



*I have a capacity in my soul  
For taking in God entirely.  
I am as sure as I live  
That nothing is so near to me as God.  
God is nearer to me than I am to myself;  
My existence depends  
On the nearness and the presence of God.*

— MEISTER ECKHART

## The Heavens Respond



Larry sat very still, soaking up Zeus's words. The only sounds came from the flapping wings of a small black crow that flew into the circle, alighting on top of the center cairn.

Zeus broke the silence. "Hi, Patchy. Allow me to make the introductions. Larry, please meet Patchuliti, the legendary crow of the Spirit People. He speaks for all the Great Black Birds, from the Raven of the Salish and Kootenai to the Crow of the Arapaho and Cheyenne."

The best Larry could offer in response was an awkward nod. He was still struggling with the question of what it would take for anyone to willingly break away from the comfort of his or her beliefs. Everything was happening too quickly, like being force-fed successive courses of very rich foods with hardly a moment between bites. This, of course, was exactly what Zeus intended.

"Patchuliti is the gatekeeper of dreams and altered states," Zeus continued without missing a single beat. "He searches the psyche and selects the visions to be played on the screen of your inner mind. He is one of the left-handed guardians, the keepers of sacred law who know some of the arcane mysteries of Creation. He can give you the courage to enter the darkness of the Void, home of all that is not yet in form.

“There is powerful medicine here. You are about to undergo a process similar to the vision quests sought by spiritual warriors in cultures all over the world. You won’t need peyote, ayahuasca, mushrooms, or any other mind-altering substance. These can sometimes help transport you into the Void, but they do so at a cost. You carry their signature with you. It muddies your Awareness, as if you were enclosed in thin plastic sheeting, and you sacrifice clarity and permanence. And if the chemical is too prevalent, Patchuliti, who often plays the clever trickster, may sense the impurity and decide to intervene, sending visions from the darker spheres of your subconscious. It’s better to greet this magnificent bird with the innocence of a child and enter his domain through ceremony and breath.

“Patchy, the humanoid sitting on the rock there, with his bottom jaw touching his knee, is Larry. He’s part of the vanguard that’s working to shift the Consciousness of this planet. Considering the dazed expression on his face, I’d say we have a job and a half ahead of us!”

Patchuliti’s eyes began to glow, then to emit streams of light that burst into tiny stars, like a July Fourth sparkler. Larry watched, mesmerized, as the crow grew larger and larger. His great wings opened and extended to twenty feet across, completely blocking the light of the sun. Darkness fell on Larry, and as his eyes slowly closed he fell into a deep trance.

“Excellent work, Patchy. Even better than I could have wished. Let’s see what he sees.”

Zeus did not move. He gazed intently inward, probing Larry’s mind. After a while he slowly raised his head and spoke, “Larry, it appears you are ready to begin. Please tell us where you are and what’s happening. Take your time; we want you to be as detailed as possible.”

Larry's mouth twitched slightly. When he began speaking, it was in a hoarse, rumbling voice that seemed to come from somewhere outside his body. "I am in a very dark place. I am straddling the back of some animal. I can feel the fur and there's a high-pitched squeal coming from its mouth. There's an unpleasant dankness and a rank odor all about me. The animal—I think it's a giant mole—is lumbering toward a light in the distance.

"We're getting closer now, and I'm beginning to see more details around me. We're moving through a tunnel—like a mine shaft. The walls are rough rock and so is the ceiling. *It is a mole!* I'm sitting on the back of a *giant mole!* I can see his beady eyes now, and the short, pointed snout. He's still making those squeaking sounds. He seems to know he's taking me some place."

"Very good, Larry," said Zeus. "Tell us about the light. What does it look like?"

"We're getting closer. It isn't very bright—it looks like a very dim light bulb dangling from the ceiling. My God! That's exactly what it is! I can see the writing on the bottom. It's a fifteen-watt bare bulb hanging from the end of an electric cord. How weird!

"Wait. We're still moving . . . a little faster now, moving toward another light. It's getting closer. . . . It's another dim bulb, exactly like the first one. All parts of the tunnel I can see look much the same. Nothing seems to be changing except our speed. . . . We're going faster and faster, moving past the dangling bulbs in seconds, instead of minutes.

"There's a very bright light ahead; much brighter than any of the bulbs. It almost hurts my eyes to look at it. It's getting closer and closer. We're going so fast now we seem to be flying. . . . The fur is changing to feathers . . . and the mole . . . has become an eagle! We're flying! The light is coming from the end

of the tunnel. We're soaring out into the sky. I'm looking back and I can see the tunnel, a tiny opening in the face of a sheer cliff.

"The brilliant light is coming from the sun! Wow, what a sense of freedom . . . expansion! It seems like I've broken through. Wait, hold it a second. I can hear a voice. There isn't any sound, but it's clear as a bell."

"And what is the voice telling you?" Zeus asked.

"It's saying, 'Behold the sun. You are at the beginning of a new tunnel now. Keep flying.'"

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" said Zeus. "This is what we discussed earlier. The path is all about the exploration of Consciousness. It's the Infinite Cosmic Onion. No matter how deep you go—how many tunnels you navigate—you're still on the surface. Keep flying!"

"Patchy has given you a powerful vision, a great gift. For now you know—in a place deeper than the mind can travel—that there will never be a destination where you have not already arrived. The joy and magic are in the journey. As the *Interdimensional Survival Manual*, that great book of incarnational wisdom, says:

*Of what value is the bee that returns to the hive  
without first visiting many flowers?*

"Some day you will rejoin the great cosmic Consciousness with full Awareness, and from there you will revisit the treasures you accumulated during your time behind the Veil. It's up to you to make as many of the experiences you have here as juicy as you can."

Larry slowly reoriented to his physical surroundings. The great crow was gone, and the pea-soup fog had been replaced by a transparent shimmering, like heat waves coming off hot

desert sand. He found himself gaping at Zeus. “My God,” Larry said, “That was so real. What just happened?”

Zeus paused, allowing Larry time to regroup before answering. “Pushing what just happened through the twenty-six holes of the strainer is going to be a bit of a challenge. Let’s see if this makes any sense to you.

“Patchy, as you experienced firsthand, can evoke mind-altering states by simple induction. No need for chemicals or anything external. He’s the guardian of the transition point between space/time and time/space, and he shifted you into the flip side with full Awareness. This means his gift to you is permanently etched into your being. It’s an immutable portal, allowing you free access to the time/space continuum.”

Zeus fully expected the What-What chorus to explode into song. There was only silence. “Not bad. I must be doing better than I thought. Is all this starting to sink in?”

“I guess so,” Larry said. “A couple of questions, though.”

Zeus laughed, “Only a couple. Even I can’t believe I did that well.”

“Okay, more than just a couple. For one, please explain what’s going on. How come you’re able to talk to me? How come all these birds and Indians appear?”

Zeus paused for a long moment, working out where best to begin. “How did last Tuesday’s events make you feel?”

“You know how I felt. You were there almost every moment, from the horror of watching it all unfold live on television to the gut-wrenching aftermath. I was stupefied for three days.”

“Yes, I do know. I asked so you can appreciate what it means when I say millions of people all over the world reacted much the same way. That event prompted the greatest focusing of human Awareness in the history of this planet. Consider, moreover, the extent of its influence. Outside of ground zero

and the other points of impact, where else did the events of 9/11 strike?”

“Everywhere,” Larry said. “Across the country. Around the world. They’ve affected the entire planet. Nothing will ever be the same again.”

“And why is that?” Zeus asked.

“Because it has shocked us into confronting our mortality. It’s made us feel violated and vulnerable. It’s left us outraged and angry. 9/11 has galvanized the world into action; it’s made clear the path we need to follow.”

“And which path is that?”

“Why are you asking such ridiculous questions?” Larry said, frustrated at Zeus’s apparent inability to see how he and the rest of civilized humanity obviously felt. “9/11 has shown the world that terrorism is a cancer that must be surgically eradicated. It’s bringing everyone together in a common cause. Isn’t that a good thing?”

“‘Good’ and ‘bad’ are such relative terms,” Zeus said, “that I find them difficult to use with any precision. Perhaps you will view the extraordinary events of 9/11 from a different perspective after we complete our work here in Joshua Tree.

“Be that as it may, let’s continue. Bear with me, as this next part is a bit tricky. Using your new gift from Patchy, I invite you to shift out of this illusion to a point a few million miles away, from where you can view planet Earth.”

“*What? What? . . . What? What?*” The unmistakable trill pierced the air, making both Larry and Zeus wince.

“Okay, I’ll backtrack a bit. We’re dealing here with the nature of truth. The problem is that Truth—with a capital T—doesn’t exist as such. Truth is a mutable commodity, shifting and sliding along, depending solely on the point from which one views. What’s that expression you like to use? Oh yes, ‘You can’t

see the forest for the trees.’ Let’s use that as an example. Imagine you’ve got your nose pressed into the bark of a tree. If I asked you what you perceive, you’d deliver a dissertation on the nature of bark. Step away a bit, and your Awareness expands to include the entire tree. Step into a hot air balloon and drift high enough, and your Awareness takes in the entire forest.”

“*What? What? . . . What? What?*”

“*Oi vey,*” said Zeus, looking up to the sky as if seeking divine guidance. “Okay, let’s try this on for size. Allow me to paraphrase a delightful Jainist parable which speaks of six blind men being led to an elephant—before we pushed it through the strainer, smarty. Don’t forget, I know what you’re thinking. Anyway, the six spread out in all directions. One grabs the elephant’s tail and exclaims, ‘This elephant is shaped just like a snake, long and thin.’ ‘Oh no,’ another says, his arms wrapped around the elephant’s front leg, ‘you’re wrong. An elephant is shaped exactly like a tree—and just as rough!’ ‘Nonsense,’ says a third, ‘elephants are hard and pointy.’ He was holding a tusk. Each of the blind men, in turn, shared his point of view. One was touching the elephant’s side, another the end of its trunk. The last of the group was playing with one of the great beast’s floppy ears. They argued among themselves, each saying his version was right. And soon, as has so often happened in your histories, they came to blows. Their actions were as befuddled as their eyesight.

“Who was telling the truth? All of them and none of them. You see, there is no truth; there’s only perception. Being stuck is believing that only what *we* see is real. People within the illusion can never fully agree because each tends to identify so strongly with his or her own singular point of view. That’s the nature of infinity—no matter how similar two objects or concepts or thoughts appear, by the very laws of Creation each is unique. As I said earlier, all coalesced Creation, in any form—physical,

emotional, mental, spiritual, conceptual—is Consciousness. Each form is a distinctive facet on the infinite diamond—which, as I also said earlier, is the One Supreme Infinite Creator unfolding endlessly.

“We’ll deal with some startling ramifications of this insight later. For now, would you agree that what you perceive is a function of where you’re looking from?”

“Yes, I can go along with that,” Larry answered.

“Great, let’s move on, then. You already know how you, along with the vast majority of people, viewed the aftermath of 9/11 from the perspective of your egoic self—the part contained completely within the illusion. Let’s see what happens when you witness the same events from a different point of view.

“Close your eyes, use your imagination, and be guided by your inner sight. Don’t let your rational mind hold you back. Imagine being transported to a spot near the center of the Milky Way galaxy, and let me know when you’re there.”

After a couple of minutes, Larry nodded slowly.

“Okay, tell me what you see.”

“I can see billions and billions of stars. In some places I can see vast swirls of color. I’m being caressed by wave after wave of beautiful, soundless music. It’s like an incredible cosmic ballet.”

“Very good. Now look back towards your solar system. Zoom in, if you wish, as if you had a giant telescope.”

“I can see it now,” Larry said. “There’s the sun and Mercury and Venus and Earth! Wow, they look so small and helpless, floating in space.”

“Excellent. Now focus only on planet Earth. Move beyond seeing with your eyes. What do you perceive?”

“The Earth is alive! She’s . . . a gloriously beautiful, conscious being . . . full of love. When I look at her, my heart swells

up so much I want to cry. Her continents, oceans, and atmosphere are gouged and sullied, yet she's singing. She's sending out ripples of light that wash over the sun, the other planets, the entire galaxy, and beyond. She's magnificent!"

"Yes, she is," said Zeus. "Magnificent beyond words. She's admired for her selfless service and well-loved. Now, can you find 9/11?"

"Not exactly," Larry answered. "Pinning down time seems almost impossible. Events appear to be moving in and out of each other, as if they're both discrete and simultaneous. That doesn't make any sense, does it?"

"Forget the words," Zeus responded. "Now you can appreciate our difficulty trying to convey information in precise terms for beings on your side of the Veil. There is no exactitude, only probabilities. No verisimilitude, only perceptions. You see, for us, like you, it's all in the 'tudes."

"The what?"

"*What? What? . . . What? What?*" The bird's screeching echoed Larry's confusion.

"Oh, the 'tudes? I'm bringing in a guest expert to delve into the 'tudes for you. For now, stay with your vision of planet Earth and the events surrounding 9/11. It's virtually impossible for those outside of the influence of Veil to pinpoint an exact moment in time. However, can you get a sense of the planet's essence before the event and compare it with how she appears now?"

"Yes. I never knew such a viewpoint existed: I can actually 'see' with my heart, and it makes everything a lot clearer than when I look through my eyes. I can see Earth before and after 9/11 simultaneously. There doesn't seem to be a big difference. It seems like she's still refining her vibrations, like an instrument

playing a series of ascending notes. When she finally reaches some ultra-high note, she's going to pass out of this illusion and move into a new dimension."

"Interesting that you describe her journey in musical terms. Very perceptive," Zeus said. "You're quite right. Earth is leaving the third density and has almost completed her transit into the fourth. You'll learn more about this process in a while. The beings on Earth's surface were always intended to make this glorious journey into the next paradigm with her. Unfortunately, the probability is no longer very high . . . which speaks directly to why you and I are here now."

"You know, this is a pretty historic moment," Zeus quipped. "The last time animals stepped in to help humans deflect disaster was what you call the Great Flood, when they were sent in visions to save Noah's butt. What a joke, your stories! Humans believe it was Noah who saved the animals. What utter tripe! Humans are currently eradicating other species at the rate of one every twenty-five minutes or so. Yet millions and millions still survive. Work it backwards and consider how many species were alive at the time of the Flood. Noah would have needed an ark the size of Ecuador. No way, José."

"But, back to the Earth just before 9/11. . . . Let's say you had the job of delivering a State of the Planet address to some high council—like your American president's yearly State of the Union speech. What would you have to report?"

"From what I can determine, it doesn't look too good. We're in big trouble, aren't we?"

"In one sense, Larry, you are. In fact, from that perspective, the situation is so dire that it might already be too late. A lot depends on what you—and a few others like you—do in the next few years. However, I choose to see it differently. I like the challenge of creating against the odds. The shift in your collective

Consciousness has already achieved much. I have no doubt that the impossible is more than doable, if you collectively will to make it so.

“For your report to the Council you will need to be armed with far more information than you have now. Just relax and release your mind. You, my friend, are about to access the planetary mainframe—known to some as the Akashic records.”

Zeus caused Larry to enter a deep trancelike state. His human master was fused directly into the vast archive containing the Earth’s story, from its birth as a fiery ball through the unfolding of human history. Every thought, word, deed, and sensation—by man, animal, plant, and element—ever occurring on the planet has been recorded there in detail, alongside an extensive catalog of probable scenarios of future events. The impact of this sea of information was close to overwhelming. Larry’s body shuddered, then began to tremble, his shoulders heaving with the weight of the knowledge downloaded into his being. Tears filled his eyes as he was transported into the Council’s presence.