

## The Lessons Begin in Earnest



The next morning when he finally realized that he was neither dreaming nor hallucinating, Larry barraged Zeus with a steady volley of questions. Zeus deflected each in turn.

“Ease up there, good buddy. I promise it will all come together very soon. Once you’ve reached a better level of acceptance, your questions will have more meat on them.”

“Acceptance! *You* can speak . . . Indians and eagles appear out of thin air . . . my world gets turned inside out, and you talk about acceptance?”

Zeus didn’t even try to muffle his laughter. “Larry, you ain’t seen nothin’ yet. All you got was a glimpse of the gift wrapping. Think you’re ready to peek inside the box?”

“Wha . . . ? I . . . I . . . .” was Larry’s best reply.

“I’ll take that as a yes. Well, then, let’s get the show on the road. It’s time we headed back to Hidden Valley.”

In the car Zeus asked Larry to remain silent. “This is not the time for understanding. It’s the time for centering as best you can. As you drive try to keep your mind still by concentrating on your breath. Just watch the inhalations and exhalations and let any thoughts drift past without clinging to them.”

Larry simply nodded. By the time they got out of the car in the Hidden Valley parking lot that Saturday morning, it was already 9:30. They walked in silence, Zeus trailing slightly

behind Larry, allowing his master's instincts to find the way back to where they had met Gathering Cloud. "Well done," Zeus said. "How did you know where to go?"

"I didn't. Come to think of it, I never gave it a thought. Wasn't I following you?"

"No. You were following *you*. You completely bypassed your mind and allowed a more powerful knowing to take over. It seems they weren't wrong," Zeus said.

"Who wasn't wrong, about what?"

"The Council. About you. Let's keep it at that for now. We have work to do—ground rules, fine print—you know, the CYA stuff you lawyers use for disclaimers. But first, don't walk any farther. Look around and tell me what you see."

"Someone's been here. I'd say they've been pretty busy." Gathering Cloud's simple circle in the sand had been made much larger. Small rocks lined the entire perimeter; a cairn of neatly arranged stones, several feet high, now stood at center; eight spokes, marked with smaller rocks, radiated out from the midpoint, three of them aligning with three smaller cairns placed irregularly along the circumference.

The offerings of pine nuts, tobacco, sage, corn meal, and juniper had disappeared. There were two new mounds on either side of the central cairn: sweetgrass and cedar.

"This wheel is excellent, exquisite. Even better than I had expected," Zeus said. "It's the embodiment of Bighorn, Moose Mountain, Cahokia. It is Stonehenge, Cheops. . . ."

"What does all this mean?" Larry interrupted.

"Ah," Zeus replied, adopting a tone reminiscent of an overzealous tour guide, "this is a medicine wheel, or sacred hoop, used in one form or another since ancient times. It represents the constant search for the Beloved . . . for Wakan Tanka . . . for the One Supreme Infinite Creator . . . for the Great

Unknowable Mystery. It symbolizes the wheel within the wheel and provides visions into the Great Bottomless Pool.

“For those content with a simple explanation, the four larger rocks Gathering Cloud placed yesterday mark the four directions of the wind. The east is the direction of new beginnings and new knowledge. The south is the direction of growth, where everything is replenished and comes to full bloom. The west holds the gifts of reflection and insight into yourself and the Creator; dreams and visions come from the west. The north offers purity, stillness, and the wisdom of the elders; healing cures are found there. The four directions also map the four elements—air, water, fire, and earth—and the four stages of life: infancy, childhood, adulthood, and old age. At a deeper level they represent the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of humankind. Notice the smaller cairns positioned at the edge of the circle. Each aligns with the center to point directly at an astronomical event important to the keepers of the wisdom; these might be the summer solstice or the dawn rising stars—Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius.

“The medicine wheel is a metaphor for Consciousness embracing all Creation. It connects the essences of the kingdoms: mineral, plant, animal, as well as human and spirit. The center represents the white hole from which all manifestation springs and the black hole where All That Is eventually returns. It signifies the stillness preceding Creation—the moment containing the unexpressed seeds of infinite possibility before time sprang into existence.

“This sacred hoop, cached here within the energy grid of Joshua Tree, is unusually powerful. Can you sense something different, Larry?” Zeus asked. “Tell me what you notice.”

“Wow. This is weird. It feels like the hair on my neck is standing on end . . . like there’s some sort of electric current moving through me. It feels strange but nice. Am I imagining it?”

“No, it’s not imaginary. The energy you feel is quite real. Joshua Tree is no ordinary place. Because of their proximity to the San Andreas and Lavic Lake fault systems, these hills are on powerful ley lines. This is a grade-A, super-prime power spot!”

“Whoa, slow down there, pardner. What are you talking about?”

“Do you understand the concept of acupuncture meridians?” Larry’s blank face told Zeus he should assume nothing. “They’re like map lines tracing circuits of increased electrical conductance in the body. In a sense, they’re like an anatomy chart detailing the nervous system, or perhaps the circulatory or lymphatic system. But instead of delineating actual tissue, the meridians trace energy flow lines. Healers activate specific points along them to remove blockages and restore the balance of the five elements. This allows the body to reestablish its innate harmony.

“Ley lines are similar to meridians, except they trace the energy grid of the planet. Power spots on the earth are analogous to the meridian activation points. Some well-known power spots, like Sedona in Arizona or Mt. Shasta in northern California or the Great Pyramid at Giza, have been used for millennia as sites for sacred ritual and prayer.

“Sensitives—people with inner sight—can ‘feel’ these spots just as you are feeling this energy now. Many houses of worship and other sacred structures have been built at the intersections of ley lines to take advantage of the energy acceleration potential there. Certain megalithic stones, menhir, and cairns in the British Isles, such as Stonehenge, Avebury, and Iona, are rather well known. But megalithic structures are found all over the world—from Novorossiysk and Lazarevskoe on the Black Sea to the magnificent statues on Easter Island. They remain mysteries only because researchers insist on looking for explanations that fit neatly into their structured view of reality.

Funny how often the need for form obscures the obvious.”

Zeus looked deeply into Larry, as if focusing on something six to eight inches behind his eyes. “You getting any of this?”

“I think so,” Larry responded. “Ancient people who had the gift of sensing energies—probably the priests and the soothsayers—built places for ceremony on power spots located on the Earth’s energy grid so they could amplify the juice for ceremonies or rituals they wanted to perform.”

“Well done, Larry. *Mes compliments!* You have the first half of the story. Now let me ask you a question: Where is the dumbest place to stand during a lightning storm?”

“Under a tree.”

“And why is that?”

“Because lightning will strike the highest attractive object it can find.”

“Excellent,” Zeus said. “Now let’s go deeper. Your scientists might explain the process as follows: All thunderclouds are made up of billions of water droplets and ice crystals. Great shear drafts create sudden, massive movement within these clouds, causing static electricity to build. As the water droplets and crystals crash madly into each other, they exchange some of their electric charge. The larger droplets take on a negative charge and migrate to the bottom of the cloud. This charge repels the negative charges on the trees below.

“As a result, positive charges begin to build in the trees. An electric potential now starts building between cloud and tree. This would drive the cloud’s charges towards the earth, except that the air between provides very efficient insulation. But if the opposing charges build up sufficiently, they overcome this barrier. The negative charge at the base of the cloud seeks a path to the ground with initial flashes of energy called leader strokes.

“As one of these leader strokes gets close to the ground a

large positive charge, called a streamer stroke, builds up around the tree. It shoots up into the sky, connecting with the leader stroke some thirty to sixty feet above the ground. This conjunction of charges is merely foreplay. It creates a channel along which a second, more powerful flash can run. This second flash is called a return stroke. It's the one that contains the jolt.

“Sexy stuff, huh? If you took slow motion photographs of this electric ecstasy, you would see something extraordinary. The tree reaches up to the cloud just as the cloud reaches down to the tree, and when the two lovers meet, they pulse in hundreds of throbbing shivers per second until, fully depleted, they consume each other totally.”

“Where was this kind of science when I went to school? I don't think I'll ever look at a cloud or a tree again without smiling,” Larry said.

“Once we're finished here, you probably won't look at anything ever again without smiling,” Zeus responded. “But I digress.

“Science paints a thin coat of reason over the force of attraction—or, to use a more comprehensive word, Love. All Creation is electric in nature. It arises from the infinite sea of Love, seeking to explore the infinite through form, motion, sound, color, or experience. Creation *always* seeks to know itself. It simultaneously calls and answers.

“Trees are tuned to universal energies in a most remarkable way. They reach to the sky in constant dialogue with the Great Unfoldment. In a sense they act as antennas, drawing cosmic Consciousness into themselves just as they transmit their essence into All That Is.

“Do you now grasp the deeper reason behind the pyramids, the standing stones, and even cairns placed in the middle of medicine wheels, like this one?”

“Wow,” Larry exclaimed. “They act as antennas, drawing down additional streams of energies.”

“Go on,” said Zeus. “When these structures point to a specific star or some other astronomical event, what else takes place?”

“You’ve got to be kidding! You mean they can actually draw in the energy of the stars they align with?”

“Now you’re cookin’, pardner. This is one super-nifty, ginger-peachy-keen place we’re in. Buckle your seat belt, we’re in for the ride of your life. Ready?”