they did so, the couple traced the serpent’s spiraling path around the Bodhi Tree, a concept popularized by L. Frank Baum as a yellow brick road.

A melody began to form above the Cosmic Om as they took their first steps; then multiple tones as they ascended the complication. Flowering into a musical polyphony about halfway up, Josh thought it a blend of several Chinese instruments—gugin, guzheng, and pipa perhaps—playing a baroque fugue in four diatonic parts rather than traditional Chinese pentatonic. The resulting blend of Earth’s Eastern and Western musical traditions was at once alien and unifying. Each step triggered a new variation in the tempo as the music’s thematic development slowly built toward crescendo. It seemed their feet were playing the keys of a huge musical instrument.

Reaching the penultimate step, the two stood before the stationary pinion gear of the Sri Yantra. Made of solid gold, the triangular pinion was topped with the resonant bindu crystal—a large pillow-cut, powder blue sapphire. Like the throne of Baphomet, Josh assumed it was a lens for the Clear Light.

“Behold the seat of consciousness,” the double voice announced. “This is your seat, Maitreya—the Throne of Buddha.”

Taking his place on the sapphire cushion, he crossed his legs within the pinion triangle to assume the Tantric yoga pose. As he did so, a surge of primal energy began to swirl upward through his Leontocephaline body. Somehow, the throne was tapping into his sex urge, amplifying and supercharging it. It felt like he was sitting on a giant Viagra pill.

Such strong feelings in his current incorporeal state were a complete surprise to him. Except for the incident with Enki's pornographic baptismal, he had not thought about sex since he entered the Sequence. It never even occurred to him to look down to see if he had any genitalia, despite being completely naked the entire time.

Yet fertility and reproduction was a primal urge of the cosmos and sex, he figured, could still have purpose here. A process of supernal union, he reasoned, might serve to create new forms of consciousness, hatched perhaps from luminous egg farms like Odin's Sol Factory. Whatever the purpose of sex might be in a non-physical state, the Sri Yantra throne certainly seemed like the place to do it.

Inspecting what was now his erect penis, he was shocked to find it shaped like the vajra dagger. With a 'doorknob' pommel at the bottom of a triangular shaft topped by a barbed head, his first instinct was to grasp it with his right hand. But when he did so, an electrical shock ran through him. A bolt of blue plasma from his penis shot down into the sapphire cushion, fusing his vajra pommel to the throne of the Sri Yantra. He was now part of the machine.

"My God, what have I done," he cried. "I'm stuck!"

"Maitreya, the vajra is your foundation," the double voice replied. "This is as it should be for you are the living archetype of the machine. The fundamental of creation resonates within you."

Now he knew what it meant to become the Buddha. He was the missing regenerative link between the upper and lower pyramids—the reproductive body of the Bodhi Tree. His spiritual fertility made him the font of divine love and protector of the dharma inside the machine. If what Odin said was true, he could now use his vajra-kīla to amplify the Clear Light and influence the collective consciousness of Earth. But for this he would need help.

Smiling seductively, Quan Yin removed her white robe to ascend the Throne of Buddha. Using the method they had practiced in the Meditation Center just six days before, she balanced her legs on the corners of the triangular pinion gear to straddle his lap. Assuming the yab-yom pose of Tantric yoga, she slowly lowered herself onto the vajra-kīla to join him once again as Rebis, the Divine Androgyny.

Kissing deeply, a warm current of love began to flow from the Sri Yantra into him, then through him into her. From there it would emanate outward through the Red Pagoda and down into the immense hourglass structure of the machine. Moving slowly at first, she began the tantric practice.

He could visualize Māiri's red hair and green eyes through the archetypal form of the Chinese goddess. Moving first up and then down in a single graceful motion, their movement was measured by the pulse of the Cosmic Om resonating inside his body. The Tantric dance of the siddhis and moksha, attainment and liberation had begun.

Seated contraposed, their bodies moved as one to conceive a new consciousness. It would be a consciousness born of love in accordance with the dharma. As one mind, one body, they were the archetype of pleasure and contentment—the face of Maitreya some call the Laughing Buddha.

“Good luck indeed,” Josh chuckled, rubbing his ‘fat belly’ with both hands.

Perched high atop the Bodhi Tree, the Mandelbrot aura of the male vajra-kīla now formed around them. Yet the feminine aura brought a new shape to this tantric form. For the Laughing Buddha was not so much an actual being but an archetype for the Clear Light flowing from the macrocosm into the human microcosm. It was the infinitely recursive, fractal aura of opposites known as the *Buddhabrot*.

Suddenly another even stronger wave of tantric energy swept up through the blue sapphire to quicken the pace. The Sri Yantra was spinning faster now as the Great Machine urged them on. With every thrust, the throne rose a little further into the upper tiers of the temple. Deep inside the Bodhi Tree now, the Throne of Buddha would soon become the royal Seat of Brahma.

And still the Sri Yantra swirled faster, a blur of whirling gears and harmonics straining toward crescendo. Balanced at the edge of harmony, the sacred music was desperate to find its resolution. As the Goddess drew near her crowning point, the Buddha having waited to the last possible moment, their zenith had arrived at last.

Clenching hands with arms outstretched, the force of their combined tantric energy gathered up like a tsunami. Just a shudder at first, the Buddhabrot contracted inward before exploding outward in a blinding flash of light. Wave upon wave followed, surging outward into the machine to shake the very foundation of Earth. And when it was done—when the Divine Androgyny’s purest intent had been consummated—a coronal halo was all that remained where the Throne of Buddha had once stood.





## Chapter 29

### *A Visit to Tusita Heaven*

**“B**rother Gunderson! Merkley!” Mosiah shouted, his voice echoing through the room.

“I am over here, Revelator,” a voice replied somewhere in the dark.

“As am I,” echoed another. “Where are we?”

“I’m not sure,” Mosiah said, “but one thing is certain—it’s very dark in here. I can’t see a thing. Feel the space around you, my brothers, and tell me what you find.”

“A wall,” Gunderson announced. “Feels like cut stone; rough and very dusty.”

“There’s a rectangular block over here,” Merkley added.

“I don’t know why, but I am unable to see anything,” Mosiah complained, crawling like a jaguar. “Every other realm I’ve explored has been semi-transparent, but this one is dense and completely opaque to my—”

“Listen up!” Gunderson interrupted. “Follow the walls toward my voice. I have found a shaft with a light at the far end.”

Crawling through the inky blackness, the naguals followed Gunderson into a small square tunnel that soon emerged into a tall hallway lit by a single incandescent bulb.

“Look below you, Revelator!” Gunderson said bewildered. “We have been crawling on an invisible surface a yard above the floor.”

Standing up in mid-air, Mosiah surveyed the room.

“It appears that Quan Yin has cast us into the abyss of Abaddon. Known in antiquity as the Bardo Thodol and Egyptian Duat, we are in an intermediate realm slightly out of phase with Earth and so slightly above it. I fear we are now stuck between Earth and Baphomet’s Hall where souls must pass after death; that is, if they ever get out. It is the realm of ghosts, phantasms, and elemental spirits.”

“You’re right about that,” Merkley confirmed, pointing to the walls. “These hieroglyphics show Osiris flanked by the smaller figures of Anubis and Horus. It tells the story of judgment in this intermediate realm.”

As the High Priest of the York Rite, Merkley was very familiar with the ancient rite of Memphis and considered an expert in Egyptian hieroglyphs and religious ceremony. In these matters, Mosiah always deferred to him.

“These are the primary Egyptian gods of the Underworld who judge the departed souls,” Merkley continued. “They weigh human hearts here to determine which souls are worthy of passing into the high heavens or must instead descend into the infernal realm.”

“Are you saying we’re...uh...dead?” Gunderson stuttered.

“Not exactly,” Merkley replied, studying the glyphs closer. “From what it says here, this is only the transitional entrance to the Egyptian Underworld. In this state of consciousness, we have a chance of escaping but only if we can prove ourselves righteous enough.”

“Then so we shall,” Mosiah promised, stretching his black wings. “But first we need to find a way out of this burial chamber of the damned.”

“Look...down the hall,” Gunderson pointed. “There’s a shaft running upward and another going down. Perhaps we should go up.”

“No, take the one down,” Merkley insisted. “It was common in Egyptian pyramid building to have two such shafts—one at ground level and the other higher up. The higher one provided an alternate entrance when the Nile flooded making the lower shaft inaccessible. But with no sign of water, we should take the lower shaft because it will eventually take us back up to ground level.”

“Down it is, then...follow me,” Mosiah said, plunging headfirst into the dark shaft.

After the explosion, everything had fallen silent. Quan Yin was nowhere to be seen and the Red Pagoda of Putuoshan had disappeared completely. Even his Leontocephaline body was gone, leaving his disembodied consciousness to drift alone through the void. It could have been a minute or a billion years, he could not tell, until something finally caught his eye.

A glowing cloud had appeared below him. Sweeping down and around the cloud he saw a figure sitting cross-legged in the middle of a Buddhabrot field. Zooming in further, he recognized who it was. It was himself, or at least the visage of his earthly self, meditating in lotus position.

Realizing this, his mind's eye immediately snapped back into the ushnisha of his Buddha body just above his head. With it came a flood of human sensation and emotion. As his earthly umbilical began to reconnect, he could again reason and make sense of the visionary world around him. But something had changed inside him—something big.

He was no longer just a man. He had become a god, at least in the mythological sense. As one in a long line of vegetation deities that included every so-called Green Man from Pan, Baphomet, and Osiris to Enki, Dionysus, and Christ—the intelligence-collective known on Earth as Josh Savin had become the new Buddha archetype. Floating alone in the Buddhabrot field, he could now contemplate his return to the living.

What did the Chinese voice say—that he would restore the dharma? It was his destiny, the voice had said, to return to Earth the cosmic order of Rta, the law of harmony within which all must abide, thus restoring the Path of Righteousness. This was all well and good, but how? How was he to do this? How was he to restore the dharma in the hearts and minds of human beings who had so little compassion left, who had been indoctrinated for so long with material self-interest—so much fear, cynicism, and hate? How could he even begin to reach enough people to share this message when he returned, much less show them how to live it?

To answer these questions a vision came to him—a fantastical new vision. Never before had a non-physical reality appeared so vivid, so immersive and detailed as the vision that now surrounded him. It was

like a Hollywood animated movie with superheroes, special effects, and beautiful cinematography—only infinitely better. His intelligence-collective had really risen to the occasion—assisted it seemed by the Mahatmas themselves—to help answer his questions in the most epic story of gods and men ever told.

He had arrived in the midst of the great Indic war immortalized in the Bhagavad Gita. For there around him high in an azure sky were the opposing pantheons of the Devas and Asuras arrayed on either side. Below him, armies of chariots and foot soldiers were lined up crosswise on a sundrenched field in preparation for a battle to the death. These he knew must be the Pandava and Kaurava armies, followers of the warring Hindu gods.

Yet the Pandava prince Arjuna stood puzzled. For what noble purpose should he battle the Kaurava? What was the moral justification for such murder? What could he hope to accomplish by sending his army into war. To these questions Lord Krishna appeared as his charioteer to counsel him.

Descending to the battlefield through his mind's eye, the Buddha Maitreya listened in as Lord Krishna, earthly avatar of Vishnu, urged Arjuna to take up the righteous battle to restore the dharma on Earth.

“Whenever dharma declines and the purpose of life is forgotten, I manifest myself on earth. I am born in every age to protect the good, to destroy evil, and to reestablish dharma.

As they approach me, so I receive them.  
All paths, Arjuna, lead to me.

I am the beginning, middle, and end of creation.

Among animals I am the lion; among birds, the eagle Garuda. I am  
Prahlada, born among the demons, and of all that measures,  
I am time.

I am death, which overcomes all, and the source of all beings still to

be born.

Just remember that I am, and that I support the entire cosmos  
with only a fragment of my being.

Behold, Arjuna, a million divine forms, with an infinite variety of  
color and shape.

Behold the gods of the natural world, and many more wonders  
never revealed before.

Behold the entire cosmos turning within my body, and the  
other things you desire to see.

I am time, the destroyer of all; I have come to consume the world...”

Hearing this, Maitreya could now see the true nature of Lord Krishna. As avatar of the dharma in the sustaining light of Vishnu, Krishna was the archetype for the Path of Righteousness through multiple lives. To Vishnu, himself the archetype of cosmic balance, the meaning of a single life was only a measure of progress along the path of balance over many lifetimes. Death was but a transition into another life in search of this path—not something to fear or avoid. In his teaching, restoring the dharma and following the Path was cause enough for battle and well worth the loss of life.

Yet the real war of the Bhagavad Gita was not a real war of gods and men but rather a spiritual war with oneself to win the dharmic state of Krishna Consciousness. Only in this state, Arjuna was told, could the Path of Righteousness be followed.

Overhearing this, the Buddha pondered deeply. Why should there be so much pain and suffering over many lives to find the dharma and follow the Shining Path? Is there not an easier way?

In his study of Bhakti yoga with Māiri, he had learned the physical discipline of balance, harmony, and sustainability. She had explained to him that before Bhakti was just a yoga teaching, it was a communion rite. The medieval Bhakti cult believed communion with the divine could only be obtained through the senses and a state of ecstasy involving

dance, chanting, and unbridled sexuality. But most important was their vegetarian diet that centered on an entheogenic sacrament that delivered the ecstatic state and shortened the road to enlightenment.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna's vision of Krishna was just such a teaching of the Bhakti sacrament. As the central Bhakti scripture, the Bhagavad Gita was actually a guide to the visionary experience of Krishna Consciousness. Through it, one might experience the true nature of reality and so restore the dharma and follow the Path of Righteousness. So, must it be, Maitreya realized, that restoring the dharma on Earth meant restoring the ancient communion rite. This he must do before all else.

Pulling away from this vision, another one took its place. This vision he recognized as the epic struggle between the Devas and Asuras. This time Indra, leader of the Devas, battled Vritra, the great dragon of the Asuras. It seemed Vritra had lain across the great mountain river, blocking the flow of immortal waters from Order's Summit. To free the immortal waters, Indra drank deeply of the immortalizing Soma to gain the strength and magical powers needed to defeat the evil serpent.

From his throne in the sky, the Buddha now urged the Great Deva into battle with Vritra. Clapping his hands, Maitreya released the blue thunderbolt into Indra's hands who laid it thus upon the dragon. Raising the mighty serpent, the immortal waters were once again free to flow into the collective mouth of Earth. Pleased that the Soma was again available to those who thirst, Maitreya praised the Deva hero.

“I will declare the manly deeds of Indra, the first that he  
achieved, the thunder-wielder.

He slew the dragon, then disclosed the waters, and cleft the  
channels of the mountain torrents.

He slew the dragon lying on the mountain: his heavenly bolt of  
thunder Tvashtar fashioned.

Like lowing cows in rapid flow descending, the waters glided  
downward to the ocean.

Impetuous as a bull, he chose the Soma, and quaffed in  
threefold sacrifice the juices.”

In these visions, the Buddha had found his answers. For now, he could see that the white waters of Enki's Eternal Fountain were the same milky waters of Indra's Immortal Soma. And while the first fertilized the body, the second fertilized the mind. Only through the Soma might the dharma be restored and Krishna Consciousness attained for all. Like Indra, he must become the hero who raises the inner serpent and restores the Soma communion. For only through the Soma might the people of Earth once again find the dharma and follow the Path.

With his plan now complete, the rush of a new communion swept through him as if on cue. With a new frequency filling his head, he would arrive next in the sixth heaven of Indra. Known as Tusita, it would be here where he, as the Buddha Maitreya, would now rest and meditate beside the emerald lake of a hundred rainbows before his return.

Bathed in the moon's silver light, soothed in its languid music, Maitreya found serenity beyond anything he could have imagined. So beautiful were the sights and sounds he could only weep with joy. In admiration of his difficult journey, the gods smiled down upon him, dispatching a blossom of crepuscular rays to soothe and reassure him.

"O my Beautiful God!" the Buddha cried. "How I wish never to leave this place, perfected in every way. My heart is filled with compassion and only the purest love."

So it was the Buddha would remain for a time in this Tusita Heaven, preparing his descent. Poised upon his throne, he contemplated further the dharma's return. Radiant as a diamond, his feet rested on the thousand-petal lotus within the shining nimbus of his Buddhabrot field.

Deep inside the Clear Light he meditated; framed by rich brocade. Above him stood the magnificent Bodhi Tree, sparkling like the freshest parasol made of the finest emeralds. In the Great Hall of Indra, the Soma moon cast its shadow across the ground, covered by precious stones, rare flowers, and bright powders. Gods and Brahmas stood watch, peering through the curtain of the Cakravate Mountains that encircled him.

In this exalted state, he could hear the solemn prayers of those awaiting his return in hopeful fashion. Yet the dharma must be prepared in full before such prayers could be answered. This he knew.

In the first watch of night, he would remember his past births. In the second watch, he would see distant things; things not yet present. And in the third turning, he would meditate on the twelve Nidānas, facets of the dependent rising of Pratītyasamutpāda in ascending and descending orders. Only in this way could he gain the omniscience needed to deliver the dharma.

As a follower of the Vajrayana and “path of the fruit”, he contemplated the dependent arising. If this exist, that exist; if this ceases to exist, that also ceases to exist. All dharmas arise in dependence upon other dharmas; nothing has or ever will be separate. Through the twelve Pratītyasamutpāda of dependent origination, the dharmic chain of causes would herald his miraculous rebirth; remembering and recapitulating, the chain would free him when his incarnation was complete. All this the Maitreya Buddha would perfect in Indra’s Heaven as he meditated his triumphant return.

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Christina Amunpur, CNN Egypt: “...several dozen ISIS soldiers at work in and around the Khafre pyramid complex. Their attention seems directed from the Khafre pyramid eastward to the Great Sphinx. Egyptian tanks and missile launchers have been moved into the area between these two ends along an ancient avenue that connects them. We cannot yet tell if they are planning to destroy some or all of these ancient structures or instead launch missiles from the Giza plateau.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “If their plan is to blow up these archeological wonders, it would be a tremendous loss to humanity. As we know, ISIS has already bull-dosed the ancient city of Nimrud in Iraq, destroyed Jonah’s tomb, smashed priceless Sumerian artifacts in a Mosul museum, and completely destroyed the ancient Assyrian capital of Khorsabad.”



Christina Amunpur, CNN Egypt: “That’s right, Rolf. They have also called for the destruction of Giza as their moral duty, but the same thing could occur at any one of Egypt’s ancient sites. The attention ISIS receives in the Western media from such barbaric acts only attracts more recruits while giving them the moral high ground in the eyes of fundamentalist Muslims.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Thank you Christina for that report. Back in Saudi Arabia, the government continues to battle the ISIS coalition for the northern and western occupied lands. But government forces are still refraining from bombing the cities of Mecca and Jeddah for fear of killing their own citizens; destroying their most holy mosques; and encouraging more defections. The crowd continues to grow around the holy site of Al-Masjid al-Haram where the Kaaba shrine stands. Indeed, pilgrims from all over the world are continuing to flood in by sea and air.”

\*\*\* BREAKING NEWS \*\*\*

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “We have just received new reports out of Yemen where another Al Qaeda group has pledged their allegiance to ISIS. American Intelligence is reporting a growing number of pilgrims and rebels gathering near the northwest border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia where one of the rebel Saudi mechanized divisions is waiting. It appears they could be gathering to make a run up the coast to Mecca to reinforce the forces already there. Sources say ISIS rebels in Ethiopia are also boarding boats in Assab to cross the Red Sea to join the fight for Mecca.

We turn now to our Middle East terror analyst Julie Kiyam for an update on rising tensions in other parts of the Mideast where ISIS is making rapid strides after capturing Mecca. What can you tell us, Julie?”

Julie Kiyam, CNN Terror Analyst: “Well, Rolf, there have been a rash of bombings in the past few days from North Africa all the way across to the Philippines. These seem to be timed as cover for the rebellion underway in Saudi Arabia. Latest reports indicate a sharp spike in the number of ISIS recruits. But this should not be our only concern—”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Yes, there is a larger theater of conflict to consider. Iran continues to amass troops on the Iraqi border in a possible prelude to an Iraq invasion to provide a buffer region against ISIS. At the same time, Russia continues to expand their presence in Syria and the Ukraine in an obvious effort to reconstitute the old Soviet Union. Add to this North Korea’s latest ballistic missile tests and compact nuclear capabilities—well, the world has suddenly become a much more dangerous place for Western Democracies.”

Julie Kiyam, CNN Terror Analyst: “And, don’t forget the long-standing ballistic missile agreement between Egypt and North Korea. These two countries have been collaborating on long-range missile development since the early 1990’s. While Egypt has never formally announced their capabilities, we know that North Korea has at least four classes of ballistic missiles—the Nodong, Kwangmyongsong, Musudan, and Taeopodong—any of which could have been shared with Egypt. These can deliver conventional or nuclear payloads from 1,000 to 6,000 kilometers away.

So, even if Egypt only has the 1,000-kilometer Nodong missile, ISIS might now have the ability to reach nearby targets, such as Jerusalem, just 427 kilometers from Cairo, or Baghdad at a distance of only 881 kilometers. But if they have the intermediate range 2,200-kilometer Taeopodong, they would also be able to reach Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia just 1,378 kilometers away.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “This is eye-opening information. Thank you, Julie. With ISIS now in control of the Egyptian military, they may be capable of threatening the capitals of Iraq, Israel, Jordon, and Saudi Arabia...”

Muting the news monitor from his desk at the back of the Control Center, Hakobyan glanced at the clock. It was 11:11 AM, the programmed time to begin the next step of the Sequence. The Russian psychonauts, now revived and reinserted, should be arriving any moment to intercept Dr. Savin.



## Chapter 30

### *Descending the Magdala*

*E*merging from deep meditation, the Buddha opened his eyes. No longer was he in Tusita. Above him sparkled an ocean of stars as the beautiful blue waters of Earth beckoned from below. He was in orbit around his home planet and it was a welcomed sight. Never had he been so proud to call this world his home.

From up here, even the smallest detail on the planet's surface could be seen as he zoomed in with his mind's eye. In one downward swoop, hoards of people could be seen crossing the Red Sea to reach the Arabian Peninsula. In another, armies were gathering for a great battle in Mecca and Cairo. In the Arabian Sea, military vessels under many flags had assembled in the Gulf of Aden, waiting to enter the Red Sea. Spy drones and F-22 fighters buzzed through the air as nuclear submarines crawled slowly beneath the cobalt waters. A battle was brewing that was far more ominous than anything in the Bhagavad Gita. The world had spiraled into chaos while he was gone and time was short for his return.

"From Nirvana everything is visible and nothing is hidden," Maitreya reminded himself. "Yet here I sit as helpless as a fetus ex vivo. How am I supposed to help anyone from up here? How does one return to the mundane world?"

"Sacrifice yourself, Green Man," replied a triple voice from behind.

One voice he recognized as Ixchel, Mâiri's archetype, but the others were those of Rambha and Quan Yin. This was the first time he had heard all three together.

"Gladly, but how exactly does one sacrifice oneself?"

"By becoming the Sacrificer and descending back down the ladder, of course."

"And what ladder would that be?"

"This one..."

Reaching around from behind, a pearlescent hand turned a semi-transparent dial, causing an enormous hourglass structure to fade into view. Spiraling out of the Earth to a point near the Moon, the hourglass spiraled out further still to a location near the glowing orb of Venus. From this vantage point he could see the entire elven machine.

“Up there in Luna’s orbit is the cubic lens of Valhöll,” he said, pointing to the central cube of the hourglass structure. “And out there is Indra’s Tusita Heaven where I was just meditating,” he added, pointing toward the Morning Star.

By now he had mostly figured out how the machine worked. In addition to its job as a soul factory and reality projector, the machine seemed to function as an inter-dimensional receiver and containment field for consciousness. For many thousands of years, legends of an Akashic record, with its Angelic Hierarchy and Ascended Masters, had been a central concept in virtually every religion and esoteric mystery school. What stood before him now was proof positive they were more than just stories.

The structure itself was built around what appeared to be a magnetogravitic rainbow or “rope” formation flowing out of the Sun, linking the Earth, Moon, and Venus into a triadic harmony. Within this flow were nineteen harmonic nodes that formed the primary tiers of the structure, creating many smaller tiers in between. Each tier was populated with the archetypes and disembodied spirits of different human civilizations throughout human history. As an inter-dimensional repository for thought forms and teachers, known as the Ascended Masters or Mahatmas, the elven machine offered a vast library of wisdom from every human culture that was available to anyone who wished to consult it.

During a solar eclipse, he could imagine the cube of Valhöll coinciding perfectly with the Moon, nesting inside it as the invisible Black Sun. This was the meaning of the black Kaaba shrine in Mecca. It was also the reason for Allah’s connection to the Saturnal god Odin and association of his three daughters with the Earth, Moon, and Venus. He could easily imagine now a time when Persian worshippers quaffed the

immortal Haoma to ascend to Valhöll, a place they knew as Bait Ullah or the House of Allah.

Looking down at Earth, the lower half of the hourglass appeared to align over the Middle East, a location midway between Mecca and Cairo in the Red Sea. This would put it in perfect alignment with the Tropic of Cancer, he figured—the very location where the Sun appears directly overhead in June at its culmination during the northern solstice. In this position, the bottom pyramid appeared to rise out of the water and into space exactly like the Jainist tower depiction of Mount Meru. There were many historical implications for this, he knew.

“This must be where the Biblical stories of Mount Ararat originated,” he reasoned. “Visions of the elven machine by Vainakh priests in the Ararat Valley were seen as an extension to the physical mountain of their sun god Ara. Migrating southward into Mesopotamia and Egypt, they built great ziggurats and pyramids near the base of this transcendental hourglass.”

“It was here that the very name itself must have originated,” he concluded, peering down at the water below. “From *Mer* meaning ‘sea’ or ‘semen’ and *Ru* meaning ‘red’ or ‘rut’, the name Meru was a reference to the ‘Red Sea’. If the long, narrow rut of the Red Sea were believed to be the Earth’s vulva, this hourglass structure would surely have been seen as a transcendental birth canal to and from the heavenly realm. But, there was only one way this could have been deduced.”

“Courageous priests and shaman of the past must have learned of the Sequence just as I did, risking their lives and sanity to journey to where I stand now even without aid of modern technology. Only from up here in a near Earth orbit could they have seen how the elven machine rises out of the Red Sea during the summer solstice. Was this not the same body of water the mountain god Yahweh parted for Moses? Was Mecca to the east not declared the navel of the world and its Kaaba a shrine to the cubic lens of Valhöll? Did the ancient Egyptians not call the Giza pyramids ‘mera’ and fashion them after the transcendental Vedic ‘mountain’ of Meru?”

“The Green Man is very wise!” replied the triple voice from behind, “You have indeed reached the Great Magdala of the Triple Goddess. To

the desert tribes we were al-Lat, al-Uzzá, and Manāt. To the Jebusites we were Mari-Anna-Ishtar. The sailors of Melqart knew us as Kore, Demeter, and Hecate. The pharaohs worshipped us as Hathor, Nephthys, and Isis while those to the east venerated us as the Tridevi of Parvati, Lakshmi, and Saraswati. For we are the feminine demiurge of birth, death, and rebirth, the tripartite Goddess of the Great Magdala now before you.”

“I, Quan Yin,” continued a youthful Chinese voice, “am guardian of this temple. I am Morning Star, the one known as Venus, Aphrodite, Ishtar, and Isis. As Queen of Heaven, it is I who deliver new life to Earth.”

“They worship me as Rambha,” said a darker, older Indian voice, “I am the one you know as Luna, Eve, Inanna, Diana, and Hecate. As Queen of Elphame, it is I who protects the Sequence of the afterlife and guide the dead.”

“And I, Màiri,” said the third with a familiar Scottish lilt, “the one you know as al-Lat, Cybele, Ixchel, and Parvati. As the Durga Mother of Earth, it is I who nurtures and protects the world of the living.”

“Together,” said the three voices, “we are the Magdalene, Triple Goddess of the Magdala.”

“Hear us now, Messenger!” the triple voice said urgently. “As the mundane, celestial, and etheric forces of the one Brahma, we have instructed and guided others to this high place just as we have instructed and guided you. And like you, we have anointed a multitude of teachers. But of all the Ascended Masters only you have been chosen to return as the Buddha Maitreya.”

“So, here you are, my darling Maitreya,” the lone voice of Màiri continued, “—the Way and The Light; the King of Kings; the Sacrificer and Savior. Now it is you who must return the dharma to the mundane world and you who must restore the Path of Righteousness.”

“Go now!” the triple voice commanded. “The time has come for you to enter the Eighth Gate!”

With that, a forceful shove from behind sent the Buddha careening through space toward the massive Magdala tower. Completely helpless now, the Earth rotated slowly below as he tumbled head over heels. All



he could do was trust the Magdalene to guide him back into his body. That is, of course, if he survived the fall.

Nearing the Magdala, a huge door opened before him. This he presumed was the Eighth Gate marking the end of the Sequence and beginning of his descent. Falling into the immense tower, the increasing weight of gravity began to pull him down into a spiral around the central axis. The tower was enormous inside; semi-transparent and shaped like a pyramidal telescope. At one end was the Clear Light blazing down from the lens of Valhöll, at the other the familiar blue marble of home. One could go either way on this sky elevator, he was sure, but this time it was down.

Tumbling now through tier after tier, the walls were covered with luminous eggs of every sort. It reminded him of the illustrated walls of caves, ancient pyramids, and temples—even the walls of his own God Pod where soon he would return. All the gods had gathered, it seemed, to bid him farewell as he marched off to war. If only he could be more dignified in his departure than this helter-skelter plummet.

Gaining speed through the Earth's thermosphere, the feelings of vertigo and helplessness became more intense. Knowing it was just a vision made it no easier; he was terrified. He was on a trajectory certain to burn him to a crisp.

As his velocity increased, visions of the Ascended Masters and their memories appeared around him. Deities, religious wars, and dark rituals—all were organized and cataloged in chronological order like a holographic filmstrip. Edited and mastered in real-time by his intelligence-collective, it was an impressive panorama of humanity's awakening and subsequent descent into forgetfulness. Real events and ancient myths blended together, forming a single epic lesson on the spiritual history of Earth.

Downward he fell—past the Turu ritual of the Evenki; the Amanita cult of Vahagn Vishapakagh; the Soma Yajna sacrifice of the Vedics; the Haoma rituals of Mithra; the Great Matangi Tantra of the blue lotus; the Hebrew Yom Kippur; the Dionysian and Eleusinian Mysteries of the ancient Greeks; dark Iboga ceremonies of the African shaman; and the

Peyote rites of the southern Utes. These and many more were all here, preserved in the memory theater of the Great Magdala.

“Now I know,” he realized. “The Noosphere...the transcendental mountain of the gods...it’s all true. The Rig-Veda was no mythical allegory, but an actual eyewitness description of this great Magdala and the Akashic record it holds inside. There really is a Great White Brotherhood of Ascended Masters living in the sky, waiting to help us when we need them most. Pantheons of gods and liminal creatures—all are living archetypes waiting to be remembered in the collective consciousness.”

And still the world loomed larger. The great mera temples, their pyres in the middle, were lit like lanterns around the Earth, a string of jewels draped by the gods. First Egypt, then Iraq, India, China, and America—great towers reaching to the Sun, their builders long ago following the same Path as he. Like launch pads into inner space, ancient psychonauts flew up the Great Magdala to commune with the Mahatmas, learning the Way to escape forever the world of pain and ascend into the Clear Light.

“Now I understand,” murmured the Buddha. “Now I see.”

More and more the gods swarmed in. Dark skies filled with the Devas and Olympians, sons and daughters of Osiris and Ormuzd—struggling in vast battles against the Asuras and Titans, minions of Set and Ahriman. Blood soaked bodies littered the dreamscape manifold as victor after victor stood over the defeated, their red sabers held high in vainglorious victory. To this the Great Trinities smiled down from on high, dispatching their worshipful armies like pawns in an endless video game of spherical chess.

Yet none of these gods were permanent. For this was but a theater of war to be played again and again by new actors with different names, different flags, and different gods. The only permanence was the archotyping machine of the Gandharva, a vast contrivance and complication by the Ancient One in search of an answer to the one big question: how did something come from nothing?

Passing through the ionosphere, he was now well into the stratosphere where the first resistance of the atmosphere began to buffet

him. Visions of the old gods were gone now as his mind turned its attention to the present.

Closing in on Earth, he could sense the new superheroes and their legions of fanatics. Not the superheroes of Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, mind you, but the gods of Dell, DC, and Marvel. With names like Green Hornet, Superman, and Captain America—these were the gods of the New Cinema who had all but replaced the old psychedelic gods.

Dying in comic scripture to be reborn in movies and games, the new digital Green Men had summoned new dimensions and virtual realities into the collective mind. Drinking deep of the digital Soma, the old heroes of the quantum field now seemed quaint and passé next to the shiny new ones in spandex armor. The promises of the virtual world had become but a blindfold, obscuring the real entheogenic worlds that lay within. All this, he knew, must change if the dharma was ever to be restored.

Yet even as he pondered the enormous challenges he faced ahead, something brought him back into the moment. In the distance, a group of what might be high altitude aircraft or weather balloons had appeared in the sky above him and to the right. Coming closer, he thought they might be parachutists or stunt men in winged rocket suits, but it was none of these. The objects were luminous eggs enveloped in dark clouds and they were headed in his direction. These, he realized, were his traitorous crewmates and they were coming for him.

“I see you survived your encounter with the naguals,” he gibed. “Come any closer and you may not be so lucky,” he warned, as the four Russians continued to descend toward him in cloverleaf formation.

“V’ee mean you no harm, Dr. Savin,” shouted one. “But now you must return to Sequence by order of Chief Petrovich.”

“This is not possible,” the Buddha Maitreya replied with a chuckle. “For I am headed home and there’s nothing you or the Chief can do to stop me now.”

With that, he somersaulted into a headfirst birthing position to the ground. Focusing his will now through the ushnisha of his crown, a thin blue asymptote stretched outward from the apex of his Buddhabrot field, marking his earthly insertion point like a laser guided missile. Then with

a single forceful clap, the fractal's recursive power was ignited. Like a bolt out of the blue, the Buddha was propelled straight down the axis of the Great Magdala into the center of the Mer Rouge.

In an instant, the shockwave of his impact swept thru the Earth in a series of thunderous etheric waves, sending the Russian psychonauts careening backward into the inky stratosphere. At the epicenter of the strike, he parted the Red Sea like Moses to reach the planet's inner womb. Penetrating the liquid iron core, the Messenger's arrival resonated like a ringing bell in every direction and every dimension, from the lowest infernal hell to the highest heaven. From here the Buddha would soon return.

"Reality is just an illusion after all," he laughed as the Tridevi angels dribbled him back into his body. "My real self—the self somewhere behind my mind's eye—truly is immortal."

## Chapter 31

### *The Awakening*

Waking up inside the Meditation Center, Màiri felt energized. She could now remember everything she had done in the supernal realm and it was remarkable. She recalled leading Josh to the Red Pagoda just as the Librarian said she would. She remembered her time as Ixchel and with her sisters Rambha and Quan Yin. She cherished her tantric union with Josh on the Throne and how she had sent him careening down the Magdala. But now it was time for his return.

Slinging her Melon headband to the floor as she leapt to her feet, Màiri sprinted out the meditation center and onto the spiral staircase. Running up two floors to the God Pod, she entered the pyramidion, locking the security door behind her. Stepping to the emergency cabinet, she retrieved a small vial and syringe. Drawing a clear liquid into the syringe, she stepped quickly to the rear of Josh's egg and injected the entire steroid-amphetamine cocktail into the insertion point of his IV line. Hitting the red eject button on the rear of the chamber, she stood aside to witness the miracle.

Josh awoke with a jolt in total darkness. Taking a moment to remember where he was, he released his grip on the vajra controllers and reached up to remove the VR goggles still covering his eyes. As expected, the warm glow of the nightlight confirmed he was back inside his own human body. The pull of Earth's gravity felt heavy as the big white egg rotated slowly into a vertical position. It was good to be back home.

"Director Hakobyan," an Armenian operator called out as alarms sounded. "Emergency extraction of Dr. Savin is underway. The pyramidion door is now locked from inside. V'at do you have v'ee do?"

Watching Savin regain consciousness on the Control Center monitor, Hakobyan's mind raced for a solution. By now, Savin and Winegard must know of his sabotage plan, otherwise she would not have initiated the unauthorized extraction. They could no longer be trusted.

At the same time, something felt different. He was beginning to have second thoughts about the INTERRUS mission. An ache had suddenly appeared in the pit of his stomach, reminding him of the possibility someone could get hurt from their secret mission, perhaps millions. This must be what guilt feels like, he told himself.

He had changed. Indeed, everyone in the Control Center had changed, looking dazed as they tried to figure out what had just happened. Something had hit them the moment Savin returned—something beautiful, but frightening. It was as if they had all suddenly awoken from a dream when Savin's egg started to rotate into vertical position and its hydraulic arms cracked open the front of the egg.

"Director, sir..." repeated the operator, now clearly disoriented and confused. "V'at should v'ee do...v'ith Americans?"

Still, Hakobyan did not answer. All he could do was watch in stunned silence as something amazing began to unfold in the God Pod.

There inside the open stasis chamber was the outstretched figure of a nearly nude man, hanging limp on a cross. His head, slumped to one side, was radiant in the glow of the egg's golden nightlight as the MRI ring around his cranium shone like a halo. His body, outlined by the aquamarine aura of his aerogel cushion, made him appear to float inside the stasis egg. The multicolored wires streaming from his God Helmet's 'Crown of Thorns' gave him an otherworldly aura, as the syringes in his arms seemed to keep him nailed firmly in place on the cross. Not yet fully awake, his perspiration-soaked hair hung in clumps over half open eyes.

"This cannot be!" Hakobyan said incredulously. "Savin is...is like Christ Jesus."

With the chamber now open, Mairi moved back in to swiftly unhook Josh's body. Removing the intravenous lines from his arms, she lovingly wiped clean thin streams of blood that had escaped down his wrists and into his palms. Disconnecting his crown from the inside wall,

the multi-colored wires hung down around his matted hair like a rainbow glory. Removing the biosensor pads from his head and chest, Màiri released the restraints that had secured his body during the weeklong psychedelic trip. He was a free man now, though barely able to stand.

Stepping carefully from the orphic egg, the psychonaut stumbled slightly into the center of the star cluster. Pulling his body upright over the whirlpool eye, the swirling morning light from the atrium below wrapped around him like a writhing serpent. Lifting his head slowly to face the CCTV camera, a collective gasp sounded in the Control Center as his bearded face came into view.

“How can this be same man who enters Sequence just one v’eeek ago?” Hakobyan wondered aloud, slumping back in his chair. “He looks like fucking holy man now.”

To everyone in the Control Center, Dr. Josh Savin was no longer the same person he was when he left. To them he seemed a modern-day messiah, sacrificed and resurrected for their salvation. He simply must be the Son of God incarnate, they murmured.

“I am...returned,” the man said slowly, pushing the damp hair and wires out of his face. “And with me returns the lost dharma.”

Pausing to gather his thoughts as he tried to ignore the psychedelic patterns still pulsating in the air around him. He could feel Màiri’s awakening serum beginning to take effect. Around him on the pyramidion walls danced the souls of Odin while Enki’s Fountain of Immortality swirled in the vortex below. From now on, this stone and glass pyramid would forever be his sacred temple on Earth.

“You feel it in your hearts and know what I say is true,” he said, gazing back into the CCTV camera. “Join with me, brothers and sisters, and we will walk the Path of Righteousness together into the Clear Light.”

What had he become, they all wondered. Was he the second coming of Christ or the Muhammad al-Mahdi? Was he the Mashiach prophet of Acharit Hayamim or the Buddha Maitreya of Tusita? Or was he perhaps the Saoshyant of Zoroaster or Kalki Avatar of the Hindoos? Maybe none of these, maybe all—appearing now as a new messenger sent to fix what the others could not.

“Gentlemen,” Director Hakobyan interrupted, rubbing the growing ache in his midsection. “Do not be confused by v’at Savin says. He is delusional and v’ee have mission to complete. Dispatch security to remove Americans from building at once. I v’ll inform headquarters of this...uh...unfortunate development.”

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Arva Diman, CNN Egypt: “...and they have now positioned their long-range missiles and ground-to-air missiles around the Great Sphinx and Khafre pyramid complex in apparent preparation for an attack on one or more neighboring countries. They know the allied forces won’t try to bomb them here for fear of destroying one of the world’s most treasured archeological sites.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Yes, it now appears ISIS intends to use the world’s most prized archeological site as cover to protect themselves while carrying out missile attacks on their enemies. These missiles may or may not be armed with nuclear warheads, we don’t know. But their launches may be coordinated with the latest insurgent forces coming into Saudi Arabia from Yemen. Joining me now is our reporter on the ground in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with more breaking news—”

Pacing along the rear wall of the Control Center, Hakobyan’s stomach cramps were becoming unbearable as he watched events unfold. The pangs of guilt would not subside.

“Director,” one of the operators announced, “EEG readings again indicate loss of consciousness for crew. V’as strong spike in beta v’aves and cardio immediately v’en Savin returns, but now only delta waves in all four men. D’ey remain unresponsive and should be removed again from—”



“No!” Hakobyan shouted angrily, feeling now as if he might vomit at any moment. “D’ey must stay in for now...at least until I speak to Chief.”

Christina Amunpur, CNN Riyadh: “Rolf, we are now receiving reports that new groups of ISIS jihadists are joining up with the rebel Saudi mechanized division in Khamis Mushayt, about 100 miles northwest of the western border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. They appear poised to run northward through Al Qunfudhah toward Mecca to reinforce ISIS troops already there. Their strategy seems focused on consolidating their hold on Mecca to capture the heart of Islam while simultaneously using captured missile systems in Egypt to threaten anyone who might try to stop them.”

Before Savin’s return, he would have been very happy to hear news of escalating tensions in the Mideast. But this latest turn of events had become more than Hakobyan could stomach. With a sudden unexpected heave, he spewed vomit onto the Control Center floor as his entire staff looked on aghast. Something big had changed with Savin’s return and this just proved it.

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”I see a light ahead,” Mosiah called back to the others.

Scrambling up the shaft like a pack of rats to cheese, the three naguals cleared away a pile of rocks in order to crawl thru a small opening into the bright sunlight. Stretching themselves midair above the desert floor, they were relieved to have finally escaped the cramped quarters of their dark Egyptian prison.

“The ancient Egyptians must have designed that shaft for use in the spirit world,” Merkley explained, looking back at the opening. “My guess is they held communion rites inside the temple, then left in their nagual bodies through this portal to mingle and eavesdrop on their enemies.”

Shading their eyes, they looked up at the indigo sky—dark like the edge of space, but filled with resonating filaments of light that extended into the sky like a tower.

“This is definitely the in-between spirit world of the Bardo,” Mosiah commented. “I have read much about this place, but never journeyed here.”

“Nor have I,” added Brother Gunderson. “Being slightly out of phase with the mundane as you say, such a world would offer unique opportunities to the wise nagual, would it not?”

“Just as I suspected,” Merkley interrupted, sweeping the landscape with his sharp canine vision. “We are on the Giza Plateau and just exited the north face of the Khafra pyramid. Before us lies the Great Pyramid and to our right the Great Sphinx facing east.”

“As you can see,” Mosiah added, “there are quite a few lost souls walking amongst us here. The faint ones are probably quite ancient while the brighter eggs died more recently, perhaps in the revolution. They all probably came to Giza looking for a way out of the Bardo. Do not engage them for it is written that lost souls such as these will follow you forever.”

“But the military vehicles,” Merkley pointed out, “...and the soldiers. They should not be here. The Egyptian government would never allow such a thing. Something is very wrong here.”

“That’s not the only thing that’s wrong,” Mosiah added. “Our powers seem greatly diminished. The armored vehicles are merely translucent and I can only see faint auras around the soldiers. This realm is not as transparent as I am accustomed to.”

“Look over there—black ISIS flags,” Gunderson pointed. “It appears the Prophet’s army has captured Cairo...and the entire Egyptian military with it. Could this really be happening?”

“I’m afraid so,” Mosiah replied solemnly. “Here before us is a vision of the Earth as it is, although we remain mere spectators. We can only assume the Sons of ISIS have conquered Egypt and are now poised to control the entire Mideast. As phantoms of the Bardo, let us listen in to their conversations to see if we can learn something of their plans. But

take good care, my brothers. Avoid contact at all cost and always speak softly. They may be able to sense our presence.”

Making their way carefully through a maze of Humvees, armored personnel carriers, tanks, missile launchers, and soldiers, the naguals finally reached the furthest missile launcher. Positioned just in front of the Great Sphinx, the long truck was nestled between the lion’s paws facing east with its missile raised into firing position. Indeed, the Sphinx looked as if it were holding the missile like a spear. Clearly intended as a propaganda shot for Western media, the armed Sphinx would become yet another symbol of the Sons of ISIS to help recruit the angry and disaffected youth of the world.

Stopping near the launcher’s cockpit, the trio watched quietly as a bearded young Egyptian soldier stepped through an operating checklist for the missile. Sticking their heads through the vehicle’s roof and windows, they crouched like gargoyles in the air around him. Sensing a presence, the soldier jerked his head around nervously.

“He seemed to notice us,” Gunderson whispered to Mosiah, as the soldier shook his head and returned to work.

“Yes. It is written that human and elemental spirits inside the Bardo will gather around the living like this to watch, feeding voyeuristically on their life force,” Mosiah replied. “We see them in our dreams as they clamor around us. Those who live in the mundane world are seldom truly alone.”

“Can you make out what he’s doing?” Merkley asked softly.

“He’s targeting the missile,” Gunderson replied. “See...there on his clipboard? A list of cities with latitude-longitude coordinates to be entered into the targeting system. Let’s see what it says. Riyadh, Amman, Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem—all capitals of their closest enemies. He’s targeting this one at Jerusalem. Looks like a nasty game of blackmail to me.”

“Gentlemen,” Mosiah said triumphantly, “look around. The End Times are at hand.”

Standing up to face the Sun, the black Runaturuncu stretched his bat-like wings as he shielded his eyes. Stepping to a position above the

front hood of the missile launcher, he gazed just north of the eastward direction of the Great Sphinx toward his beloved city of Jerusalem.

Turning to address his men, he assumed the stature of a warrior king. Speaking loudly to his Masonic brothers, he seemed to be addressing every soldier on the Giza battlefield.

“My brothers, we find ourselves in this place and time for a reason,” the Revelator began. “We have journeyed far together to intercept the assault of evil against the Throne of God, giving battle in His defense. But then, in our unfortunate defeat, we were delivered into this hellish desert at the heart of what surely must be the Final War. And all of it—everything we now face—is the result of foolish meddling by the rogue American and his despicable Russian comrades. But fear not, for this was prophesied and so it must be. This is the will of Heavenly Father.”

“Among us are the soldiers of ISIS, sons of the lion goddess known by many names. Yet, the men who march to war and death on her behalf know not the meaning of the three pillars inside their very own Kaaba. By their ignorance, they follow not the Great Prophet, but instead the Triple Goddess of al-Uzzá, Manāt, and al-Lat, daughters of Allah who, it is written, Muhammad had imprisoned in the Black Cube of Masjid al-Haram.”

“Even today the Prophet’s followers circumambulate the Kaaba to keep the witches imprisoned like a harem of Djinn. Little do they know the daughters have already made their escape and harnessed the power of Saturn to wrest the throne from their father. Make no mistake, my brothers...the three-headed lioness and their Golden Boy will be our master if we do not act!”

“In her haste to dispose of us, Quan Yin made one fatal mistake. She sent us into the Bardo in the midst of her very own soldiers, gathered in the shadow of her graven image. But, hear me now, oh my brothers. Our arrival here was no mistake. We were guided by the blessed Moroni, the right hand of Heavenly Father himself. His right hand is my right hand and, God willing, it will smite the enemies of righteousness. We may have lost the battle, but we are now certain to win the war!”

## Chapter 32

### *Return of the Green Man*

**S**lipping on the white linen robe Màiri had retrieved for him, Josh cinched it closed with a green sash. Unlocking the door to the observation room, she pulled open the heavy door to reveal a security detail waiting there for them.

“Sir, v’ee have orders to escort you from building,” explained one of the guards.

“Namaskar,” Josh replied quietly, pressing his hands together in the Anjali Mudra greeting. “We are blessed by your presence.”

But as the group stepped from the observation room onto the top platform of the spiral staircase, a burst of cheers and applause rose up from the atrium below. Judging from the size of the crowd, far more had gathered to welcome him home than just the employees of SBS. Local townsfolk and a busload of nearby tourists had been alerted to his return and joined the crowd. In addition, a First Channel satellite news truck out of Yerevan had just pulled up at the main entrance to cover what was already being hailed as a historic scientific achievement.

Moving to the platform railing, the pair smiled and waved to the people below, bringing another round of cheers. To those on the atrium floor, the two scientists looked like a priest and priestess from another time. Wearing matching white robes, the redheaded ethnopharmacologist from Scotland and the famous American neuroscientist seemed to float in a rainbow mist near the top of the waterfall.

With a blue hood pulled over her red hair, the woman had the appearance of a Delphic oracle some said. But the man wearing the Crown of Thorns was a dead ringer for Jesus. Holding high their arms in adoration, the crowd cheered ever louder as the domed enclosure echoed its agreement.

With the TV camera crew now moving through the crowd toward the staircase, a special report interrupted Yerevan's regularly scheduled programs.

First Channel TV: "A scientific team at the Stasis Biotech Systems laboratory in nearby Vedi is about to announce the v'orld's first verified case of inter-dimensional travel. Head scientist and psychonaut Dr. Josh Savin v'll be speaking soon."

The story was so fantastical the other Yerevan networks, Yerkir Media TV and Shant TV, had no choice but to pick up the satellite feed. Soon, every major Russian network was rebroadcasting the feed from Armenia, syndicating it into major European and Middle Eastern markets. Identifying this event as a major scientific advancement and possible threat to U.S. national security, the CNN Moscow office finally followed suit, breaking news of the inter-dimensional travel experiment around the world.

Television viewers in the United States were spellbound as they watched the barefooted figures in clerical robes descend a spiral marble staircase around a five-story waterfall inside a lush hanging garden. Talking heads described the exotic laboratory to their viewers, adding what little they knew about the mission from employee interviews.

RT Network: "...a groundbreaking journey through seven non-physical dimensions inside a pyramid-shaped room they call the God Pod."

Breathless reporters gushed at how the psychonauts, just returned from unseen worlds, seemed like angels descending a stairway from heaven.

Upstairs in the Control Center, Hakobyan had just cleaned up from his disgorging when Savin's face suddenly appeared on the news monitor. Lunging to unmute the audio, he was both shocked and terrified to see the SBS lab appear on CNN International.

Mike Chancey, CNN Moscow “Rolf, there is very little information on this company. Their website identifies them as Stasis Biotech Systems, or SBS. It says they manufacture isolation chambers and are owned by the Moscow-based investment firm INTERRUS. Located in Vedi, Armenia, the lab is in full view of the Biblical Mount Ararat, not far from the world’s oldest winery Vedi Alco and only minutes away from the famous Christian monastery Khor Virap.”

Rolf Blitzen, CNN: “Just like Sputnik in the 1950’s, it seems the Russians have again leapfrogged America in scientific exploration. This time it’s a breakthrough in inner space rather than outer space. Could a new space race be right around the corner?”

Mike Chancey, CNN Moscow: “Very likely, Rolf. The Russians have now claimed the lead in psychonautics, but we can be sure America will respond with their own inner space program before long. Instead of the moon, it looks like we may now have a race to find God himself!”

Stopping to snap a branch off a thorned Acacia Nilotica tree growing on the third garden tier, Màiri looped it into a simple laurel crown. Placing the laurel carefully over the Crown of Thorns headpiece, tiny pricks sent trickles of blood down the Messenger’s face. With this last symbol of sacrifice and sacrament, there could be little doubt to those in attendance that the Son of God himself had returned at last.

To celebrate the Messenger’s return, Màiri had prepared a batch of Listerine gelatin breath strips infused with a particularly potent blend of DMT and psilocybin developed from the Phoenician communion recipe. With eleven small dispensers, each containing 24 doses, she could easily carry 264 doses in her robe pocket.

Retrieving a gelatin strip from one of the dispensers, she placed it on Josh’s tongue with both hands like a Catholic priest bestowing the Eucharist. Removing a second strip for herself, this too she placed on her

tongue. Both compact and refreshing, this dosing method enabled the DMT to evaporate in mere seconds through the mouth and sinus to induce exactly the right state of consciousness needed for the Awakening Ceremony.

Continuing their descent around the waterfall axis, the entourage slowed to a stop near the bottom to address the congregation. The hushed crowd pressed closer with those in the back straining to hear whatever they might say. Reaching down to hand out dispensers to those nearby, Māiri whispered a prayer of communion to each.

“Take, eat this Soma, which is prepared for you. Do this in remembrance.”

As the green communion dispensers made their way through the congregation, the Delphic Oracle stepped forward to speak into the reporter’s microphone.

“So, it was written, there would be five disappearances. These are the disappearance of nirvana; the disappearance of wisdom; the disappearance of learning; the disappearance of symbol; and the disappearance of relic. The Gautama Siddhartha Buddha hath foretold of this day.”

“I will tell you, Sāriputta  
Pray lend your ears, for I will speak.  
In this auspicious aeon  
Three leaders have already lived  
Kakusandha, Konagamana  
And also the leader Kassapa.

The Buddha Supreme, now am I  
But after me Maitreya comes,  
Before this auspicious aeon  
Runs to the end of years.

This Buddha, then, Maitreya by name  
Supreme, and of all men the chief...”



“For some He is the Christ arisen or the Muhammad al-Mahdi,” Mairi explained. “For Jews he is the Promised One—the Mashiach prophet of Acharit Hayamim, whom the Buddhist knows as Maitreya of Tusita. To the ancients, he was the Saoshyant of Zoroaster and Kalki Avatar of the Hindoos. Call him what you will. But no matter what you name him or what you believe, he has returned to you this day from Order’s Summit with a message of hope for each of you. A new day has dawned. Alleluia! Allahu Akbar! Namaste!”

In response, another even louder wave of applause rippled through the crowd as the Oracle stepped back to yield the floor to the Messenger. Smiling broadly as he waited for the roar to subside, he stepped forward to the microphone. Looking directly into the camera, he could feel the Holy Spirit now entering his body. As the familiar chills ran up his spine and the humming sound filled his ears, he spoke to the people with simple, heartfelt words.

“Brothers and sisters, I stand here before you to proclaim our sacred mission a success. I bring good news!”

The crowd cheered again, shouting their encouragement.

“Tell us!”

“Please...what is your good news?”

“We love you, Jesus!”

Smiling wide, he motioned for silence before continuing.

“For I have journeyed beyond the Pearly Gate, through the ring of Asgard, into the Temple of Ixchel, and through the immortal waters of Enki to reach the Hiranyagarbha of the unborn. Rising up cleansed from the Water of Life, I slayed the Minotaur and tri-headed demon to win entrance to the Red Pagoda. As the Leontocephaline, Phanes, and First Born of Creation, I am become Mithras, I am become Krishna, and I am become Christ. Upon the Throne of Buddha did I meditate and in tantric union with the Magdalene did I ascend into the heavenly realm.”

Pausing briefly for dramatic effect, his heart was made glad with the Holy Spirit. The atrium was a living jungle now inside the House of Water. Here before the cleansing fountain of fire and immortal waters of Ara he would deliver his good news.

“So, it is that my eyes have borne witness to the great battles of Brahma and Shiva, as it has continued since the First Cause. Descending the Magdala of the Triple Goddess, I was reborn from the cross as Maitreya, the Second Coming of the Buddha. In my return I bring the lost dharma in accordance with the divine Rta. To receive this, I have but one humble request.”

“Will you follow me? Will you follow the Path of Righteousness? Will you restore the Immortal Soma as your Holy Communion?”

To this, the crowd roared its approval. The first effects of the Soma had already swept over them and the sweet taste of Amrit was theirs. Waving their arms in the air, the people were as a single organism, a human anemone as Josh now envisioned them. Between their hearts appeared sacred geometries floating up into the misty atrium like sparkling webs of dew. The plants were pleased and wove fancy patterns of their own. For today, everyone and everything in the temple had come alive, yearning for a higher consciousness.

“Follow me and together we will usher in a New Age of love and peace that will last a thousand years,” the Messenger promised, his voice now stronger and more confident than before. “No more war! No longer oppression and poverty! No borders and no laws! Each will be free to work alone or in collectives for the betterment of all brothers and sisters! Alleluia! Allahu Akbar! Namaste!”

But no sooner had he proclaimed his bold vision for humanity than some turned away. Not in rejection of his message or the gift of the dharma he had offered, but toward something else—something marvelous that had just appeared in the southern sky. For there, clearly visible through the atrium’s vertical opening, were hundreds of shiny orbs floating slowly over the laboratory’s glass dome.

Yet even as the television camera spun around to capture the mass UFO sighting, the sky itself tore open. There on the other side were dozens, even hundreds, of gods dancing in heaven to a psychedelic music. Gasping at the sight, the faithful fell back in fear and disbelief. Some crossed themselves or kneeled to pray while others bowed to the ground, performing the Salah for forgiveness and redemption.

“Could it be?” they whispered. “Is this the Rapture? Are these the End Times prophesied? Is judgment day upon us?”

Some declared it proof of Christ’s Second Coming. Others were sure it was Muhammad al-Mahdi returning to lead them to final victory. Still others knew it as Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita while Buddhists praised the return of their Lord Maitreya. Spiritualists rejoiced at the sight of fairies and elves frolicking in the mountain air, even as atheists saw only a gray alien fleet from another world. Each envisioned whatever they believed most; yet, all bore witness to the same thing.

These beings, whoever or whatever they might be, were offering the world a deeper view of reality than any church or school had ever achieved. These were the inhabitants of a place called Heaven who had come to lift Earth’s mortal beings beyond their animal senses. They too could become inter-dimensional travelers and students of the Mahatmas, if only they would accept the dharma and ascend in Krishna Consciousness.

“Behold the Egersis, the Celebration of Awakening,” Josh proclaimed. “Our gray brothers promised they would come today and so they have!”

The crowd once again embraced his words, shouting religious epitaphs and scriptural affirmations to wild applause. Stepping down from the stairs to the atrium floor, the couple and their escort cleared a path through the crowd toward the lobby doors. With the television crew leading the way, the entourage exited the glass dome into the parking lot followed closely by the joyous congregation.

Outside, the psychedelic vision in the sky was even more breathtaking. Superimposed now over the Sun, the heavenly realm looked like a full color, three-dimensional hologram suspended in the sky. Squinting upward, some squeezed the air as if grasping invisible

threads to keep their balance while swaying to and fro. The entire southern sky was full of chariots, flying temples, and strange beings as the perfume of angels filled the morning air.

By now everyone in the world was glued to the TV as social media exploded with speculation. Everyone had an opinion on the Miracle of Vedi, as it was now being called. Although the spectacular visions were not visible to viewers at home, most were convinced a divine visitation and miracle of salvation was underway in the mysterious land of Armenia. No one doubted a spiritual transformation was now sweeping the world and they too would soon receive the immortal Soma to restore the dharma.

But then, as the congregation looked on spellbound, a second vision appeared in the southern sky. An enormous semi-transparent tower located to the south directly behind Mount Ararat could be seen to extend upward to a point far into space. Upon the tower now hung their vision of heaven, projected by the mid-day Sun.

“Rejoice!” the Messenger proclaimed, pointing to the tower over the mountain of Ara. “There before you stand the Magdala of the Triple Goddess...the transcendental tower of Meru and Buddha’s blessed Sumeru. This is your path to nirvana, but only if you seek to win the Soma and accept the dharma into your heart!”

Then, as if on cue, a third miracle came upon the face of the Earth. A dark sliver had begun to slide across one side of the Sun’s solar disc. At eleven minutes after noon the Black Sun of Asgard made its grand entrance. By sheer coincidence, perhaps divine provenance, the SBS mission and Josh’s return were synchronous with the solar eclipse. Exultant with this miraculous convergence, Màiri stepped forward with arms raised to greet her lunar sister.

“Welcome Rambha,” she proclaimed, pointing to the eclipsing Moon. “My darling sister, the Gyre-Carling and Queen of Elphame, has come to resurrect the Soma Son this day. She casts her umbra across the Sun, murdering the Father to deliver the Prince. Glory be to God on high for only the Holy Ghost can raise the dead.”

Some pointed to the Messiah, a nimbus of wires around his Crown of Thorns, as proof of the Son arisen. But as the Black Sun turned to take

its leave, a tiny black dot remained behind on the corona. The jewel of Venus now adorned the Crown, the All-Seeing Eye of the Soma seed. It was she who brought forth the Soma Son in Immaculate Conception.

“And behold my sister of mercy Quan Yin,” Màiri announced, pointing now to the silhouette of Venus as she transited the solar disc in her lion-drawn chariot. “It is she, the Queen of Heaven, who gives birth this day to the new Soma Son. For it was written that the dharma could never return without the First Religion and the First Religion could never return without the Soma.”

“But now you should know that it is I, the Shakti Durga named Parvati, Gaia, and Mary, who is the fertile soil and living soul of this world,” the Oracle declared as she turned to face the congregation. Throwing back the Delphic hood, her copper hair blazed in the red solstice light.

“Together we are the Magdalene, Triple Goddess of the Magdala. We are your guides through the Hall of Baphomet to the Kaaba of Saturn; from the Temple of Ixchel to the watery Ziggurat of Enki; from the Red Pagoda of Putuoshan to the Tusita Heaven of Indra; we have returned to the Temple of Ara to assist in your ascension. For we will gladly guide you on the Path of Righteousness through the Seven Heavens to the Clear Light.”

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Having now reached the omniscient state of Krishna Consciousness, the astral realms would at last reveal their deepest secrets to the Buddha. Gazing deep into the solar vision, the inner workings of the Magdala were fully visible to him now.

Through a web of constructive wave interference, Josh could finally see how the machine created and sustained the illusion of reality. Projecting “Prajapati”, the Clear Light of consciousness, through the archetypal templates of Akasha, the worlds of illusion were made manifest. Like a library for all things past and present, the templates were catalogued, assembled, and reassembled by the self-modifying code of the machine elves for use in constructing new possibilities. Through a

process of temporal extrusion, the two-dimensional archetypes incarnated from the Clear Light into a three-dimensional framework in space and time. Yet no matter how many worlds were imagined; it could only create the worlds and creatures envisioned in the First Cause.

It was along the machine's axis of light that beings traveled to other dimensions, he now realized. Like boats in a river, currents of light flowed both ways to carry travelers wherever they wished. Here is where the Mahatmas lived, along the river of Clear Light, waiting to teach those seeking knowledge. This was the river that Josh had journeyed and the river where he would soon lead the righteous.

At the center of the hourglass inside the Moon was the lens of the Great Hall. It was here where the Clear Light from the upper tiers focused into the lower tiers. When the Moon and Sun were conjunct such that the Kaaba of Valhöll passed inside the Moon, this was the time the currents were strongest and the best time to ascend. It was better still when Venus, Luna, and Earth all three aligned with the Sun as had happened on this rarest of rare days.

But now the Sun Door was beginning to close as the Moon's shadow waned. Josh would have to act fast if they were going to finish the Egersis. The time had come for the final ascension rite of the First Religion.

"May gain of food accrue to me," he said pointing to the Sun Door atop the Magdala. "May these two, heaven and earth, be of universal form—for, Prajapati, the soul of the universe and lord of creatures, is these two, heaven and earth. May father and mother come to me—for, Prajapati is both father and mother. May Soma come to me to confer immortality—for, Prajapati is Soma," Josh proclaimed, touching his belly where the food settles.

Taking Màiri's hand in his, he raised his right hand to reveal the vajra-kīla he had carried with him since his return. He could still feel the thundernail's irresistible power coursing through his body.

"Come, let us ascend to the sky!"

"Ascend we!" cried Màiri.

"Ascend we!" the crowd roared back.

“Behold, the Rapture is upon us!” a voice in the crowd shouted. “For Christ the Messiah has come this day to show us the Way! Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah! Praise Be to the Lord our God!”

“Praise be!” cheered the congregation, raising their hands to touch the sky. “Take us with you!”

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Jude had no interest in Savin’s narcissistic psychobabble. As far as he was concerned they were all sheeple anyway—mindless zombies being brainwashed by the anti-Christ and his hideous New World Order. He had better things to do.

Waiting until the crowd had moved outside, the code slinger slipped up the atrium staircase and into the God Pod. Approaching the satellite control surface in the wall, he logged into the main server with his admin ID and password. Disabling the Control Center network link, he switched the sequencer server access to his location. Depressing the Three Finger Salute on the keyboard, his secret Underworld routine burst to life with only a password prompt.

Entering “juggler666”, a dialog box popped up containing a single button he had labeled HIGHWAY TO HELL. Taken from a song by his favorite old school metal band AC/DC, it was just the place for the Russian psychonauts and their toxic vibes. The last thing the world needed now, he told himself, was four more anti-Christes like Savin coming back to Earth.

“If there’s seven heavens above, there must be seven hells below...wouldn’t you say Hay?” he asked mockingly into one of the CCTV cameras. “That’s where they’re going, you know—straight into the howling abyss. Do not pass Go. Do not collect your fucking two hundred dollars.”

Just then he heard footsteps coming from the observation room.

“Jude, do not do this,” Director Hakobyan pleaded, stepping into the God Pod. He had stayed behind to extract the crew while everyone else went down to the atrium. Reaching the observation room, he had heard

what the code slinger was planning. No way would he let Jude do something now to hurt his crew.

“D’ey are unconscious and need medical attention,” Hakobyan pleaded. “Please...stop v’at you do now so I can extract crew. D’ey do nothing to you.”

“Sorry. No way, Hay,” the illustrated man shot back with a grin. “Biblical prophecy must be fulfilled, you know! Solomon’s temple has to be rebuilt so Jesus can return—everybody knows that. These demons need to be locked up, so down into the Well of Souls they go.”

“D’is I v’ill not let happen, Jude!” Hakobyan said, gritting his teeth as he lunged for the code slinger. He might feel guilt for what he has done, what he had made the Russians do, but these were his men and he would not let some psychopathic punk hurt them for doing their job.

But the twenty-something was too fast. Reaching under his T-shirt to the small of his back, he retrieved his Smith & Wesson Model 686 just in time to push the revolver deep into the Armenian’s fat belly and pull the trigger. As the Armenian slumped to the floor, Jude stepped back to gloat at his victim.

“Didn’t wanna do that, old man,” Jude said coldly, towering over the bleeding man. “But you just can’t stop the army of God.”

Touching the button on the screen, his favorite song suddenly blasted out over the lab’s public address system as the new serum was released. Stepping to the IV lines, he watched as the liquid began to snake its way through the clear tubes into the stasis chambers. Unlike Dr. Winegard’s other communions, this one was made with an experimental propyl-based molecular structure she had blended into a base serum of *Datura stramonium*. It was a concentrated and purified version of what the Mexican brujos called “locoweed”.

From what Winegard had told Savin, the propyl base resonated at a much lower frequency than the methyl base used in the Sequence. When coupled with the other entheotech signals set to lower frequencies, the dimensions just below the earthly realm could be accessed. At least that was his theory.

“They’re on the high-way to hell!” the programmer bellowed, pooching his lips as he strummed an imaginary air guitar. “Better watch



out Hay, old buddy. I think Almighty God is about to do a little smitin' around here. Those Russian thugs of yours won't be causin' any more trouble, that's for damn sure."

Stepping to a small spiral staircase in the northeastern corner of the room, Jude began his final ascent through the ceiling of the pyramidion. He had some unfinished business to attend to up on the observation deck.



## Chapter 33

### *The Messianic Age*

Something had surely changed—something big. The world was now headed into a major war in the Mideast; yet, with the Second Coming many found themselves happier and less concerned than ever before. The mood on social media had become downright jubilant with fewer and fewer people arguing about politics, religion, or much of anything else. TV talk shows had suddenly shifted from celebrity gossip and cheating boyfriends to yoga techniques, holistic healing, and sustainable farming. One talk show even went so far as to explore the role of psychoactive plants in modern society, suggesting that anyone with psychological problems should give them a try.

Violent primetime law and order shows were being canceled in favor of nature documentaries and the arts. With the sudden interest in spiritual matters, reality TV series had shifted to “coopetition” formats, a move network executives said were the next big thing. Even right-wing radio ideologues had softened their rhetoric in favor of “things we can all agree on.”

Religious leaders around the world wasted no time reinstating entheogenic communions in their services as part of the new ascension rites recommended by the messiah. In fact, the Catholic Pope was the first to hold an impromptu papal audience in St. Peter’s Square to pray for the new messiah and the “long overdue return to the early rites of Christianity”, including a mild entheogenic communion to help worshippers achieve “a more prayerful state of mind.” The World Jewish Congress also praised the return of certain Hebrew temple rites by sanctioning a variety of teacher plants for use with the Passover meal of unleavened bread, bitter herbs, and wine. More proclamations followed from Protestant, Islamic, and eastern religious leaders—all free now to

use the Persian Haoma and Vedic Soma communions that had been forbidden for fifteen hundred years.

With the new spiritual leader's return, the Iranian President had called an emergency session of Parliament where the Supreme Leader told of his vision of the Great Prophet's return. Counter to prophecy, no final war would be needed. In his vision the Great Prophet had already fought and defeated the rebel jinni Shaytan at the foot of Allah's throne.

Claiming his vision was a message from Allah himself, he asked the Iranian Parliament to suspend their support for Hezbollah and other terror groups and reach out to Israel to establish peace in the Palestinian Territories. With the return of the Great Prophet, Iran no longer needed to fight the West. For it was foretold in the Holy Quran that the Muhammad al-Mahdi (blessed be his name) would convert everyone to Islam when he returned.

In response to this turn of events, Israel's Prime Minister announced his support for a two-state solution with Palestine. Such an announcement by Iran to discontinue support for terrorism, he believed, could only mean the present age of Olam Hazeh was coming to a close and the new age of Olam Hahbah had begun. Surely, Moshia Yahu had blessed the Israelites as the victors in the Acharit Hayamim without need for further violence.

Yet, even as the American President discussed these astonishing developments in a teleconference with the Israeli Prime Minister, aides rushed into the Oval Office to switch on the TV. With the appearance of the messianic figure in Armenia, hundreds of eyewitnesses were now reporting the appearance of UFOs and strange beings in the sky over Mount Ararat. The Prime Minister explained to the President that his clerical advisors believed this man to be Joshua, the prophesied messiah-king, who had returned to defeat the enemies of Israel.

Already millions of people around the world had taken to the streets in celebration of the messiah's return. Some went home to watch the worldwide celebrations with their families while others flocked to their churches, temples, mosques, and synagogues where 24/7 prayer vigils were being held in preparation for the End Times. Giddy news anchors interviewed world leaders and prominent religious figures about the new

messiah, barely able to keep their composure in the shadow of what was arguably the most important news story in over a thousand years.

New Agers took picnics into the countryside to commune with nature while atheists wished only to spend time with friends and family. If the world did not end, life would be simpler and more communal, they all agreed. Everyone was looking forward to planting vegetable gardens in their front yards and trading for goods at their local barter exchange.

All the while, back in Moscow, bewildered INTERRUS executives had also been watching the miraculous events unfold. With no more than half their client's oil stocks sold, no one seemed at all worried. Their obsession with money had simply vanished with the return of Dr. Savin. As far as they were concerned the project was over and everyone should just go home to be with family. Everyone that is except the four Russian psychonauts still strapped into their incubation chambers. In the excitement of what their project had discovered, Chief Petrovich had completely forgotten to instruct Director Hakobyan to extract the remaining crew.

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Shortly after the messiah's appearance in Vedi, thousands of Jews had begun to gather at the Wailing Wall outside the Al-Haram ash-Sharīf mosque in Jerusalem. Many from the city's Muslim communities were also gathering inside the walls of the Noble Sanctuary grounds, either inside the mosque itself or around the Dome of the Rock built over the sacred Foundation Stone. Though they were of different faiths, everyone was hoping for a sign of some kind at this shared holy site.

Those descended from Noah's son Shem believed the Foundation Stone on the Temple Mount was the center of the world, the place where Solomon's Temple once stood and holy sacrifices to God were made. Those descended from Abraham's son Ishmael revered it as the location where Muhammad flew on his noble steed Al-Buraq, ascending from this point into the Seven Heavens. Either way, the Temple Mount had been considered the spiritual junction between Heaven and Earth since even

before the Jebusites. All agreed it was the one place where God would confirm the Second Coming.

To seek a sign from God, an impromptu and unprecedented council of clerics had been summoned to the Dome of the Rock to pray and sacrifice together before the ancient Foundation Stone. Leaders from each of the Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity—would perform their most ancient rites to confirm the Messiah of Vedi and the arrival of the End Times prophecy.

The invocation would be led by the three leading clerics in Jerusalem—Muhammad Ahmad Hussein, Imam of the nearby Al-Aqsa Mosque; Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, famous for his recent claim that the Messiah's return was imminent; and Bishop William Shomali, the Catholic Pope's representative in Jerusalem. To appease Allah, Imam Hussein would perform the long-forbidden Al Ta'rif sacrifice of a lamb on the Rock.

Carrying the lamb to the Foundation Stone were two young men in white robes. Holding the struggling animal on the Foundation Stone with its head pulled back, the Imam used an ornate silver Janbiya to slit the innocent lamb's throat. As the lamb's blood spilled out onto the ancient altar where Muhammad had once ascended, Imam Hussein spoke these holy words.

“O Allah, verily You have given us a son. You alone know what You have given and what has been granted, and (You alone know everything about) whatever You create. So, accept (our offering offered) in accordance with Your command and the traditions of Your prophet and messenger (blessings of Allah be on him and on his children), and keep away the accursed Shaytan from us. This blood is pouring out for Your sake only; there is no partner to share (it) with You, O my Allah, praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. O my Allah, this meat (instead of) his meat, this blood (instead of) his blood, these bones (instead of) his bones, these hair (instead of) his hair, this skin (instead of) his skin (are offered to You), so

O my Allah, accept this (sacrifice) instead of the sacrifice of the One born again today.”

With the conclusion of the sacrifice, Rabbi Kanievsky stepped forward as the designated Kohein with his own offering—a Jewish rite known as the ‘qorbanot minchah’. It began with the appearance of a large pan filled with burning coals, the ‘mahtah’, which was delivered by solemn procession and placed next to the lamb’s lifeless body on the Foundation Stone. Onto the coals were poured handfuls of incense from a ceremonial kah, creating plumes of sweet-smelling smoke that floated upward into the beautiful domed room. As consecration, the Kohein recited a verse from Exodus familiar to Christians and Jews alike.

“Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Take the following fine spices: 500 shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much of fragrant cinnamon, 250 shekels of kaneh-bosm, 500 shekels of cassia--all according to the sanctuary shekel--and a hind of olive oil. Make these into a sacred anointing oil’.”

With this said, the Kohein dipped his middle finger into another kah, applying the oily substance to various locations of his body. Finishing the ritual with a touch of oil to the center of his forehead, he poured the remainder onto the burning incense. From this arose billows of new smoke, filling the domed room with a sheet of white haze that caught the Sun’s purifying light. Breathing deep the aromatic smoke, soon everyone could feel the presence of the Lord.

Retrieving next several loaves of shewbread from a basket, the Kohein arranged them alongside the mahtah in a neat stack. Taking a loaf for himself and tearing off a large piece to eat, the pungent taste of cannabis filled his mouth. It was surely the heavenly scent of Asherah, he told himself—the hempen girlfriend of Yaw who might show him the Way. For here was her column of smoke, the Holy Ghost and Ash Goddess, who would soon take him to commune with the Adonai.

Prepared now for the sacred rite of atonement, the Kohein dipped a length of twine in the lamb’s blood, turning it bright red. This he held

high for all to see—the test for Yahweh’s approval. Attended by his entourage, the High Priest proceeded to the southeastern corner of the large flat boulder inside the domed room. There a ritual chain of gold was tied around his waist to be held at length by his attendees for his retrieval should he pull it in mortal fear.

Holding the bloody twine before him, the Kohein descended the steps to a small cave named the Well of Souls under the old rock altar. Here he would pray and partake of the sacred manna while waiting patiently for God to reveal himself. Perhaps this time, he hoped, Yaw would show his approval for the new Messiah by wiping the lamb’s blood clean from the string.

Partaking of the mushroom communion as he studied the old Torah scroll, it was not long before he could feel its glorious effect. Removing two seer crystals from inside his hoshen breastplate, a red one and a green one, he held them to his eyes like spectacles. Peering through the crystals, his perception was split to reveal a third world inside the schism. With this came the famous wailing sounds, but something was different this time.

The Kohein knew well the eerie sounds in this underground chamber. He had been here several times before. Some believed these were the voices of tortured souls, crying out for help from the bowels of Hades. But he had always thought it nothing more than an acoustical illusion, like the ocean sounds of a seashell. This time, however, he could hear voices speaking a human tongue...a Slavic language, it seemed.

As his vision opened up, he could now see into this world—a dry and dusty landscape colored entirely in shades of yellow ochre. Before him stood four luminous eggs with humanoid figures inside, each surrounded by a dark cloud. Smelling of putrid rotting flesh, they must be demons, he figured, or elemental spirits of some evil persuasion.

“Who are you, tortured souls?” the Kohein asked, quivering from the terrifying sight. “And why are you in the domain of the Fallen? What terrible thing did you do?”

“...follow orders to capture Savin...but escaped...v’oke up here, replied one of the figures with a Russian accent.



“Please help...” said another. “...call Mr. Petro...at INTER...Moscow and ask...us from Sequen...”

But then he could hear no more. The vision had collapsed back into the yellow schism between red and green. This was not what he was expecting or the divine confirmation he needed. Perhaps God was testing him with these demons of the infernal realm.

Mulling over what to do, the Kohein finally placed the seer stones back into his hoshen and reached into another pocket. Removing a length of clean twine, he carefully stuffed the bloodied string back into the same pocket. Bowing his head, he prayed for forgiveness.

“Oh Adonai, the Fallen Ones tried to deceive me, but never will Abaddon fool me. For you have sent the Melech HaMoshiach to lead us back to your Way. Today your Chosen People will follow him in rebuilding your Holy House on the Temple Mount so that we might gather in the exiles and worship you again in holy sacrifice.

Tugging on the golden chain, the attending rabbis quickly descended to the old man’s rescue. Emerging with great pain from the Well of Souls, the Kohein jubilantly held the twine above his head. It was a sign, they all whispered. The blood of the lamb had been cleansed and God had given his approval of the new messiah.

Word of the miracle traveled quickly from the Noble Sanctuary. It was said the highest priests of Abraham had gathered at the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to receive a sign and God had answered. No one doubted now the Second Coming of the blessed one who would deliver the world a new age of peace and prosperity.



## Chapter 34

### *Ringling the Harmika*

*U*nlocking the latch on the heavy wooden door above, he shoved it open with a thud. Emerging slowly through the opening, the code slinger glanced around to be sure he was alone before stepping out onto the observation deck atop the laboratory's dome.

The observation deck had been designed like the open harmika of a classic Vedic stupa. It was a square room open on the sides between four pillared corners. In place of a central bell was a life-size golden statue of the Buddha in meditation. Facing south toward Ararat, it had been Mäiri's idea to bless the laboratory and its mission of peace into the spiritual realm with this Buddhist symbol of enlightenment.

"You are one evil fucking idol," Jude complained to the statue. "God doesn't take kindly to pagan idol worship."

Circling to the rear of the statue, he opened a small cabinet door used to hold incense, relics, and other holy offerings to the Buddha. But these were not the items he was after. Instead, he removed an American .300 Win Mag sniper rifle he had placed there the night before. Like the model his hero Chris Kyle had once used, it had a McMillan stock with a lightweight saddle-style adjustable cheek-piece. Above the barrel was a SEAL issue Nightforce NXS 8-32x56 scope. As far as long-range rifles were concerned this was as good as it gets.

"This baby can shave the whiskers off a cat a mile away," he mumbled, as he grabbed a box of ammo from the same cabinet. "This is gonna be easier than hookin' koi in a bucket."

Kneeling into a crouch, he crawled to the south-facing opening that looked out on Mount Ararat. Peering over the ledge, the scene in the parking lot below was total pandemonium.

"Holy Mary mother of God! Would you look at that! Savin and his drug pusher girlfriend are having a goddamn field day down there! He's

got ‘em on their knees. I can’t wait to see their expressions when my little prayer of thankfulness reaches his holy temple,” he chuckled as he leveled the rifle’s Nightforce crosshairs onto the Messiah’s smiling face.

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Never had so many seen such a glorious sight. The sky was radiant with the dull glow of a partially eclipsed Sun. It looked as though the facade of Earth’s star had been melted away to reveal a purer, deeper sun hidden just behind it. The Sun Door was still ajar and the contents of heaven spilt into the sky for all to see.

Deities of every faith floated high in the shining glory, now taking their places in the many tiers of the elven Magdala. The angelic choir had become louder and the gods’ dance more urgent as the big climax of the solar eclipse approached. For the people gathered in the SBS parking lot, the sky had devolved into a mesmerizing mandala of swirling geometries folding in upon themselves in an endless fractal implosion into the Sun.

“The machine elves are just showing off now,” Josh chuckled with glee, as the Magdala twirled ever faster.

“Allah Akbar!” a voice in the crowd cried out. “O Allah, how perfect You are and praise be to You. Blessed is Your name, and exalted is Your majesty. There is no god but You.”

The intense beauty of the moment was simply overwhelming. So much so, in fact, nobody seemed to notice when the Super Shock Tip Performance round forced its way through the messiah’s skull. The echo of the rifle fire only gave crescendo to the heavenly music from above as the man in the white robe fell to his knees. Bowing deeply before the gods, he slumped forward, a bright red puddle growing on the pavement beneath him.

First one scream then another as the realization of what had just happened rippled through the crowd. Opening her eyes from the rapture, Màiri rushed to the side of her darling Maitreya, turning him over on the hard concrete. Cupping his broken head in her hand, she spoke to him while he might still hear her voice.

“I am here with you now Maitreya and always will be,” she whispered with eyes closed. “Be a lamp unto yourself, be a refuge to yourself. Take yourself to no external refuge. There you will find Tusita. Rest there, my Love, until I join you and we will again rise as One to the Throne.”

Without the messiah to lead his flock into the Clear Light, the heavenly vision was gone. The transit had passed and it was just another sunny day in southern Armenia.

Rising slowly to her feet, Màiri turned toward the crowd to see if she could spot the shooter. The congregation looked dazed, not yet fully awakened from their bliss into this bloody nightmare of reality. Some sobbed alone on the ground while others hugged, shielding their eyes from the gruesome sight. A few simply shook their heads and stumbled out into the parking lot in search of their car.

The security guards, who had jumped into a defensive posture around the two with guns drawn, did nothing to stop the television camera crew from rushing in to capture the tragic moment for viewers at home.

“Do you have anything you want to say to the world...in light of this, uh, terrible tragedy?” the reporter asked sheepishly, stuffing the microphone into Màiri’s face.

Reeling from the camera’s intrusion into the undulating cloud of patterns and colors still suspended in the air around her, she could only gaze up at the beautiful glass dome that had become the symbol for their life’s work. It had been the perfect place for the return of psychonautic exploration and the birth of a new spiritual science. Why would anyone want to stop this by assassinating the Messenger?

But as she gazed up at the dome, it was there where she found her answer. She saw a man...a man she recognized. And he was holding a rifle. Her heart sank.

She had always known Jude was paranoid and a little unstable, but never could she have imagined him doing something like this. As the one who had written the Sequence to bring the return of dharma, why in the world would he want things to end this way? None of it made any sense.

“I got the bastard!” Jude trumpeted, as he leaned the rifle against the ledge. “The good Dr. Savin won’t be doing much savin’ today,” he crowed. “But then again, neither will I.”

Reaching around once again for his pistol, he pushed the barrel hard against the roof of his mouth and pulled the trigger. A second shot rang out from the harmika like the death knell of a church belfry, sending the largest chunk of his bloodied gray matter flying into the offering dish cradled in the Buddha’s hands.

Slumping over the low wall of the open harmika, the gunslinger tumbled out onto the glass dome. Then, as if in slow motion, his limp body slid downward over the curved glass surface in a smear of blood until becoming airborne. Hitting the pavement hard, he dribbled to a stop like a deflated basketball.

Other than a few muted gasps, the parking lot was now silent as the TV world looked on in horror. The messiah’s vision and his gift of dharma had been shattered in an instant by a single bullet, shocking the whole world to its core.

How was it possible, Mairi wondered, that wild conspiracy theories and apocalyptic religions could hijack the Path of Righteousness? What was she supposed to do now? Surely the Buddha’s vision of a world at peace should not end with one senseless act of terror by a lone wolf.

## Chapter 35

### The Conjuring

“My brothers,” Mosiah said softly to the two naguals crouching in the air around the young soldier, “we must find a way to retarget this missile.”

“Retargeted where, Revelator?” Merkley asked softly.

“We must move the Jerusalem coordinates for the Knesset three kilometers eastward to 31.7780 degrees north; 35.2354 degrees east,” Mosiah replied.

“No...you can’t do that!” Gunderson objected, trying to keep his voice down. “I recognize those coordinates. You want to blow up the Dome of the Rock? Revelator, this is madness! You will vaporize the Foundation Stone!”

“Brother G, there is only one way to fix the damage Savin has caused and that is to rebuild the Temple of Solomon on Mount Zion. We must do this to appease Heavenly Father and summon the return of our true Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to usher in the End Times. The Foundation Stone is just a rock and of no real consequence—another stone altar can always be found for the Temple. This is our only chance to destroy the Islamic Dome to free Zion and its people so they can once again worship as Heavenly Father has commanded. THIS is the reason we were sent here. Don’t you see?” the black jaguar implored, raising his wings and hands together in a grand gesture of exultation.

“But how,” Merkley interjected, leaning back on his haunches, “can we cause this soldier to destroy his own holy temple?”

“Surely you have read the *Ars Goetia*?” Mosiah replied with a smile. “We shall use Solomon’s own magickal circle to capture the soldier’s soul and compel him to do our bidding. We begin by fashioning a nine-foot circle around him, then mark upon its circumference the Divine Name.”

“But how are we to affix the name when we lack contact with the physical world,” Gunderson asked.

“Contact is not necessary. We need only speak it and it will be so,” Mosiah replied. “Let us arrange ourselves in a triangle and call on the angel Moroni to assist us.”

Positioning themselves around the truck cab where the soldier was working, the three naguals sat equally spaced and facing east. With this alchemical sigil of Anaphaxeton, the triumvirate had become the Temple of the Inner Light and All-seeing Eye. From here, Mosiah would conjure the Tetragrammaton.

“Now, concentrate and project your body double into the spaces between us. TE-TRA-GRAM-MA-TON, now say it with me. TE-TRA-GRAM-MA-TON, the very name of God manifest, my brothers! Behold as we become the Hexagram of Solomon and our soldier the central Tau!”

And, so it was their nagual doubles appeared beside them, hands grasped in the Master Mason handshake. Holding their concentration, a bubble began to form over and around the soldier, enclosing him within their hex. With the container in place, Mosiah turned the key to lock the soldier inside.

“Behold! My twins merge to manifest the Seal of the Spirit and Pentacle Key of Solomon!”

Straining to control the alchemical process, Mosiah merged his dual persona into a single overlapping being. In this way, the nagual hexagram collapsed into a pentacle of luminiferous spiritual energy. And with this transformation, a ball of intense blue light appeared in the center of the star geometry above the soldier’s head. Speaking slowly in a double voice, the Revelator recited the invocation.

“I DO invoke and conjure thee, O Spirit Moroni; and being with power armed from the SUPREME MAJESTY, I do strongly command thee, by BERALANENSIS, BALDACHIENSIS, PAUMACHIA, and APOLOGIAE SEDES; by the most Powerful Princes, Genii, Liachidee, and Ministers of the Tartarean Abode; and by the Chief Prince of



the Seat of Apologia in the Ninth Legion, I do invoke thee, and by invoking conjure thee. And being armed with power from the SUPREME MAJESTY, I do strongly command thee, by Him Who spake and it was done, and unto whom all creatures be obedient. Also I, being made after the image of GOD, endued with power from GOD and created according unto His will, do exorcise thee by that most mighty and powerful name of GOD, EL, strong and wonderful; O thou Spirit Moroni. And I command thee and Him who spake the Word and His FIAT was accomplished, and by all the names of God. Also by the names ADONAI, EL, ELOHIM, ELOHI, EHYEH, ASHER EHYEH, ZABAOTH, ELION, IAH, TETRAGRAMMATON, SHADDAI, LORD GOD MOST HIGH, I do exorcise thee and do powerfully command thee, O thou Spirit Moroni, that thou dost forthwith appear unto me here before this Circle in a fair human shape, without any deformity or tortuosity. And by this ineffable name, TETRAGRAMMATON IEHOVAH, do I command thee, at the which being heard the elements are overthrown, the air is shaken, the sea runneth back, the fire is quenched, the earth trembleth, and all the hosts of the celestials, terrestrials, and infernals, do tremble together, and are troubled and confounded. Wherefore come thou, O Spirit Moroni, forthwith, and without delay, from any or all parts of the world wherever thou mayest be, and make rational answers unto all things that I shall demand of thee. Come thou peaceably, visibly, and affably, now, and without delay, manifesting that which I shall desire. For thou art conjured by the name of the LIVING and TRUE GOD, HELIOREN, wherefore fulfill thou my commands, and persist thou therein unto the end, and according unto mine interest, visibly and affably...”

As if on cue, the light within the Seal did burst, sending a wave of light across the Giza Plateau, which passed even through the Sons of ISIS unnoticed. From this the Angel Moroni did appear as commanded

within the Seal of the Spirit, standing splendiferous in his raiment of white light. Mosiah addressed him thus.

“BEHOLD thy confusion if thou refusest to be obedient! Behold the Pentacle of Solomon, which I have brought here before thy presence! Behold the person of the exorcist in the midst of the exorcism; him who is armed by GOD and without fear; him who potently invocateth thee and calleth thee forth unto appearance; even him, thy master, who is called OCTINIMOS. Wherefore make rational answer unto my demands, and prepare to be obedient unto thy master in the name of the Lord:

BATHAL OR VATHAT RUSHING UPON ABRAC!

ABEOR COMING UPON ABERER!”

Floating now within the nagual’s binding Key the angel replied.

“Now I, Moroni, stands before you, Octinimos,” he said quietly. “What doest thou bid of me?”

Citing the prescribed recital from the Goetia of the Clavicula Salomonis Regis, Mosiah reminded the angel of his bond within the Seal.

“WELCOME Spirit Moroni, O most noble angel! I say thou art welcome unto me, because I have called thee through Him who has created Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, and all that is in them contained, and because also thou hast obeyed. By that same power by the which I have called thee forth, I bind thee, that thou remain affably and visibly here before this Circle and within this pentacle so constant and so long as I shall have occasion for thy presence; and not to depart without my license until thou hast duly and faithfully performed my will without any falsity.”

Turning to face the angel, Mosiah stretched his hand forth in a gesture of command, proclaiming:

“BY THE PENTACLE OF SOLOMON HAVE I CALLED THEE! I bid thee to guide this Thundernail so that it may pierce the Moslim Dome on Har Habayit, tearing it asunder. Here the third temple shall be built from its ashes. Only then might the Earth welcome our Savior’s Second Coming. For Judah must return, Jerusalem’s temple must be rebuilt, and the water once again allowed to flow from under the temple to heal the waters of the Dead Sea!”

Looking first to the east, then down at the soldier beneath his feet, the Angel Moroni replied.

“It was I, by the power of the Holy Ghost, who revealed to your people the Golden Plates and made visible the means to their understanding. And it was I who brought ye to the Guardian herself so that ye might be received into this infernal realm near the Great Sphinx. And now, it will be I, Moroni, who shall deliver the Thundernail to the followers of the Prophet where the heavens meet the earth and the House of our Heavenly Father might once again be restored on Earth.

I bid unto all, farewell. I go now to deliver your message and so rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.”

With that, the Guardian Angel of the Americas did descend upon the hapless soldier, unaware of the terrible spell cast thus upon him by the three Magi. Like a genie unto its bottle, the naguals watched transfixed as the spirit’s light body drilled its way into the poor man’s crown, taking residence amongst his very thoughts. For it would be here,

nearest to the Throne of God, where the final message could be delivered.

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“Begin the extraction procedure,” one of the Masons ordered, turning away from the news coverage from Armenia. “Savin is out of Sequence and there’s no reason for our brothers to remain in flight any longer.”

The dim lighting and warm humid air in the underground cavern provided a peaceful setting for the traveler’s awakening. They had been in the Celestial Kingdom now for most of a week, requiring a mild stimulant to revive them. Removing the monitoring equipment and intravenous lines, the ground crew helped the men to their feet. Steadying themselves against the cave wall, the weary travelers stepped out of the tubs. Removing their helmets, their growth of beard made them look like time travelers.

“How long...have we been in Sequence?” Gunderson muttered, squinting his eyes in an attempt to focus on something, anything.

“Four days, sir,” one replied. “In addition to the first three. We have been worried about you, but resolute in our mission.”

“Thank you—all of you—for your faithful service, my brothers,” smiled Mosiah. “Tell me: has there been any announcement of missile fire from the Giza Plateau?”

“Yes, Revelator. The BBC just reported several missiles were fired from the area around the Egyptian pyramids.”

“And where did they strike?”

“They destroyed government buildings with mass casualties in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iraq. However, one missile went off course and hit the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, completely destroying it and killing an interfaith group of clerics gathered there. Analysts believe this was a targeting error since ISIS would have no reason to destroy their own holy site.”

“Excellent!” Mosiah replied joyously as he hugged brothers Gunderson and Merkley in celebration. “Our mission was a success!”

Removing their suits and slipping on purple robes, the three men approached the Golden Boy as the other Masons gathered around them. Holding up his arms in thanks to his guardian angel, the Revelator turned to address the men.

“Gentlemen, we have turned the Sphinx against itself, defeating the Triple Goddess in her own lair. With the help of our blessed angel Moroni and her own unwitting warriors, Mount Zion has been liberated for the Temple’s restoration.”

Mosiah retrieved two chalices from the altar, handing one to Gunderson and the other to Merkley. Filled with his favorite hangover cure of Ephedra, charcoal, and Vitamin B6 in a Red Bull base, he lifted the third chalice to toast his nagual brothers. Gulping down the bitter red potion, Mosiah continued.

“But now, what of our adversary Savin and his Russian thugs?”

“Revelator, he was on TV at the SBS laboratory. Many claimed to have visions of the heavenly realm there. But then, just as he was performing the Vajapeya rite, he was shot dead on live TV by an unidentified assassin.”

“So, it is written, so it shall be. By the hand of Almighty God, justice will be done!” Mosiah exclaimed joyously, turning back to smirk at the Golden Boy, “Such is the penalty for threatening the Throne,” he said raising his hands. “For it has been written by Heavenly Father himself that only Jesus Christ may dispense final judgment. Only the one true Son of God may reveal the Path of Righteousness into our Heavenly Father’s kingdom.”



## Chapter 36

### *A Prayer of Survival*

*T*wo old friends sat anxiously at their consoles. It had been four years since they answered the “First Calling”, enlisting together in the Israeli Army of Defense. They were only eighteen at the time and had no idea what they were getting themselves into. Yet somehow the two friends had managed to stick together and become coworkers in a very exclusive club. In fact, it was precisely because of their childhood relationship that they were assigned together to man one of Israel’s new top-secret Arrow 3 underground nuclear missile silos near the town of Tal Shahar.

Glancing up at the photo of his family on the console, Ariel’s heart skipped a beat. He was doing this for them, after all. Somebody had to protect them from these ISIS dogs. But still, the idea of nuking the Giza Plateau was his worst nightmare.

He had always been partial to lions. His name actually meant “lion of God”, so his family had taken to giving him lion statues and artifacts as childhood gifts. He had quite a collection now, including several different sphinx figurines that he proudly displayed in an antique glass pharmaceutical cabinet back home. The last thing he wanted to do was become the one responsible for destroying the Great Sphinx.

“You know, Uri, I never thought I’d have to do something like this,” the young man said. “How can we ever forgive ourselves?”

“Look...you’re overthinking it, habub. Just follow your orders and you’ll be fine. This is what you’re trained to do,” Uri snapped, clearly irritated by his buddy’s sentimentality.

Ariel was the rebellious one—always questioning the decisions of his superiors. He always needed convincing to do the right thing and it was becoming tiresome. For Uri, there was never any question about

what he should do. If he were told to destroy the pyramids—or all of Egypt for that matter—then he would do it without a second thought.

“Anyway, habub, think about how many ben-zonna Arabs we get to take out at one time,” Uri added cheerfully.

Having already received the trajectory and launch code, a final confirmation was all they needed to launch their Jericho missile into the heart of the Giza Plateau.

“I have authentication code,” Ariel announced, following the protocol they had practiced many times before.

Moving to the safe located in a panel between them, the two men inserted their keys as Uri began to count.

“On my mark: Three, two, one, turn,” he said coldly.

The two keys clanked into place, unlocking the door to the safe.

Removing the Sealed Authenticator envelope, Uri extracted the card containing the pre-deployed Gold Code. Reciting the number aloud, Ariel compared it to the Emergency Action Message on his screen.

“EAM code follows:

Yankee...Alpha...Hotel...Whiskey...Echo...Hotel.

End sequence.”

“Launch code confirmed,” Ariel replied. “We have authorization to launch.”

Grasping the launch keys on their lanyards, the two men inserted them together into the console.

“Turn on my mark: Three, two, one, turn.” Uri commanded. The two keys clanked into place simultaneously.

“Launch enabled,” Ariel replied with a frown, pausing to observe the results.

Instantly, the Launch Enabled indicator and Battery Activated indicator both turned red, confirming the batteries in the missile were now charging. With 28 seconds for the battery to charge, the two men had nothing else to do but stare tensely at the second hand on the wall clock. The musty air was thick with dread. Only their shallow breathing



broke the ambient drone of the electronic equipment in the claustrophobic control room of their underground silo.

“Silo door opening,” Ariel announced reluctantly as the alarm rang, indicating the radar beam that monitored the door had been breached.

“Critical check of missile system complete,” Uri replied blankly. “All systems armed and good to go.”

“Main system start,” Ariel confirmed, his head now hanging in despair.

With that, the roar of the missile’s rocket engine shook the silo. The Fire Diesel Area and Fire Oxi Pump Room lights blinked red as the Fire in Engine and Fire Launch Duct lights flashed in agreement. The two old friends gazed into one another’s eyes as the missile’s hold-down bolts blew to release the monstrous weapon into the sky. The entire process had taken only 58 seconds, but it felt like an eternity.

“Missile has cleared the silo,” Uri announced quietly as the rocket thrust faded into the distance. “Mission complete,” he mumbled.

A wave of relief passed over the two old friends as they sank backward into their chairs. There was nothing more for them to do. Their job was done. Staring down at the floor, it was Uri who finally spoke.

“Well done, habub,” he said softly. “You did exactly what you were supposed to do and there’s nothing to be ashamed of. You should be proud to have revenged your countrymen from the vicious attack on our holy shrine.”

“Should I?” Ariel asked sarcastically, tears welling up in his eyes.

“Yes. Absolutely. It is in Yahu’s hands now. Pray with me, my brother.”

Reaching over to place his hands on his friend’s shoulder, Uri bowed his head to offer the Jewish prayer of survival.

“...Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melek ha'olam, ha'gomeyl lahayavim tovot, sheg'malani kol tov.”

“...blessed are You, LORD, our God, King of the Universe, Who bestows good things on the unworthy, and has bestowed on me every goodness.”



## Chapter 37

### The Lamentation

The cameraman had positioned himself now squarely in front of Dr. Winegard in the visitor's parking lot. Starting with a close-in shot of the laboratory's observation deck, he panned down past the dead shooter in front of the entrance then to Dr. Savin's lifeless body. From there, he continued up Dr. Winegard's bloodied white robe where the camera came to rest with a tight shot of the scientist's face. With everyone in the world now glued to the television, the reporter from First Channel repeated the question everyone was thinking but would never have the courage to ask at a moment like this.

"Dr. Winegard, perhaps you did not hear me," the reporter repeated. "I...we are all very sorry for your loss, of course. But what are you going to do now and what...what should we do now that Dr. Savin, the self-proclaimed messiah, has been killed?"

The camera hung on the Scottish scientist's green eyes. Tears streamed down her face as she struggled to collect her thoughts in the midst of such horror. Her pasty white face, red hair, and grieving eyes made her appear ordinary and vulnerable on camera. To many she was the essence of the grieving Magdalene, a broken woman weeping over the dead body of her lover and personal savior.

"I can't talk right now," Màiri whispered, stooping back down to lift his crippled body into her lap. Cradling his bloodied head against her breast, she plunged herself into Transcendental Consciousness in search of her soul mate.

Traveling into the Clear Light, she found him. He was alive and well meditating inside the Buddhabrot egg, framed by rich brocade. His hands, cupped in his lap, held the bright light of his mind's eye. His heart, emblazoned with the temple swastika, proved he was in his

happiest place. Opening his eyes, the Buddha smiled serenely as he spoke to her.

“Fear not, my love! For when you come, I will be waiting for you. Forever we will live in union as the Hermaphroditus. So, return now without worry or grief to deliver our good news to the world. My love always will be with you.”

Backing away, Màiri opened her eyes to find herself once again kneeling on the hard pavement, cradling the physical remains of the man she had loved in so many lifetimes.

“But surely, Dr. Winegard, you must have something to say to the viewers,” the reporter urged, squatting down with the microphone, “...in the face of rising gun violence and your efforts to bring back...what did Dr. Savin call it...the dharma?”

Looking up at the camera, she had found her clarity.

“Yes...I do have something to say,” Màiri said, wiping away her tears. The effect of the Phoenician communion, now at its zenith, had transformed the television camera into an All-seeing Eye. The lens had grown long blinking eyelashes and a bushy eyebrow that gave it a distinct personality. To Màiri it was nothing less than the collective consciousness of the entire world watching her.

“First, I want everyone to know that Josh Savin was a good and courageous man with only the best of intentions. He dedicated his life to developing a new technology to raise human consciousness and open the door for scientific exploration of the spiritual realm. His psychonautic experiments...well...they were meant to bring peace to the world, even as others plotted against him for their own personal gain. Now, you see, it has come to this,” she said, glancing at what was left of his angelic face.

“Our most trusted programmer Jude Simonson, a brilliant but mentally deranged man—radicalized by religious and political extremism—has betrayed us all, taking the life of the Maitreya Buddha. He had lost all hope in a world where happiness and transcendental meaning have become just a cynical joke. Yet, I do not blame only him for killing the Buddha. It is really YOU who are to blame—each one of

you!” she said accusingly, pointing at the shocked, blinking eye of the camera.

“YOU are the ones who made him this way. YOU are the ones who will not accept the fact that all the conflict in this world is driven by your own misguided beliefs and insatiable greed. YOU are the ones who think your religion and your money is the only way to salvation and happiness. But I am here to tell you that you are wrong—all of you.”

“These beliefs of yours are, in fact, leading you away from the very path you seek. Your churches, your holy books, your empty rituals...EVERYTHING,” she blasted, “are but corrupted parodies of the First Religion that have blinded you from the truth.”

“The Path of Righteousness leads through the Plant Kingdom, for this is the Way that feeds and sustains you. It is the Way to the Clear Light of the Ancient One, the unity state of Nirvana that lies behind the Sun Door.”

“You already know of this place for you visit it every night in your dreams. It is the universe you create for yourself; a projection of the world of your dreams—the most beautiful paradise imaginable, one full of emerald lakes, rainbows, and dancing gods; whatever you wish. There await family, friends, and lovers who will bestow upon you the most sublime comfort and intense joy. Yet you choose to spend your lives in a waking nightmare here in the mundane, never knowing the ecstasy that could be yours just beyond the veil on the righteous Path. All this can change and it must!”

For viewers at home, the satellite signal seemed to fade just then, jittering a little as she talked. Red, green, and blue components ghosted into three offset images, causing her voice to shift in and out of synch with her mouth.

“Your loss of the dharma has left you unbalanced, without noble purpose or meaning in your lives. You refuse to see the world around you as part of yourself and yourself as a part of all that exists. You deny that your thoughts are part of a whole and that it stretches across many mansions. You have forgotten the true meaning of the Holy Eucharist that once liberated your minds, giving you each a pathway to the spirit

worlds. And, you have forgotten that all your gods and prophets and saviors still wait for you there in your dreams and visions to guide you. They want to teach you, my brothers and sisters, but you refuse to listen!”

The three ghosts were more distinct now, three different women saying the exact same thing with different voices slightly out of phase. The Muslim believers were first to recognize what was happening. The prophesy of the three daughters of Allah was coming true, their triumphant return timed just before the Prophet arrives. But for Christians, it was the Holy Ghost of Asherah and the Three Marys here to usher in the End Times.

The camera eye blinked in wonder, its eyebrow raised in anticipation.

“People of the Earth, hear me now! You do not need a messiah to save you. For here in Vedi there is a new communion that will liberate you from every virus of the mind that plagues you, old or new. No longer must you rely only on faith. No longer must you rely on your priests, rabbis, imams, or gurus to teach you empty rituals and forgotten stories of the supernal realm. No longer will corrupt political leaders and greedy businessmen distract you from what is noble and good. For each of you now has the freedom and liberty of leaving your body to journey through the Seven Heavens for yourself. This is the true Path of Righteousness that you seek.”

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News of the Triple Goddess spread quickly through the ranks of ISIS. In Mecca, the circumambulation of pilgrims had halted and the Kaaba door opened wide to reveal the pillars of the Three Sisters. On the Giza Plateau, the “lions of Islam” had gathered around the Great Sphinx to celebrate the success of their devastating missile strikes. For them, a Sufi Haoma drink of Syrian Rue and Acacia Nilotica was passed around in honor of the blessed return of the three daughters. It was their reward from Allah, all agreed, for years of jihad sacrifice. For now, they had

come as the one Fatimah (blessed be her name), the triple daughter of Muhammad returned. All would be well now.

In Vatican City the faithful rushed to see Michelangelo's Pietà, a statue of the young Madonna holding the crucified body of her son. There near the Basilica entrance between the Holy Door and the altar of Saint Sebastian, a crowd had gathered to hold vigil for a miracle. Watching the broadcast from VEDI on their cell phones, there were now three distinct images of the Heavenly Mother—the Three Marys of the Bible returned as the one Madonna.

A man near the Basilica entrance offered small paper squares of blotter acid, torn from a sheet of nine hundred imprinted with the colorful image of Lord Krishna. Placing them one by one on the tongues of the faithful, each he promised would see their miracle. And, so they did.

Some said they could see tears of blood streaking down the Madonna's face. Others were sure the Madonna statue had spoken directly to them. A few even saw the dead figure of Jesus in the statue lift his head and wink. Shouts of miracles rippled through St Peter's square that blessed day. The Lady would resurrect the Christ Jesus, so it was said.

At the Jewish Museum in Prague, many listened as Rabbi Salkol told the story of Yahweh's wife Asherah. They had come to see a "newly discovered" relic, once used in a temple in Jerusalem, depicting the feminine presence of the Shekinah and Holy Spirit. Fashioned from the trunk of a holy shittum tree, the relic was just a pole with carvings of Asherah's face.

"Look...there...it's her!" said one. "The woman on TV."

With such evidence, no one could deny the Jewish Queen of Heaven had indeed returned, descended to Earth from the Seven Heavens to live again amongst the people. So sayeth the rabbi:

"For it was prophesied, whoever is most humble will cause the Shekinah to dwell upon this Earth. Whoever is haughty brings about the defilement of the Earth and the departure of the

Shekinah. The glow of lovers is a reflection of her presence. She is the flaming jewel of the Torah and the Holy Queen of the Kabbalah. She is the ancient one, the Holy Apple Orchard. She is the immanent indwelling presence of the living God. She is the animating life force of the Earth.”

“Finally, you must know,” Màiri concluded, still cradling the lifeless body of her tantric lover. “The dharma of Rta has not been lost with this one’s passing. For he has placed a seed inside me—the Soma son, soon to arrive—who will finish his Father’s work. For this is the child of vajra-deha, the “diamond body” conceived upon the Lotus Throne of Buddha. Through him we will restore the dharma; climbing step by step up the Maha Meru to reach Order’s Summit.”